

HSHA VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK



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WELCOME!

Dear Volunteers:

Welcome to the Humane Society of Harrisburg Area's (HSHA) volunteer Program! This manual contains much of the basic information that you will need to know as an HSHA volunteer, so please take the time to read it carefully. We are funded almost completely by private donations, and many of the programs we offer would not be possible without the hard work and dedication of volunteers like you.

Our volunteer Program is both diverse and flexible. No matter how busy your schedule is or how varied your interests are, there is a place for you at HSHA. We want our volunteers to be actively involved in many areas of our organization. Providing direct care for the animals, contributing to the everyday functioning of our shelter and programs, and increasing

community awareness of the many facets of HSHA are examples of ways you can support our shelter and our resident animals.

Thank you for choosing to give your time and energy to the homeless animals at HSHA. We are excited to have you as a part of our team – and we hope that the time you spend here will be as rewarding for you as it is for the animals!

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns at any time, please contact our Coordinator of Volunteers.

Sincerely,
The HSHA Team

- **Welcome (cont'd)**
- **About HSHA**
- **The Volunteer Program**

ABOUT HSHA

The Humane Society of Harrisburg Area, Inc. (HSHA) is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization that has been providing care for homeless animals, as well as education for the community, since 1911. HSHA is not funded by the government or other animal welfare groups. Therefore, we must rely on private donations and fundraising activities to support its mission.

HSHA is an open-admission shelter that serves Cumberland, Dauphin, Perry and northern York Counties. We take in approximately 6,000 animals yearly. We do not euthanize any adoptable animals due to a lack of space or length of stay.

The mission of HSHA is to build a better community for pets and people through compassion, protection, education, and collaboration.

Our organization has a Board of Directors and employs approximately 40 people. Our shelter is located at 7790 Grayson Road, Harrisburg, PA 17111 and is open to the public during the following hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday 11 a.m. - 7 p.m.; and Saturday 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.

HSHA takes great pride in the various programs and services we offer to both the pets and people in the communities we serve. These include community educational programs, low-cost clinics for vaccinations and microchips, low-cost spay/neuter clinics, a community pet food bank, a domestic violence support program, Mature Pets for Mature People, an extensive foster care program, pet loss bereavement services, and animal cruelty and neglect investigations.

Our major fundraising events include the Penguin Plunge on January 1; 5K Run/Walk for the Animals in May; Fur Ball Gala in November; special adoption events in July and December; and numerous off-site events and public appearances throughout the year.

ABOUT THE VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

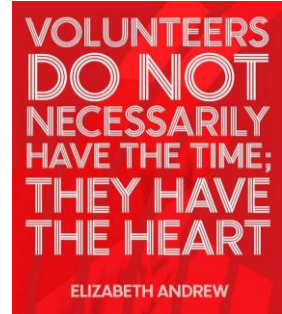
The first step in joining the HSHA Volunteer Program is to submit an application. All applicants are notified after their application is processed. Approved applicants must complete Volunteer Orientation. All volunteers are required to complete at least general orientation prior to

▪ **The Volunteer Program (cont'd)**
 ▪ **Volunteer Opportunities**

volunteering. Those who wish to work hands-on with animals also must complete dog and/or cat orientation, according to personal preference. After completing orientation and a one-on-one training session, an applicant becomes an Active HSHA Volunteer.

Volunteers who wish to assist with showing animals to potential adopters must complete SAFER training after being active for at least six (6) months and logging at least 48 hour of dog walking and/or cat socializing.

HSHA’s Volunteer Program is based on a team format. Each team has a specific task(s) (i.e. dog walkers, cat socializers, etc.) and a Team Leader. Team Leaders – who are either experienced volunteers or staff members - are responsible for keeping the team organized and informed and acting as a liaison between the team members and HSHA’s Coordinator of Volunteers.



Because HSHA is a non-profit organization with limited staff resources, and because substantial time and effort are required to train our volunteers, we want our volunteers to commit to at least two hours per week on an ongoing basis.

Our primary form of communication with volunteers is via e-mail. For those volunteers without e-mail, hard copies of the most critical messages and the newsletter are posted in the Volunteers’ Room at the shelter. In addition, HSHA volunteers are urged to explore our website, including the Current Volunteers page, at least weekly. The HSHA website is updated frequently and contains a wide range of timely information as well as excellent animal-related resources for people considering adoption and current pet owners alike. The Current Volunteers page contains back issues of our volunteers’ newsletters, which communicate important information, including current protocols and policies in place at HSHA. All Active Volunteers are expected to be familiar that information.

