



Care they need. Love they deserve.

Volunteer Manual

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Welcome!

Thank you for volunteering your time and talents with the animals at Humane Animal Rescue shelters. Volunteers are an essential part of the day to day operation of the shelters, and one of the most important parts of the continued wellbeing of the animals in our care.

Volunteering at an animal shelter or rehabilitation center is not an easy task, but is extremely rewarding. Your love of animals led you to volunteer and it is our hope that this love will develop into a commitment to the welfare of the animals at Humane Animal Rescue and to working along with our staff to reach our goals. Volunteering with animals can lead to headaches, heartaches, and, of course, joy; giving back to those who cannot help themselves. Through all this, keep in mind it is through your skills and commitment that we can make a difference in the lives of these animals and in our community. In addition, volunteering is a privilege. We reserve the right to refuse any applicant that may not be a suitable fit.

We look forward to working with you and please let us know if we can help you during your journey as a volunteer.

Sincerely,

The Staff of Humane Animal Rescue

Purpose

Humane Animal Rescue continues the legacies of the Animal Rescue League & Western PA Humane Society, bringing greater efficiency in animal care processes, staff training, and cutting-edge practices to one cohesive organization. We strive to provide all aspects of care to abandoned, neglected, and injured animals; reunite lost pets with their caregivers or seek new families for them; educate the community on humane care and interactions with all animals with the goal of reducing pet overpopulation and negative relationships with native wildlife; reinforce a standard of living for animals and prevent cruelty; and provide assistance and medical care to injured, orphaned, or ill native Pennsylvania wildlife with a goal of returning them to their natural habitat. Our open door policy ensures that no animal is ever refused shelter.

Why we are proud to be an *OPEN DOOR SHELTER*

Did you know that very few animal shelters in Western Pennsylvania accept all domestic animals, regardless of age, health or temperament? Many other shelters choose to reject animals that don't fit a particular profile. We have an "open door" policy, so every animal finds shelter here, every day. For generations, the community has relied on us as a resource for adoption, foster homes, veterinary care, behavioral training and animal welfare advocacy. We consider the unique needs of all the animals in our care and work compassionately to prepare every safe, appropriately socialized pet for a wonderful new life. As you can imagine, opening our doors to so many animals requires the support of people like you. Thank you for donating your time to Humane Animal Rescue. Find out more about the Open Door philosophy at opendoorshelters.org.

Purpose

This Manual is designed to acquaint you with the shelter and provide you with general information about volunteer conditions and policies affecting your involvement as a volunteer.

The general policies contained in this Manual apply to all volunteers of Humane Animal Rescue. Following the policies described in this Manual is considered a condition of continuous volunteer work. The Manual is a summary of our policies, which are presented here only as a matter of information and should not be considered as a contract of volunteering.

You are responsible for reading, understanding, and complying with the provisions of this Manual. Our objective is to provide you with an environment that is constructive to both personal and professional growth.

WHAT WILL WE BE ASKING OF YOU AS A VOLUNTEER?

1. Volunteering is a serious commitment. Please have the availability to commit for at least 6 consecutive months.
2. Attend required orientation, training and mentoring sessions for your interests.
3. Commit to volunteering for at least 2 hours a week on the same day and time.
4. Support the Humane Animal Rescue's philosophies and policies inside and outside the shelter.
5. Be honest with yourself and us concerning your needs, wishes, and availability.
6. Be able to follow detailed instructions, read, write and work independently with limited to no supervision.
7. Be at least 18 years of age to handle domestic shelter animals.
8. Maintain an active email account through which we may communicate with you.

WHAT DO YOU GET IN RETURN?

1. LICKS, PURRS, CUDDLES, & TAIL WAGS!!
2. Opportunity to work in a highly recognized and well-respected animal shelter that protects the community as well as the animals.
3. Learn about animals through direct volunteer work and through a variety of educational opportunities.
4. Choose from and experience a variety of volunteer assignments.
5. Explore new career opportunities.
6. A chance to develop new skills or polish old ones.
7. Receive support and feedback from a professional staff.
8. A chance to meet others who share your interests.

