



SOMALILAND VOLUNTEER GUIDE

CCF's MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Cheetah Conservation Fund is to be an internationally recognised center of excellence in research and education on cheetahs and their eco-systems, working with all stakeholders to achieve best practices in conservation and management of the world's cheetahs.

January 2023

CCF's MISSION STATEMENT	1
Welcome Message	2
Somaliland Contact Details	3
WhatsApp	4
Cheetah Conservation Fund: Values and Guiding Principles	5
Somaliland Introduction	6
Weather and Climate	7
Traveling to Somaliland	7
Traveling through Ethiopia	7
Carrying Items for CCF	7
Visa	8
Arriving in Somaliland	8
Money	8
Safety	9
HIV/AIDS	10
Travel and Medical Insurance	10
Before you Leave Checklist:	11
CCF Facilities and Practicalities	12
Water, Laundry and Electricity	13
Food	13
Alcohol policy	13
Internet, Telephones & Mail	14
Working Hours	14
Product of your Work	15
Photos and Video	15
Working with Animals	15
Cheetah Health	16
Record Keeping	16
After Your Trip	17

Welcome Message

Dear Volunteer,

Welcome to Somaliland and thank you for choosing to join us and our Somaliland team to help save the wild cheetah. We really appreciate your commitment and contribution to support our ongoing efforts to counter the illegal cheetah trade. Since the Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF) was founded, volunteers have been the backbone of our programs and are fully part of the success in our efforts to save the endangered cheetah.

When you travel from your home to Somaliland, you are bringing far more than a pair of willing hands. The fresh perspectives and enthusiasm of our team is a constant reminder for us that our work may be taking place in an isolated environment, but that others in the world are as committed as we are to conserve these unique predators.


Our volunteers also serve as ambassadors for the local community – your very presence helps Somalilanders realize that the world is interested in the cheetah's race for survival and shows that while some may see cheetahs as a problem, others will travel thousands of kilometers to see these amazing animals in the wild. This brings a much-needed boost to the local economy that helps improve key services such as medical and educational facilities. In this way, you help us achieve one of our key goals to turn communities into conservationists in their own right. This is my passion; that cheetahs and humans can live together and prosper.

While working with us, you will become part of the CCF team. I'm sure you will learn a lot about cheetahs and the illegal wildlife trade; one of the challenges that we face as conservationists. While it can be hard work, we've always been able to turn back to our goal – to help cheetahs in their race for survival.

Somaliland is a very unique country and can be challenging for visitors. However, we hope that you enjoy being part of this experience, working with our team and supporting our efforts to conserve the cheetah. We're really looking forward to working with you.

Thank you very much for deciding to give us your support!

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Laurie Marker". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Laurie" and last name "Marker" clearly distinguishable.

Laurie Marker, PhD
Founder and Executive Director
Cheetah Conservation Fund

Somaliland Contact Details

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WhatsApp

We have multiple WhatsApp groups that link all relevant people for different situations and communications. Generally, someone will be available regardless of the time zone. If there is an emergency and no one is replying, please call (DO NOT TEXT) Dr. Marker directly using her WhatsApp, at +264-811247887. Please make sure you have WhatsApp on your phone, as you will be added to the relevant groups upon your arrival.

Cheetah Conservation Fund: Values and Guiding Principles

Our **VALUES** are what we, as an organization, and we, as individuals, stand for and believe in. Our **GUIDING PRINCIPLES** guide the way we work—they govern our behavior and our decisions. We make all decisions, throughout the organization, with these **VALUES** and **GUIDING PRINCIPLES** as our guide points.

Passion

We exhibit passion in our mission and our work. We approach challenges with enthusiasm and perseverance. We are relentless in our efforts to accomplish our goals.

Conservation

We are a conservation organization. We adopt a conservation mindset for everything we do. We use our resources, such as time, money, food, water, electricity, and supplies, wisely and productively. We are resourceful and find creative solutions to challenging problems.

Pride

We are proud of the work we do and what we have accomplished. Every action we take, every job that we do, no matter how small, is critical to our mission. We take pride in our roles and responsibilities and see a job through from beginning to end. We are proud of our facilities and take individual ownership for keeping our grounds, buildings and equipment clean, organized and maintained.

Appreciation

Our organization is composed of talented, intelligent and experienced individuals, without whom we could never accomplish our mission. We are indebted to those who support us with donations of money, time and resources. We are honored to have such passionate partners.