Additional volunteer opportunities are available. These include:

- ★ Offsite Events – These events are volunteer-driven – we may not be able to accept an invitation to participate in an offsite event if volunteers are not willing to help at it. Volunteers who wish to take a dog to an offsite event may do so after volunteering as a Dog Walker for at least 26 hours/three (3) months. Other volunteers are needed to help at the HSHA information and/or donation table at events.
- ★ SAFER Training – Those Cat Socializers and Dog Walkers who wish to assist with showing animals to potential adopters and have been a volunteer for at least 48 hours/six (6) months may complete SAFER training.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Please realize that each team involves an average of a 2-hour/week commitment, so be careful to not over-commit yourself.

ANIMAL CARE TEAMS

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dog Walker -
Walk and socialize dogs. ▪ Cat Socializer - | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Socialize & pet cats. ▪ Exotic Animal Socializer -
Socialize and groom rabbits, hamsters, etc. |
|---|--|

NON-ANIMAL CARE TEAMS

- **Laundry** - Done at the shelter
- **Dishes** - Clean/sanitize bowls & litter boxes.
- **Office/Clerical Assistance** - Occasional filing and light office tasks
- **Cut/Sew Team** - Cut larger comforters, blankets, etc. into crate-sized bedding for animals and stitch open seams. Pick up at shelter, cut/sew at home, then return to shelter.



- **Dog Buckets Team** - Wash/sanitize/refill water buckets once a month.
- **Kong Team** - Mix 'kong recipe' and stuff kongs for all dogs.
- **Groundskeeping/Shelter Basic Maintenance Team** - This team tends to be seasonal and project-based.
- **Events Team** - Attend events offsite and at the shelter to sell merchandise and/or baked goods, distribute HSHA information.
- **Petfinder Team (P-Team)** - Take pictures and/or write descriptions of HSHA animals and post them to our website to facilitate their adoptions.

▪ **Opportunities (cont'd)**
▪ **Policies & Procedures**

VOLUNTEER POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Basic Volunteer Procedures

- Each time you come to the shelter to volunteer, log your arrival and departure times in the Volunteers' Room. For off-site functions, please log your hours the next time you visit the shelter.
- You are expected to follow the additional procedures of the individual volunteer team(s) you belong to.

Dress Code

- You must wear either an HSHA shirt/jacket (available at Furget Me Not) or a volunteer sticker (available in the Volunteers' Room) when volunteering so that you are not mistaken as a member of the public.
- You should wear sturdy, closed-toe shoes when volunteering.

Professional Attitude

- You are a representative of HSHA and are expected to act accordingly at all times with customers, the public, staff, etc.
- Animals are always to be treated kindly, gently, and professionally.
- Volunteering is a serious commitment and must be treated as such.

Hours & Time Commitment

- You may volunteer during the following hours: Monday: 11am-7pm; Tuesday: 11am-7pm; Wednesday: 8am-Noon; Thursday: 11am-7pm; Friday: 11am-7pm; Saturday: 11am-4pm;

▪ **Policies & Procedures (cont'd)**

Sunday: 11am-3:30. You do not have to schedule your hours with us in advance, but many volunteers find that fulfilling their 2-hours/week commitment is easier by including 'HSHA' in their personal calendars each week.

- Volunteers are expected to volunteer at least two (2) hours each week on a year-round/ongoing basis because of the time invested in orienting and training and because the animals benefit from consistency.

Communication

- Communication between HSHA and volunteers will largely be through e-mail. If you do not have e-mail, be sure to check the current postings in the Volunteers' Room.
- The Coordinator of Volunteers acts as the liaison between HSHA and volunteers. Volunteers should direct all inquiries regarding any HSHA matter to the Coordinator of Volunteers.

Media, Public Relations, & Community Outreach

- Please do not discuss any HSHA issues with the media or approach the media regarding any HSHA issues.
- All campaigns, events, fundraisers, press releases, appeals, marketing materials, donation jars, Web sites, etc. are created, distributed and managed by HSHA administration. Do not distribute materials such as these on behalf of HSHA without prior authorization from the Coordinator of Volunteers.
- Volunteers are not permitted to contact animal rescue organizations about Humane Society animals.

Age Requirement

- Volunteers must be at least 18 years of age.
- Volunteers are not permitted to bring children or other guests with them when they volunteer.

Euthanasia

- As an animal welfare organization that takes in all animals, even those that are unhealthy or unadoptable, HSHA must sometimes euthanize animals that are hopelessly ill or aggressive with a poor prognosis for rehabilitation. It is vital that volunteers understand that euthanasia is part of the environment at our shelter. Euthanasia decisions are not taken lightly by HSHA staff, however they are a reality of what we do.
- Any questions on euthanasia or euthanasia decisions should be directed to the Coordinator of Volunteers.

Accidents & Injuries

- Any accident or injury suffered by a volunteer must be reported immediately to a supervisor and recorded on an incident report form.