VOLUNTEER POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Volunteer ID:

All volunteers will receive a volunteer badge for identification purposes. Please wear your badge anytime you are representing the shelter as a volunteer.

Staff Only Areas:

Volunteers are to be in the Public Adoption Areas only. Do not enter staff only areas. Do not ask staff to grant you access to staff only areas.

Professional Attitude:

Volunteers must:

- Take their commitment seriously.
- Agree to conduct themselves in a professional manner with the animals, co-volunteers, staff, and the public.
- Maintain a professional and **positive** attitude. Bad mouthing the organization or staff will not be tolerated. This includes comments on social media.
- Keep all client data confidential. No names of clients are to be discussed outside our organization.
- Be friendly, warm, and courteous to the public, and put them at ease.
- Be neat and accurate.
- Ask the staff for assistance with any questions to which you are not sure of the absolute correct answer.

Attendance:

- We ask that volunteers commit to a regularly scheduled 2 hour shift per week. Volunteers may sign up for “extra” shifts as long as they have good attendance in their scheduled shift.
- Be reliable. If you cannot keep your scheduled time, please notify your Team Lead, a member of your team, the Volunteer Manager, or post on the Facebook group.
- Each volunteer has made a commitment. You have agreed to a certain job, certain hours, and a certain amount of time.
- Volunteers are required to sign in upon arrival through VicTouch, each time you come to volunteer. Upon completion of service, sign out. Conscientious effort to this important detail will enable us to maintain accurate records. Volunteers who are consistently unwilling to sign in and out may be terminated from the program. In the case of an emergency, the Volunteer Manager will use Volgistics to see who is in the building.

Proper Dress:

- Volunteers are asked to convey a professional public image. Overall appearance should be clean and neat. Wearing of shorts is not recommended. Shoes must have covered toes. For those positions involving direct animal care, large hoop or dangling earrings represent a safety hazard and should not be worn.

Volunteer Personal Property:

- The Humane Animal Rescue is not responsible for loss, theft, or damage of personal items. Volunteers are advised not to bring excessive amounts of cash or valuables with them. Lockers are available for volunteer use. Volunteers must supply their own lock, and remove it after each shift.

Media Procedures:

- In order to maintain accuracy in information dissemination and branding, it is essential that all media requests are first approved by the Public Relations department. All requests should first be brought to the attention of the Volunteer Manager who will forward it on to the next level.
- Media is anything that will be printed, broadcast, or televised about the Humane Animal Rescue. We welcome any contacts or story ideas you may have.

Suggestions:

- Make suggestions! We welcome your ideas as a means of improving our operations. Suggestions can be made to the Volunteer Manager.

Resignation:

- Please notify the Volunteer Manager. You can do this in person, by email or by phone. We may ask for you to fill out an exit survey. This provides valuable feedback to improve our program.

Discipline:

- The Humane Animal Rescue's Volunteer Program encourages growth and improvement rather than focusing on punishment and negative feedback. Volunteers who commit minor violations of policy and procedure will be verbally counseled, in an effort to achieve acceptable compliance. Continued violations could result in additional counseling or dismissal. Serious violations (animal abuse; abusive, threatening, harassing behavior to staff or customers; disclosure of confidential information, etc.) could result in the immediate termination of service.

GENERAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Standards of Conduct:

The work rules and standards of conduct for Humane Animal Rescue are important, and the organization regards them seriously. All employees and volunteers are urged to become familiar with these rules and standards. In addition, employees and volunteers are expected to follow the rules and standards faithfully in doing their own jobs and conducting shelter business. Please note that any employee or volunteer who deviates from these rules and standards will be subject to corrective action, up to and including immediate termination.