Initiative

Each of us takes initiative, as well as responsibility, to do what needs to be done so that we achieve our organization's goals. We never hesitate to go above and beyond our individual job duties so that CCF succeeds.

Teamwork

We know that, by working together, we will accomplish our mission. We communicate openly and directly, and we resolve our disagreements constructively. We value the contributions that each and every member makes to our team.

Education

We are educators. Through our words and actions, we teach others about our organization's mission. We take every opportunity with friends, relatives, visitors, donors and the community at large to communicate CCF's mission.

Safety

We work with animals, many of which are frightened or injured. We take every precaution to ensure the safety of our guests and staff. We take extreme measures to ensure our animals are safe, as well.

Somaliland Introduction

Located in the Horn of Africa, the Republic of Somaliland is a self-declared autonomous region of Somalia and is not internationally recognized, and functions apart from Somalia. However, although it is frequently associated with Somalia on travel advisories, it has its own government institutions and functions as a partly democratic country, having held peaceful presidential elections since 2003. Although poverty and drought are prevalent, the capital Hargeisa is considered remarkably safe for foreigners. (<https://www.cnn.com/travel/article/hargeisa-somaliland-somalia-africa/index.html>).

Somaliland has been identified as the main transit route for cheetah cubs taken from the wild in the Horn of Africa region for the illegal pet trade in the Middle East, where exotic animals are in high demand as pets. It is estimated that 300 cheetah cubs are trafficked each year out of the Somaliland shores, across the Gulf of Aden, into Yemen for the illegal pet trade. CCF has been operating in Somaliland since 2011 in connection with this trade, working with the government and institutions to improve enforcement of the law and raise awareness. Since then, more than 100 cheetah cubs have been confiscated and handed over to the CCF Somaliland team.

Until 2016, confiscated cheetahs had been transferred to wildlife rescue centers in neighboring countries. However, these transfers are no longer allowed. As a result, we must provide care to cheetahs and other animals confiscated by the authorities.

Preparing for Your Trip

Cultural Considerations

The national language is Somali, although English is spoken. Please be considerate and respectful of the culture and religion, and follow any rules that are in place.

You might interact with persons of widely different academic, professional, and cultural backgrounds. CCF considers discrimination of any form (ex. gender, cultural, religious, sexual, racial and ethnic) to be an extremely serious matter. Discrimination is considered to include (but is not necessarily limited to) making derogatory remarks, taking decisions based on considerations other than merit and harassment of any sort. Those proven to behave in a discriminatory manner face immediate dismissal from CCF.

Given that the culture in Somaliland is likely to be different than you're used to, volunteers should not expect things to always go smoothly or according to plan (TIA: This Is Africa!). Approaches and interactions with people both at CCF facilities and elsewhere will be different than you're used to. You may feel a bit like a fish out of water – flooded with new experiences, new people who are constantly around you, and new things to do and learn. Culture shock is common, and even if mild, can affect a person's happiness or normal state of mind. Frustration can build up if things don't work as planned and this can become overwhelming.

Be prepared for a period of adjustment, as you may feel out of sorts for the first few days. You may have traveled across several time zones and be suffering from jetlag. You may be sensitive to the food and water as they are different here. Bugs and insects are a common occurrence, as are wind, dust and dirt. Hyenas can be heard at night along with stray cats and dogs. If you have difficulty sleeping, you may want to bring earplugs.

The volunteer who will get the most out of his/her experience in Somaliland is the one that can relax and be flexible as well as appreciate the differences in culture and take the time to learn new ways and enjoy the unique opportunity of simply being here. You will have unforgettable memories of your stay if you remain open to the adventure and novelty of the place. This will be your home away from home, so enjoy it. If you are struggling in any way, please talk with management. It is best to get anything off of your chest, so that you can make the most of your time with us. We all understand the struggles of living in Somaliland, and are here to talk you through the transition if needed.

Weather and Climate

Somaliland's capital, Hargeisa, lies at 9°33'N 44°03'E. The cooler months are November through March with temperatures ranging between 11° and 26° C (51° and 76° F) the hotter are July through September (26°-35° C or 76° -95° F). Spring rains occur between April and June, and autumn rains between October and November. It can be very windy and dusty during the dry months. Humidity ranges widely and can reach 85% at times.

