

VOLUNTEER VET PROGRAM

Thank you for your interest in volunteering at Lanta Animal Welfare. This document provides a basic outline of our volunteer vet program.

Further details will be addressed upon application.



Lanta Animal Welfare (LAW)

Lanta Animal Welfare Center opened in January 2010, complete with a surgery room and recovery shelter. Our primary objective was to implement a sterilization program on Koh Lanta, but because we were the only animal welfare facility on the island demand came flooding in. We still aim to reach our sterilization goals via organized clinic days, but we ask our vets to respond to emergencies by providing medical attention within the center's capacity.

The center holds 30 dogs and 20 cats who are looked after daily by staff and vets. We organize adoption of all animals, both locally and overseas (in conjunction with Soi Dog Foundation in Phuket).

LAW is not yet a registered charity and thus is cut off from major funding and support from outside organizations. Application has been filed and we expect another year before status in America, and another three in Thailand. In the meantime we rely on profits from Time for Lime (the restaurant and cooking school run by our founder) and individual donations to keep the center running.

Currently the law prohibits foreign volunteer vets from practicing in Thailand, although this is not in any way enforced. Many Thailand based animal sanctuaries and rescue organizations advertise recruitment for volunteer vets without incident. Should there be any consequences, LAW would be the only party responsible. The volunteer is exempt from any potential related fines.



Positions at LAW

Senior Vets

(Qualified for a minimum of two years and experienced with sterilizations of dogs and cats)

Because we don't have a permanent vet in the clinic, we are highly dependent on our volunteers to be committed and flexible. Vets will need to distribute their time between fulfilling the centre's primary goal of sterilization and providing medical treatment for incoming patients. We ask that applicants notify us of their comfort level in performing under these circumstances independently.

New Grads

(Graduated within a year of placement)

There are two scenarios for new grads:

- *Working with Senior Vets*

We place new grads with Senior Vets for mentorship and training. The new grad will be given the opportunity to perform sterilizations and basic surgical procedures independently once the Senior Vet determines he/she is competent. We sometimes coordinate a crossover placement, training the grad with a departing Vet for a few weeks and allowing the remainder of their time to be independent. Although this is our preference, the opportunity is dependent on availability. Applicants who are flexible with timing can request to be notified when the opportunity arises.

- *Integration into General Volunteer Schedule*

In the absence of a Senior Vet, we ask that new grads be integrated into the daily schedule with other general volunteers. This includes general animal husbandry and management of shelter/clinic operations. Because they will be the only medical staff present, we will depend on them to respond to incoming patient demands and monitoring of center residents, though they will not be allowed to perform any invasive surgical procedures.

Vet Nurses

We depend on vet nurses to be flexible with their roles, providing support to both vets and general volunteers. They will assist in all sterilizations and surgical procedures, as well as administering medication and vaccinations to patients and shelter residents.

Students

We do not provide school credit to students, however we gladly offer a General Volunteer position with access to observation and basic support to medical staff. This placement would also be dependent on timing and availability.





Volunteer Vet Schedule

Our vets work six days a week on the following schedule:

Monday-Friday:	9am-6pm
Saturday:	9am-1pm
Sunday:	OFF

Organized sterilizations for several animals at a time will be dependent on the availability of the volunteer staff. Most of the time clients will come in and request a sterilization that can be scheduled in advance. We ask that vets are always prepared to respond to emergency arrivals that can not be attended to by our trained staff. Because of our lack of sophisticated medical equipment, we are unable to do many diagnostics and procedures. For those needs we direct our clients to the mainland hospitals.

Accommodation

We provide free shared accommodation to all volunteers staying a minimum of one month. Rooms are basic and located on site of the center. For those wishing to live off site we can recommend several affordable options. The price range for monthly rentals is 4,000 baht to 10,000 baht



Location

Lanta Animal Welfare is located within 20 minutes walking distance of a central cluster of restaurants and convenience stores. There are a few local family run restaurants around the corner, but we highly recommend volunteers rent a scooter as this is the best and most convenient way to get around the island. The cost will run about 150 THB/day or 2500-3000 THB/mth

Working environment

The center functions primarily as a sterilization clinic and most days are organized with this as a priority. However, because it is the only animal medical response facility on the island, demand for medical attention comes in, sometimes in high numbers, and we ask that our volunteers be flexible and prepared to respond to these kinds of scenarios. This might mean overtime hours and on-call availability.

There is currently no Thai vet staff at Lanta Animal Welfare. We have a Thai assistant manager who is in training to take on some vet nurse duties but her availability will depend on the needs of the shelter. Vets must be prepared to alternate and share nurse duties in the absence of a vet nurse volunteer.

Communication

Most times our Thai employee will be able to translate medical information between doctor and client, and if she is not available, we have several written translations to refer to. There will, however, be times when communication will still prove challenging.

Cases

The most common cases we see at the clinic are listed below. For any complicated and invasive procedures that require more sophisticated equipment, we direct the client to a mainland hospital.

- Motorbike/Car Accidents
- Poisoning
- Bite wounds
- Infections
- Skin disorders-mange, ringworm, etc...
- Cat flu
- FIP

Medical Donations

We are always in need of and greatly appreciate donated medical supplies. There are some legal limitations to consider when entering Thailand, so if you are interested in bringing something, please contact info@lantaanimalwelfare.com for a comprehensive wishlist.





Koh Lanta

Koh Lanta is located on the west coast of southern Thailand. As many of the resorts, bars and restaurants have only recently arrived on the island, the atmosphere remains relaxed and tranquil compared to other more developed destinations in Thailand. The island itself is comprised of several stunning beaches, a large protected national park, a historic Chinese fishing village, mangroves, caves, etc... Opportunity for exploration will not be lacking! Eating on Koh Lanta is relatively affordable and there are options for every culinary appetite. Nightlife varies from relaxed bars on the beach to occasional dance parties and live reggae music concerts. For exploration beyond the island, there are plenty of tour operators who can provide you with easy and affordable island hopping packages.

Travel

Koh Lanta is located just two hours from Krabi International airport and seven hours from Phuket International airport. Flights can be arranged directly to these airports but restrictions may apply during low season. Alternatively, flights and trains from Bangkok are cheap and very convenient. Minivans can be hired to drop passengers at their destination on Koh Lanta.





Vet Volunteer Testimonial

Hello! My name is Esther and I'm a Lanta Animal Welfare volunteer vet from the Netherlands. I have been working as a volunteer here for 2.5 months and I'm enjoying it more and more everyday.

The main goal of the center is to reduce the population of stray animals on the streets through sterilization clinics, but as we are the only veterinary clinic on the island we are also required to deal with emergencies, sick animals and vaccinations. Animals that come in can be both stray and owned animals. Sick stray animals that need care stay with us as long as necessary and when they are recovered, if possible we release them back to their natural homes. We also must look after our own resident animals to ensure they get the medical care they need.

As the clinic is only one year old and has not always been occupied by a vet, there has been need for development and new procedures to be put in place. For example, there are limitations for anesthetics in Thailand and the ones available I had never worked with before. So in my time here I researched the details of these medicines and composed a protocol for incoming volunteer vets.

I have also had the privilege of training the permanent staff members how to deal with the most common medical problems, so now they can work independently while I begin to focus more on sterilizations and working on development to improve the clinic and the centre. Of course, as I am still the only vet at the island, I am always available for advice and emergencies.

The staff I work with are all incredibly hard working and dedicated and together we've become a team of people who are building the foundation for an incredible future of hope on Koh Lanta. It's very rare that you can stumble upon something like this and can see immediately the positive changes you're making - as a result I'm having a very hard time leaving!





Come and join our team!