While not intended to list all the forms of behavior that are considered unacceptable in the workplace, the following are examples of rule infractions or misconduct that may result in disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination:

- Any inhumane treatment or harm caused to HAR animals or animals served through our clinic
- Theft or inappropriate removal or possession of property
- Working under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- Possession, manufacture, distribution, sale, transfer, dispensation or use of alcohol or illegal drugs in the workplace
- Fighting or threatening violence in the workplace
- Boisterous or disruptive activity in the workplace
- Negligence or improper conduct leading to damage of organization-owned or customer-owned property
- Disrespectful conduct
- Violation of safety or health rules
- Smoking in the workplace
- Sexual or other unlawful or unwelcome harassment
- Unauthorized use of telephones, or other Company-owned equipment
- Using Company equipment for purposes other than business (e.g., playing games on computers or personal Internet usage)
- Unauthorized disclosure of confidential information
- Violation of personnel policies
- Unsatisfactory conduct

Volunteer/Employee Conflict Resolution:

POLICY

Problems, misunderstandings and frustrations may arise in the workplace. It is HAR's intent to be responsive to our employees and volunteers regarding their concerns. Therefore, an employee or volunteer who is confronted with a problem may use the procedure described below to resolve or clarify his or her concerns.

PROCEDURE

Informal Resolution

The HAR will make a good faith effort to achieve an informal resolution of a problem brought to its attention through direct consultation with all parties involved. Many complaints and conflicts can be resolved through open discussion between the parties involved and employees and volunteers are encouraged to engage in direct consultation with one another in an effort to achieve conciliation.

Informal resolution is a voluntary process of dispute settlement in which a neutral third party helps the involved individuals reach a voluntary resolution through negotiation, persuasion and problem solving. Mediation is conducted by the Supervisor based on comfort level with the mediator by those involved. Volunteers and staff members who agree to participate in voluntary mediation do not give up the right to file a formal grievance at a later time if informal attempts to resolve a problem have not been successful.

The mediation process is best utilized for resolving interpersonal conflicts and disagreements and is not intended to be used for resolution of alleged violations of agency policies, employee misconduct and failure to meet performance standards. While a staff member or volunteer may desire to resolve a problem informally, the HAR retains the right to conduct a formal investigation and take appropriate corrective action as it determines necessary.

If informal attempts to resolve a complaint or conflict are not successful or are not appropriate given the nature of the problem, a staff/volunteer member may commence a formal complaint through the grievance procedure outlined below.

Formal Grievance Procedure

Step One.

Employees or volunteers should initially discuss their concerns with their immediate supervisor. If the complaint involves the employee's or volunteer's supervisor, the employee or volunteer should schedule an appointment with that supervisor to discuss the problem that gave rise to the complaint within five (5) working days of the date the incident occurred.

The immediate supervisor should respond in writing to the complaint within five (5) days of the meeting held with the complainant employee or volunteer.

Step Two.

If the discussion with the immediate supervisor does not resolve the problem to the mutual satisfaction of the employee or volunteer and the supervisor or if the supervisor does not respond to the complaint, the employee or volunteer may submit a written complaint to the employee's director and a copy should be forwarded to Human Resources. The submission of the written complaint is due within five (5) working days of the response from the supervisor and must include:

- The problem and the date when the incident occurred.
- Suggestions on ways to resolve the problem
- **A copy of the immediate supervisor's written response or a summary of his or her verbal response** and the date when the employee or volunteer met with the immediate supervisor. The complaint should state if the supervisor provided no response.

Employees/Volunteers may request assistance with writing their complaints from Human Resources.

Upon receipt of the formal complaint, the director must schedule a meeting with the employee or volunteer within five (5) working days to discuss the complaint. Within approximately five (5) working days after the discussion, the director should issue a decision both in writing and orally to the employee or volunteer filing the complaint.

Step Three.

If the employee or volunteer is dissatisfied with the decision of the director, the employee or volunteer may, within five (5) working days, appeal this decision in writing to the Human Resources Department to investigate the complaint.

Human Resources may call a meeting with the parties directly involved to facilitate a resolution or may refer complaints to a review committee if Human Resources is of the opinion that the complaint raises serious questions of fact or interpretation of policy. Human Resources may gather further information from involved parties. All involved individuals, other than Human Resources, will be charged with the responsibility of not discussing the situation with any other employee/volunteer or with the complainant employee/volunteer.

Step Four: Additional guidance.

If an employee or volunteer fails to appeal from one level to the next level of this procedure within the time limits listed above, the problem shall be considered settled on the basis of the last decision and the problem submitted by the employee/volunteer shall not be subject to further consideration.