Traveling to Somaliland

Volunteers are responsible for making their own travel arrangements to and from Hargeisa. Please forward your travel details, including flight numbers and arrival times to: Jess (Somaliland Volunteer Coordinator: Jess@cheetah.org), Chris (Project Manager: slmanager@cheetah.org), and Karlene (Clinic Manager: clinic@cheetah.org). The Cheetah Safe House is only about five minutes from the airport and one of CCF's staff will make arrangements to pick you up when you land.

Traveling through Ethiopia

Most flights to Hargeisa go through Dubai or Addis Ababa. Dubai is a fairly easy airport to navigate. However, if you are traveling through Addis Ababa's Bole International Airport, here are a few useful tips:

Most flights to Hargeisa go through Dubai or Addis Ababa. Dubai is a fairly easy airport to navigate. However, if you are traveling through Addis Ababa's Bole International Airport, here are a few useful tips:

- If you have a long layover in Addis, we recommend staying in the international terminal, which has better and more varied services. Most shops and restaurants take only cash.

- Once at the terminal, you will have to clear security prior to entering the gates area.
- Be at the gate 1 hour prior to your connecting flight to Hargeisa to get to the gate.
- Make sure you have the correct gate number. The signs don't always display the right gate numbers.

If your travel back home is also through Addis Ababa, the same considerations apply in the reverse order.

We do not advise "hacker" fares, i.e., separate tickets, as your luggage might not be checked all the way through Hargeisa and you might have to go through immigration and customs in Addis, which involves paying for an Ethiopian visa (US\$50). If you purchase a "hacker" fare, make sure you have at least 3 hours to transfer.

Baggage

Check with your airline for luggage allowance information. Make sure you have all your essential needs as not everything can be easily purchased in Hargeisa. Essentials, as well as valuable items (ex. computing and photographic equipment, jewelry (not encouraged), music players, etc.) should be carried as hand luggage.

Carrying Items for CCF

On occasion, incoming volunteers will be kindly requested to carry supplies that are not easily accessible in Somaliland. Such items might include medications or supplies for the cheetahs. If you carry such items, please pack them in your suitcase and not a separate box to avoid any customs inspection. Generally, you won't be asked to declare anything upon arrival, but should any questions arise, please have the invitation letter you were sent by the Volunteer Coordinator printed and ready to present if needed. Please check in advance with your airline as to allowed weights and request additional weight allowance if needed. If you are able to bring some of those items with you, it would be greatly appreciated.

Visa

As of March 2019, interns/volunteers that come to Somaliland from certain countries do not need to apply for a visa. The Volunteer Coordinator will let you know which category you fall in, and assist you as needed.

If you do not fall under the visa exemption categories, you will need to obtain a visa prior to arrival. You will be asked to send a copy of your visa application along with a passport photo and a copy of the front page of your passport. The visa will be sent to you before your arrival once received by Somaliland management. If you fail to apply for a visa and attempt to enter the country, you risk refusal of entry and being returned to your home country at your own expense.

Whether or not you need to apply for a visa in advance, please **make sure your passport is valid for at least six months from the date of your arrival in Somaliland**. If it is not, you will need to renew it prior to your trip, allowing enough time for the renewal process.

Arriving in Somaliland

Note: Ladies, please cover your head on the airplane as soon as you land in Hargeisa!

What follows might seem a bit complicated, but it is the normal procedure. If you are not required to obtain a visa in advance, it will be issued at the airport, but please remember to print the completed Visa Application that was sent to you prior to your arrival.

If you can get your Visa when you arrive. The VISA is **\$US60 CASH**. Please let them know how long you will be staying and ask for a few days to a week longer, if you are a long-time volunteer. They

usually only give one month and then you will need to get an extension before your VISA runs out.

If you must obtain a visa prior to arrival, you must print the visa you received by email and show it to an immigration person. Explain that a driver is outside with your original visa. If you have been given the name of the person that will pick you up, give that name to the immigration official. He will go outside and ask the people waiting for arriving travelers. He will bring back the original and allow you entry into the country. If for any reason this doesn't work, ask the officer to call the Operations Manager (Xamse +252 063 6973133) or the Project Manager (Chris +61 427 778 645). They are usually very accommodating.

