

Animal Behaviour Specialist

[Full-Time Permanent]

About Us

The Edmonton Humane Society (EHS) has been an animal welfare leader in the Edmonton community since 1907. We strive to be a model of excellence in the advancement of animal welfare and to lead the movement in creating a more humane world. EHS is a safe haven for thousands of homeless animals each year, providing veterinary treatment, behavioral rehabilitation, care, enrichment and rehoming. Beyond animal sheltering, we engage with the community through various programs and services to support happy, lifelong bonds between people and pets.

The Role

The Animal Behaviour Specialist is responsible for optimizing the emotional welfare and behavioural health of all canines within the care of the Edmonton Humane Society. The Animal Behaviour Specialist must fulfill all daily duties of the Animal Behaviour department, including assessing newly arrived dogs, recording behavioural observations, conducting behaviour modification sessions, and facilitating dog-to-dog interactions. A foundation of applied behaviour analysis (ABA) informs all responsibilities within this role.

Key Roles & Responsibilities

Behaviour Evaluation and Modification

- Create and maintain detailed behaviour files for all adult shelter dogs, integrating various observations and histories to inform modifications and recommendations.
- Develop and implement positive reinforcement-based programs to improve adoptability and welfare, including individualized behaviour modification plans and enrichment programs.
- Ensure timely progression through behavioural pathways, making informed outcome recommendations (adoption, rescue, or euthanasia).
- Assess dog-to-dog sociability, facilitating playgroups to provide socialization and exercise.
- Communicate handling needs and critical information to staff and volunteers via whiteboards.

Behaviour Education and Outreach

- Provide specialized counselling for staff, volunteers, and clients on high-level behaviour concerns.
- Contribute to workshops and presentations on force-free, evidence-based techniques to enhance the human-dog relationship.
- Conduct assessments for dangerous dogs and cruelty cases as requested by external agencies.
- Stay informed on current shelter behaviour best practices through continued education.

Management of Staff and Department

- Act as a frontline resource for staff and volunteers, ensuring safety and understanding of shelter dogs' needs.
- Collaborate with medical and operational departments to ensure the welfare of dogs during procedures and interactions.
- Participate in population rounds and other meetings to monitor and uphold behavioural health standards.
- Update and maintain departmental standard operating procedures and training materials based on science-backed methodologies.
- Safely manage potentially dangerous dogs using defensive handling techniques.



Education & Responsibilities

- High School Diploma or equivalent (GED) is mandatory
- Completion of the Dog Behaviour and Training Methodology Program (DBTM-C)
- Successful completion of the Fear Free Shelter Program within 6 months of hire date
- Certification in alignment with EHS training philosophies, such as CDBC, CSB-D, CBCC-KA, or KPT CTP within 1 year of employment
- Minimum 2 years of previous experience in animal care, training, or behavior modification in a professional capacity
- Experience working in an animal shelter setting would be considered an asset

Skills & Abilities

As the ideal candidate you have knowledge of and experience with companion animals. You possess outstanding verbal and written communication skills and are able to multi-task and work independently in a challenging environment. You understand and have commitment to positive reinforcement training methodologies. You are proficient in animal handling and have strong understanding of dog/cat body language, problem behaviour and resolutions. In addition, you have excellent knowledge of operant conditioning and behaviour resolution techniques.

Compensation & Hours

- **Compensation:** EHS offers a competitive not-for-profit compensation package which includes a comprehensive benefits package, and a strong work-life balance.
- **Hours:** 40 hours a week; however, is expected to work hours as required to fulfill department responsibilities. Some evenings and weekends may be required.

How to Apply

If you are looking for a rewarding career in an exciting fast paced environment, we invite you to forward your resume and salary expectations, in confidence, by email to hr@edmontonhumanesociety.com

The Edmonton Humane Society is an equal opportunity employer, and we thank all applicants for submitting their resume. However, only those candidates considered for employment will be contacted.