Because problems are best resolved on an individual basis, the conflict resolution procedure may only be initiated by individual employees/volunteers and not by groups of employees/volunteers.

Humane Animal Rescue reserves the right to impose appropriate disciplinary action for any conduct it considers to be disruptive or inappropriate. The circumstances of each situation may differ and the level of disciplinary action may also vary, depending upon factors such as the nature of the **offense**,

whether it is repeated, the employee/volunteer's work record and the impact of the conduct on the organization.

No one will be retaliated against for filing a complaint under this procedure. All complaints must be made in good faith.

Drug-Free Workplace Policy

Humane Animal Rescue recognizes alcohol and drug abuse as potential health, safety and security problems. It is expected that all volunteers will assist in maintaining a work environment free from the effects of alcohol, drugs or other intoxicating substances. Compliance with this substance abuse policy is made a condition of volunteerism.

Volunteers are prohibited from the following when reporting to the HAR shelters, or for any off-site events:

- The unlawful use, possession, transportation, manufacture, sale, dispensation or other distribution of an illegal or controlled substance or drug paraphernalia;
- The unauthorized use, possession, transportation, manufacture, sale, dispensation or other distribution of alcohol; and
- Being under the influence of alcohol or having a detectable amount of an illegal or controlled substance in the blood or urine ("controlled substance" means a drug or other substance as defined in applicable federal laws on drug abuse prevention).

If a volunteer reports to HAR in a condition giving reasonable cause to suspect the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs, the volunteer will be asked to leave the premises immediately. Further incidents will result in termination of volunteer services.

Any volunteer violating these prohibitions will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Violence-Free Workplace

It is Humane Animal Rescue's policy to provide a workplace that is safe and free from all threatening and intimidating conduct. Therefore, the shelters will not tolerate violence or threats of violence of any form in the workplace, at work-related functions, or outside of work if it affects the workplace. This policy applies to Humane Animal Rescue employees, volunteers, clients, customers, guests, vendors, and persons doing business with Humane Animal Rescue.

It will be a violation of this policy for any individual to engage in any conduct, verbal or physical, which intimidates, endangers, or creates the perception of intent to harm persons or property.

Examples include but are not limited to:

- Physical assaults or threats of physical assault, whether made in person or by other means (i.e., in writing, by phone, fax, social media, or e-mail).
- Verbal conduct that is intimidating and has the purpose or effect of threatening the health or safety of a co-worker.
- Possession of firearms or any other lethal weapon on Company property, in a vehicle being used on Company business, in any Company owned or leased parking facility, or at a work-related function.
- Any other conduct or acts which management believes represents an imminent or potential danger to work place safety/security.

Anyone with questions or complaints about workplace behaviors which fall under this policy may discuss them with a supervisor. Humane Animal Rescue will promptly and thoroughly investigate any reported occurrences or threats of violence. Violations of this policy will result in disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination of employees/volunteers. Where such actions involve non-employees/volunteers, Humane Animal Rescue will take action appropriate for the circumstances. Where appropriate and/or necessary, Humane Animal Rescue will also take whatever legal actions are available and necessary to stop the conduct and protect the organizations employees, volunteers and property.

Workplace Harassment Policy

Humane Animal Rescue's policy is to provide a work environment that is free from harassment. Therefore Humane Animal Rescue will not tolerate harassment based on age, race, gender, gender-identity, color, religion, national origin, disability, marital status, covered veteran status, sexual orientation, status with respect to public assistance, and other characteristics protected under state, federal, or local law. Such conduct is prohibited in any form at the workplace, at work-related functions, or outside of work if it affects the workplace. This policy applies to all Humane Animal Rescue employees, volunteers, clients, customers, guests, vendors, and persons doing business with the organization.

Sexual harassment is one type of prohibited harassment which warrants special mention.