Once your passport has been stamped and your visa accepted, you will be directed to the Ministry of Finance window, where you will need to pay the entry fee of US\$60. This must be paid in cash in US Dollars. Change is given also in US Dollars. You will be given a receipt which you will have to present at the exit door immediately to your right. Once you leave that area, your luggage will be waiting. Do not accept help for your luggage if you don't need it. It is not free. The people who want to help ask for between \$US 5 and \$US 10 to help get your luggage to the car.

Money

Somaliland's currency is the Schillings (approx. 8,500 Sch. per 1 USD). However, US Dollars are the preferred currency. **The money you bring in has to be in good condition with no tears in the bills. Any money with tears is rejected.** Try to bring small denominations (US\$5, US\$10). It is very hard to get small bills in Somaliland, so bringing in 10's, 5's and 1's is very helpful. The bank will not give the smaller bills and many places don't have much change.

Volunteers will need money for: sodas, special food items as well as for personal purchases, such as gifts or souvenirs (there aren't any local products, but CCF has a small amount of merchandise for sale), or if you plan to travel elsewhere. ATM's are becoming more common, although they don't always work. **Credit cards are not widely accepted for purchases and cash is much preferred.**

Dress Code and Clothing

Please be respectful of local customs. Again, Somaliland is a Muslim country and women are expected to wear clothing that covers their full body. Elbow-length shirts are acceptable. The head/hair must be covered outside of the CCF compounds. Please bring a scarf with you to use from the airport to the CCF Compound.

If you are working with animals, it can be messy, so please wear clothing that you don't mind soiling or ruining and closed shoes. You may want to bring a pair of work gloves.

Please refer to the Suggested Packing List that you will receive separately from the Somaliland Volunteer Coordinator prior to arrival.

Safety

All your work will take place within the CCF facilities. However, for your safety, it is not allowed to walk alone outside of these facilities. If you need to walk, please make sure a CCF police guard (SPU) walks with you. Dress appropriately; women cover your hair with a scarf when not in the compound) both men and women are expected to dress respectfully of the Muslim culture (long pants).

Note: Any travel outside of CCF business is at your own expense.

Health

We are fortunate to have a Staff Health Officer on staff, who is a registered nurse. Please speak with her if you have any concerns. If you have serious allergies or illnesses that require constant medical attention, Somaliland may not be the place for you. In addition, we might not be able to provide

specialist diets (ex. diabetic, low fat or low sodium, etc.) First aid and other over-the-counter medical items are readily available at pharmacies in town; however, it is advisable to bring with you any medical items that you might need for the duration of your contract period.

Note: You are responsible for your own travel insurance while volunteering with CCF.

The protection provided by medical evacuation coverage is comprehensive. Ask your travel agent or health insurance provider for advice. Please email a copy of your chosen coverage to the Volunteer Coordinator (jess@cheetah.org) when you send your other documentation.

Emergencies:

For your own safety, inform us in advance if you suffer from any allergies or other health problems.

- Report any accident or injury to the Managers and Health Officer right away. In general, some first-aid supplies are available in both safe houses. An Incident Report needs to be written and given to the Project Manager to put in the file.
- Should you need emergency assistance, you will be transported to the nearest medical facility and your emergency contact entered on your Volunteer Liability Waiver form will be notified.
- Always have your prescription medication and documentation with you or easily accessible.

Chemoprophylaxis, Vaccinations and Immunizations

There is low risk for malaria in Hargeisa, although some travelers choose to take malaria prophylaxis. Keep in mind that apart from malaria, mosquitoes also carry other serious diseases such as dengue fever. Zika is not a risk in Somaliland according to the US Center for Disease Control. We recommend that you bring an effective Deet-based mosquito/insect repellent if you are visiting during the rainy season (typically July/August and October/November) and **You should talk to your doctor or your local health department for advice on prophylactics for malaria.**

In general, whether you're traveling or staying home, you should always make sure all your immunizations are up to date, including **tetanus, polio and diphtheria** (now given as an all-in-one vaccine), and **hepatitis A. MMR and Hep B** are usually given as childhood vaccines, but if you have not acquired them, it is suggested that you do so before arrival. Yellow Fever is not considered a risk in Somaliland, and therefore vaccination would only be suggested if you have spent time in a yellow-fever country such as Ethiopia prior to entering Somaliland.

You should have **pre-exposure rabies vaccinations**, as you will be working with animals. Rabies can be transmitted by infected animals. During the time we have been working in Somaliland we have not seen any cases of rabies; however, once infected, rabies is a fatal disease. Even if you have been immunized against rabies and come into contact with a rabid animal, you will still need to undergo further treatment quickly.