Telephone Calls & Cell Phones

- HSHA asks that you do not use shelter telephones to receive or make personal calls while volunteering, unless in the case of an emergency.
- For the safety of the animals, please refrain from using a cell phone while walking dogs, handling animals, etc. If you have the need to use a cell phone, please do so when you are not directly handling animals.



Storage of Personal Items

- You make leave personal items in the Volunteers' Room or you may lock them in your vehicle while volunteering. Please remember that our shelter is a public building. We do not recommend that anything of value is left in the building unattended. HSHA is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

▪ Policies & Procedures (cont'd)

Drugs, Alcohol, & Weapons

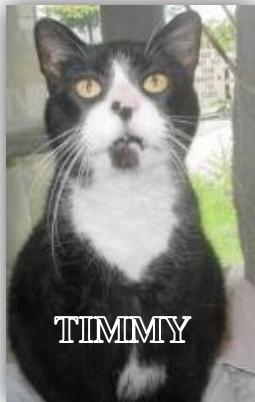
- Use or possession of drugs, alcohol, or weapons while volunteering is strictly forbidden.

Safety

- Volunteers must take the time to learn the correct and safe methods of performing their tasks, and all HSHA protocols must be followed. If you are unsure, ask an experienced volunteer or a member of staff.
- Please do not attempt work for which you are not authorized or qualified.
- Always use good lifting techniques or seek assistance when handling large and/or heavy items.
- Horseplay and fighting will not be tolerated.
- Report any unsafe conditions or equipment to a staff member immediately.

Direct Animal Care – Dogs

- Dogs should be walked in the cemetery area behind the shelter or in the grassy areas on HSHA property.
- When returning a dog, put the kennel lock back the way you found it. If you are uncertain about how to put locks back on the kennels, please get staff assistance.
- If a dog should escape from its run or is exhibiting aggressive behavior, alert a staff member immediately.
- A volunteer must be an active dog walker for at least 26 hours/3 months before being permitted to take a dog offsite.



- When taking a dog offsite, please sign the dog out in the book at the front desk and place a “special event” sign on their kennel.

Direct Animal Care – Cat

- When working with cats, please sanitize your hands between each cat.
- When returning a cat, please make sure the cage door is securely locked.
- Volunteers are not permitted to handle kittens.

Direct Animal Care - All

- “Get-acquainted” areas are to be cleaned/tidied after each use.
- HSHA animals are fed on a regular schedule each day. Volunteers are not permitted to feed any animals but you may refresh an animal's water.
- If you find a dirtied cage/kennel, you are encouraged to clean it up.
- Do not give treats to any shelter animals without prior permission. Permission should be obtained each day you wish to distribute treats.

▪ **Policies & Procedures (cont'd)**
▪ **Final Words**

- When grooming animals, please clean and disinfect tools (brushes, nail clippers, etc.) between each animal.
- Return animals to the same kennel from which they came. Do not move animals and/or kennel cards to a different kennel.
- Please wear latex gloves whenever handling animal feces and urine or animals with unknown backgrounds and while using disinfectants or bleach. Always wash hands thoroughly after completing any of these tasks.
- Do not take an animal from its kennel or cage if the identification card is missing. Report missing kennel cards to the front desk.
- If you are showing an animal to someone who wants to adopt it, put the animal back in its kennel and instruct the adopter to take the kennel card to the front desk.
- Do not handle animals that have a “hold” sign on their kennel or have not yet been temperament tested.
- Volunteers are permitted to give some toys to animals. If you are not leaving the toy with an animal, please clean and disinfect it before putting it away. *Caution: toys containing batteries, small parts, etc. are not to be left with an unattended animal.*
- Medical report forms and behavioral report forms: If you notice a medical or behavioral issue with an animal that is not already under treatment, please complete a report form and place it in the appropriate box outside the medical screening room.

Adoptions

- HSHA values our volunteers’ opinions. If you feel that a potential adopter may not be an appropriate adopter for any reason, please alert the front desk immediately.
- Volunteers who wish to assist with showing animals to potential adopters must be an active volunteer for at least 48 hours/six months and complete SAFER training.

Termination

- Failure to adhere to any of HSHA’s policies or procedures could result in termination.
- HSHA reserves the right to terminate a volunteer at any time.

FINAL WORDS

Please print this handbook and keep it with other HSHA volunteer papers so you have everything handy for future reference.

Take the last page (Acknowledgement Form) of the Dog Walker Manual OR the Cat Socializer Manual with you to your one-on-one session. Your trainer will turn that in to the Coordinator of Volunteers, and you then will be an Active Volunteer.

Thank you, again, for choosing to make the commitment to volunteering at HSHA! Your work on behalf of our animals and our organization is sure to be a rewarding experience!