There is currently no treatment for rabies available in Hargeisa, to buy the time you need to seek treatment, you should ensure you are vaccinated prior to arrival.

Conclusion: All volunteers must be vaccinated for tetanus/COVID-19/rabies prior to arrival in Hargeisa, and have proof of their status.

HIV/AIDS

The human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) is a disease that suppresses the body's immune system for which there is no known cure. Although HIV prevalence in Somaliland is lower than in other parts of Africa, it is an important issue to consider for any traveler. HIV/AIDS can be transmitted via sexual intercourse, blood transfusion or injection, or sharing needles with HIV/AIDS infected drug users. You can take steps to avoid these risk situations by practicing safe sex, not sharing needles and wearing gloves when handling blood or applying first aid.

Health Precautions

Protective Clothing:

- As mentioned previously, women are required to wear clothes that cover the full body (long pants or long skirts). Elbow-length sleeves are OK. Head scarfs must be worn when outside the compound.
- Men can wear shorts only within the confines of the CCF facilities. Long pants must be worn when working with the cheetahs for BOTH men and women.
- During the rainy seasons, you are advised to wear long pants and shirts with long sleeves to protect yourself from mosquito bites.
- You should wear closed shoes during most of your activities during your stay with us.
- Use sunscreen and wear a hat when spending time outdoors, as the sun in this area is intense.

Dehydration:

- Prolonged exposure to a hot dry climate can cause severe dehydration. Drink plenty of water; **do not wait until you are thirsty.**
- Always have water with you.
- If you feel hot and dizzy, stop working and seek shade, drink water and douse yourself to cool down.
- Stay in the shade till your body temperature returns to normal.
- Use moisturizers on lips and skin.

Before you Leave Checklist:

Have you done the following before leaving home for Somaliland?

- E-mailed your final flight itinerary and arrival details to the Volunteer Coordinator?
- E-mailed your volunteer liability waiver and confidentiality agreement to the Volunteer Coordinator?
- Installed WhatsApp on your mobile device and ensured your phone is unlocked for a SIM card?
- Checked that your passport is valid for at least 6 months after entry into Somaliland?
- If required based on immigration rules, have you obtained a visa prior to entry and have a copy of it to present to immigration upon arrival **and/or** if you are able to obtain a visa upon arrival, have your pre-filled visa application printed and ready to present to immigration?
- Updated your vaccinations (start the rabies immunization process at least two months in advance)?
- Brought US Dollars (cash) in small bills including \$60 for your visa (if applicable)?
- Bought travel and medical insurance?
- Left details of how your family and friends can reach you?
- Packed a scarf and some extra clothing in your carry-on in case your luggage gets lost?
- Packed all your medication and a copy of your prescriptions in case?
- Read your Volunteer Guide and asked any questions in advance?
- Made a photocopy of your airline ticket, passport, insurance and vaccination documents in case they get lost (keep in a separate, different location)?

CCF Facilities and Practicalities

CCF currently operates three safe houses for confiscated cheetahs and other animals in Hargeisa: Safe House 1, Safe House 2, and Safe House 3 and CCF Staff house, and a training house. All are located one block from each other.

A new Cheetah Sanctuary is being built outside of Hargeisa in an area called Geed Deeble, with much larger and more natural enclosures, a full staff accommodation, an education center, and veterinary clinic. It is near completion and it is likely that the first cheetahs will be transferred to this new facility before mid-year 2023. As a volunteer, you may be assigned to either facility.

Housing

Hargeisa Facilities: There is a 6-bedroom CCF Staff House, and an additional 5 bedroom house (the Training House) where staff and volunteers stay. Food is prepared daily by a cook. Staff are encouraged to take care of themselves as much as possible such as cleaning dishes, doing their own laundry and housekeeping.

The Safe House 1 is where the veterinary clinic is located and the younger cubs are housed. There are two other Safe Houses where the older cats are kept.

Geed Deeble Facilities: There are 4 houses, and each house has 4 bedrooms with its own bathroom. Volunteers will likely share a room with one other individual. It will be the volunteers responsibility to keep their room and bathroom clean and tidy. There is a lounge/dining area with a kitchenette in each

house where volunteers can fix their own breakfasts in the morning (materials will be provided). Lunch and dinner will be provided for you at the Common Room/outdoor eating area.

The cubs and juvenile cheetah are housed in an area adjacent to the veterinary clinic. The other large enclosures are a short drive away from the main compound. There is a separate area that houses a meat preparation room with a walk-in freezer.

If You Smoke:

- All indoor spaces are considered smoke free environments and therefore no smoking is allowed. Please be very considerate to those around you, including the animals.
- During the dry season, sparks from cigarettes can be dangerous! Be very careful while smoking outdoors.
- Please dispose of all cigarette butts in the rubbish bins and not on the ground. If an ashtray is being used, please ensure that it is emptied and cleaned when you are finished smoking.
- DO NOT flush cigarettes down the toilets; they will clog the septic system.
- **SMOKING IN VEHICLES IS PROHIBITED**

Water, Laundry and Electricity

Water is not potable in Somaliland. Please drink only bottled water. During times of drought, water resources are very limited so please take care not to waste water. Please take short showers and avoid keeping water running unnecessarily while brushing your teeth.

Washing machines and detergent will be provided for volunteers to utilize. We ask that you wash your own laundry. Laundry is to be hung dry.

Electricity is supplied at 220 volts, 50Hz. The plug is a type G, UK 3-Prong plug. You should ensure that you obtain the correct adaptor before you fly. Items that run on 110 volts cannot be used without a suitable step up/down transformer or they will be damaged or destroyed. Also note that all outlets have an on/off switch. On is red, off is white. Please turn the switch off when not in use.



Avoid leaving lights or other electrical items switched on unnecessarily as this is not only expensive but bad for the environment. Solar panels are used at Geed Deeble, so this is especially important.

Food

CCF provides materials for volunteers to make their own breakfast.

Food in Somaliland is **very basic**: rice, spaghetti, vegetables and meat (goat, sheep, camel and chicken for the most part). Vegetarians and vegans can be catered for but please be aware that your diet might be limited and you may want to bring your own supplies. It is recommended that you bring in granola or protein bars to eat as needed especially if you are vegetarian or vegan. We are working on changing the diet a little to accommodate more “Western” tastes, but please be accommodating as we

try to cater to all kinds of cultural tastes.

Some people might be affected by the change in diet. If you feel nauseated, try drinking some Coca Cola (Coke), this often helps, however if nausea persists please speak to the health officer or management. We keep some anti-nausea medication on hand for these instances.

Alcohol policy

Somaliland is a Muslim country and you will not find alcoholic beverages sold or served anywhere. However, you can bring 1 litre of the beverage of your choice in your suitcase (buy this at the Addis Adaba airport in Ethiopia when in transit to Somaliland and put it in your **carry-on bag**). Please bear in mind:

- Unlimited consumption of alcohol will not be tolerated.
- Hangovers on workdays will not be tolerated.
- The use of any drug(s) except by prescription is strictly prohibited (including the use of Chat)
- No drinking and driving allowed.

Internet, Telephones & Mail

Internet is provided at the CCF Centre. An internet SIM card will be provided for you when you arrive in Somaliland, so that you have data and are able to communicate when there is no Wi-Fi available (CCF staff will assist you with this). You will need to **make sure your phone is unlocked** before using a Somaliland SIM card. SIM cards can be used for the next volunteer, so please leave these behind when you depart.

Wi-Fi is expensive. Please be mindful and use it moderately for web browsing, checking personal emails and instant messaging.

WhatsApp is a need, as it is our only way to communicate with the international cheetah team. It will also allow you to communicate with friends and family who have the app without charging international SMS or international calling prices, and can be used on Wi-Fi or by using small amounts of data. Please make sure you have this app on your phone. It is free to download and is recommended to download before you leave home. Please add the contacts at the beginning of this document onto your WhatsApp once downloaded. Regular postal/letter services in Somaliland are not recommended, and the only courier service available in Somaliland is DHL. Advise family to correspond electronically.

Laptops and other Electronic Devices

It is advised to bring your own laptop or notepad. It may also be useful for you to bring a USB memory stick, flash drive, external hard drive or similar storage device. CCF cannot assume any responsibility for non-CCF supplied equipment breaking or malfunctioning. You should ensure that your personal travel insurance covers any such eventualities. Please be aware that during the dry season Hargeisa is a dry, windy, dusty city, which can wreak havoc on electronic items. It's helpful to bring a sleeve or case where you can store your laptop to minimize exposure to dust, especially when traveling. Always lock up when you leave your room or lock your passport, camera, music player and other precious belongings in your suitcase; make sure you have a lock on your baggage. Do not leave anything in vehicles. The office safe can be used to store passports and cash.

Working Hours

Your time will be demanding with little free time available. The following schedule reflects a typical volunteer day at CCF, although it is subject to change depending on needs. You might have some down time, but in general you will stay busy with animal care and administrative tasks. You may be required to put in longer hours to complete tasks, especially when taking care of very small cubs that need to be fed frequently, or when we have a sick cheetah and sometimes work continues until late into the night.

Note: this schedule is subject to change once re-location to Geed Deeble is complete.

6:00-7:15 a.m. Breakfast or coffee (staff and volunteers make their own)

7:15 a.m. Keeper staff morning briefing meeting

7:35 a.m. - 12 pm. Cleaning enclosures, feeding, training and enrichment

12:00 p.m. Lunch (at the staff house – this is the main meal of the day. Lunch is prepared)

2:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. Work continues. Tasks, projects, record keeping, evening feeding of animals, enrichment, preparing for the next day

6:00 p.m. Dinner (food is prepared, volunteers must clean their own dishes)

As a volunteer with CCF Somaliland, you are expected to assist in all aspects of the project's operations to include care, cleaning and feeding of cheetahs, medical assistance, paperwork, and record keeping, computer entry, scanning, compound maintenance and general housekeeping. Volunteers will work under the supervision of CCF staff members (locally and based abroad). Duties will include but are not limited to: assisting with meat preparation, feeding of cheetahs, cleaning of enclosures, cleaning of common and clinical areas, maintenance of cheetah enclosures, fence maintenance, weed/brush-clearing, office and paperwork, and other functions as required by the on-site CCF staff.

Note: as a volunteer, you may be asked to do a wide range of tasks that suit your experience and interests.

Important Documents

We have set up a shared drive on Google Drive that contains:

- Protocols: Animal husbandry, enclosure entry, necropsy/samples, quarantine, etc.
- Cheetah IDs: With images and information about each individual cheetah (in progress)
- Cheetah-related articles/papers: (in progress)
- Volunteer guides and other relevant paperwork

Volunteers will be given access to the documents that are relevant to their work. Please read them thoroughly and assist in keeping them updated if necessary. If you have any suggestions to add or change anything on this drive, please contact the relevant Management personnel.

Note: All documents in that drive are the property of CCF and cannot be distributed without our permission.

Product of your Work

The nature of our work in Somaliland is very sensitive, as it involves tracking illegal activities and the cheetahs we house have been confiscated from the illegal trade. CCF Volunteers are privy to behind-the-scenes information and as such all CCF information should be treated with caution and thought. All information, data and images gathered during your stay with us becomes the intellectual property of CCF upon your departure, and may not be used in any way for non-CCF purposes without prior written consent. If you need or want to keep copies of your work product, please obtain consent in writing from CCF.

Note: You will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement before your time at CCF Somaliland

Photos and Video

CCF would like to have good photos, videos or stories shared by all volunteers. Photos taken at CCF Somaliland are the property of CCF. Please upload all photos to the google drive (you will be shown how during orientation). There is a designated social media person at CCF Somaliland. Since we have certain restrictions for posting pictures of cheetahs on social media, we ask that you send your pictures to our CCF team first to use in our social media and then any post can be shared directly from our CCF site.

Note: Photos or videos of the CCF Facilities from the outside are not allowed for safety reasons.

Keep in mind: Social media is one of the main causes for people thinking of cheetahs as pets.

We do not want to give the general public the wrong impression about our work. We are a scientific conservation organization and do not want to share a message of us being a “cheetah pet place.” We fight the illegal wildlife trade of cheetahs. Volunteers posting pictures of themselves with cheetahs (even when not touching cheetahs) conveys the wrong message. Failure to abide by the social media policy regarding photos and videos is subject to discipline, and may lead up to the termination of your volunteer experience.

Working with Animals

On your arrival, you will be added to a Somaliland Cheetah WhatsApp group. This is a group where every day happenings are reported, and consists of CCF’s Executive Director, Dr. Laurie Marker.

You will be caring for cheetahs that were confiscated from the illegal trade. As such, they have gone through very traumatic conditions. Although cheetahs are not considered dangerous, and although some of these cheetahs are considered habituated, they are not pets; they can be unpredictable.

Note: You will be required to sign a liability waiver before your time at CCF Somaliland

Safety Around The Cheetahs

1. All volunteers will be required to observe the protocol of how to feed and water the cheetahs before being allowed into enclosures.
2. **VISITORS ARE NOT ALLOWED** in the CCF Facilities **AT ANY TIME**, unless pre-approved by management.
3. Wear closed-toed shoes when working with the animals.
4. Spray shoes with disinfectant spray (F10) before entering all cheetah facilities.
5. **You are only allowed to enter an enclosure if approved by CCF appropriate staff.** Once approved, you may only enter an enclosure with a staff member and only if the cheetahs have been shifted.
6. **Make sure the gates are always securely closed behind you**, whether you are going in or out of an enclosure.
7. **Rough playing is not allowed**, even with small cubs. If a small cub tries to chase you or nip at you, try to distract it with a toy. If this does not work, gently push the cub away. For older cheetahs, if distracting the cheetah with a toy does not work, leave the enclosure.
8. Never sit on the ground when cheetahs are present (except very small cubs). If you need to get down, squat facing them, so you can get up quickly should a cheetah approach.
9. **Never let a cheetah jump on you!**

Cheetah Health

1. A cheetah’s diet is very specific. You will be asked to abide by all rules as to meat and diet prep.
2. The scat (feces) must be removed from the enclosure daily.
3. All cheetahs should always have clean water.
4. All the cheetahs’ eating and drinking utensils must be thoroughly washed with soap and dipped in a bleach solution after each use. This is particularly important in the case of small cubs. Small cubs’ utensils, (ex. bottles) should be sterilized after each use with boiling water.
5. When caring for both small cubs and older cheetahs, always feed the small cubs before feeding older cheetahs to prevent any pathogen transmission from adult carriers to cubs.

6. Check the whiteboard before feeding to see if any cheetah has a suspected infection; **these cheetahs must be fed last.**
7. **DO NOT FEED THE STRAY CATS AND DOGS.** They can carry diseases that are transmittable and can be deadly to cheetahs. Some of these diseases can be unintentionally carried on clothes, shoes and skin. If contact with them is inevitable, disinfect hands thoroughly and change clothes and shoes.
8. Handling or working with animals, including cheetahs, poses a risk of zoonotic diseases (diseases that can be transmitted from animals to people). The risk of cheetah to human disease transmission can be minimized by following certain basic rules:
 - Always wash hands properly after working with cheetahs
 - Ensure that shoes and clothes are sprayed down with disinfectant spray before and after entering cheetah enclosures and that work clothes are not used for any other activities.
 - In case of bites or scratches, immediately wash and disinfect the affected area thoroughly and inform Management.
9. Masks are to be worn around the cheetahs and others IF there is a COVID-19 outbreak, or you are presenting flu-like symptoms.

Record Keeping

1. Daily records are kept for all cheetahs. These contain information about feedings, digestive and overall activity, medications, etc. The information is put into ZIMS and a hard copy is filed in the office. Please ensure that the records are kept up to date.
2. Please report any irregularities (limping, bad digestion, hair loss, different behaviour, etc.) to the veterinarians, and the relevant WhatsApp group. Be as specific as possible and add photos or videos if these could help to illustrate a problem.
3. The main SLD WhatsApp group is also used for daily updates. Please read all of the information, even if it does not pertain to you, in order to keep up to date.
4. If you notice that any medical, cleaning or feeding supplies are running low, please notify the Clinic Manager immediately. Do not wait until things are out to re-order.

After Your Trip

We really want to hear about your experience. We expect for you to write a blog that we can publish on our web site, www.cheetah.org about your experience. Also, if you have any comments that you think can improve our work in Somaliland, please don't hesitate to let us know. You will be sent a volunteer experience evaluation form upon completion of your time in CCF Somaliland. Please fill it out to the best of your abilities and send it back to the Volunteer Coordinator (jess@cheetah.org). Your comments will not be taken harshly and will only be seen as a way of improvement. CCF Somaliland is a new operation with limited resources, and we are doing everything we can to make it better both for people who work there and for the animals. Please send your blog to clinic@cheetah.org or jess@cheetah.org and they will communicate it to the correct person.



We are looking forward to welcoming you to Hargeisa soon!

*****I certify that I have read and understood the above information*****

Volunteer Signature and Date