Sexual harassment has been defined according to the Humane Animal Rescue's guidelines as:

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

Submission to such conduct is made a term or condition, either explicitly or implicitly, of an individual's employment;

Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a factor in decisions affecting that individual's employment; or

Such conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with an individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

Examples of conduct prohibited by this policy include, but are not limited to:

Unwelcome sexual flirtation, advances, or propositions;

Verbal comments related to an individual's age, race, gender, gender-identity, color, religion, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, or weight

Explicit or degrading verbal comments about another individual or his/her appearance;

The display of sexually suggestive pictures or objects in any workplace location including transmission or display via computer or smart phone;

Any sexually offensive or abusive physical conduct;

The taking of or the refusal to take any personnel action based on an employee's submission to or rejection of sexual overtures; and

Displaying cartoons or telling jokes which relate to an individual's age, race, gender, gender-identity, color, religion, national origin, disability, or sexual orientation.

Workplace Harassment Policy continued

If you believe that you are being subjected to workplace harassment, you should:

1. Tell the harasser that his or her actions are not welcome and they must stop, if you feel comfortable enough to do so.
2. Report the incident immediately to your supervisor/manager or Human Resources.
3. Report any additional incidents or retaliation that may occur to one of the above resources.

Any reported incident will be investigated immediately and thoroughly. Complaints and actions taken to resolve complaints will be handled as confidentially as possible, given Humane Animal Rescue's obligation to investigate and act upon reports of such harassment. Appropriate actions will be taken by Humane Animal Rescue to stop and remedy any and all such conduct, including interim measures during a period of investigation.

Retaliation of any kind or discriminating against an employee or volunteer who reports a suspected incident of harassment or who cooperates in an investigation is prohibited. An employee or volunteer who violates this policy or retaliates against an employee or volunteer in any way will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including immediate termination.

Confidentiality

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to define the extent to which certain information, including but not limited to donor and client information, euthanasia policies, internal operations of HAR, and adoption information will be kept private and confidential by Humane Animal Rescue, its volunteers, staff and contractors, to fulfill the mission and goals of the organization.

Confidentiality of Humane Animal Rescue's business

HAR expects and requires all volunteers, staff and contractors to keep confidential any sensitive or proprietary business-related information belonging to the HAR which has not been released to the **public domain** or generally made known to all stakeholders. The confidentiality policy includes the sharing of private information between staff and volunteers.

Such information includes but shall not be limited to:

1. Donor information such as donation amount, addresses, telephone numbers or other personal information
2. Policies and procedures regarding the care of the animals
3. Decisions made regarding the euthanasia process
4. Disclosure of information which could **defame, damage or reasonably damage** the reputation of the HAR or its relationship with customers
5. Confidential information of customers, volunteers or employees including but not limited to addresses, phone numbers, donations or personal information

Signed Agreement to Comply

Humane Animal Rescue volunteers and staff shall be required to sign a Confidentiality Agreement. All signed agreements will be kept in employee files or volunteer permanent records.

State of Social Media

Humane Animal Rescue recognizes the benefits of social media and appreciates on line expression and encourages an on line presence using sound judgement.

This policy will set forth guidelines that colleagues should follow for all online communications in reference to HAR and applies to any person associated with HAR including but not limited to: employees, volunteers, contract employees, interns, temporary employees, etc.

HAR employees and volunteers are free to publish or comment via social media in accordance with this policy. Employees and volunteers are subject to this policy to the extent they identify themselves as being associated with Humane Animal Rescue.

Guidelines and Usage:

Employees and volunteers are encouraged to share available animals on their social media to promote adoptions and help foster the mission and vision of HAR. Remember you are associated and can be construed as representing the overall organization in public forums of this nature. Discretion should be used to prevent any mis-conceptions.

Employees and volunteers are encouraged to use the following guidelines when using social media:

- Apply a “good judgment” test for every activity related to online communication. Think of the following:
 - Could your posting negatively affect HAR's partnerships within the community, adopters and potential donors?
 - Could what you are posting possibly limit adoptions and/or donations by community members?
 - Could your posting potentially harm the relationship between the shelter and its surrounding community?
- All post should display professionalism, be respectful and truthful.

To insure clarity of message and to avoid any internal or external confusion in relation to the HAR's official position and message HAR must not be identified online. For example, logon IDs and usernames may not include the HAR's name or logo without prior approval from the Executive Director.

Confidentiality and Disparagement:

It is acceptable to talk about your work and have a dialog with the community, but it is not acceptable to publish confidential information. We require that information or opinions related to the internal operations of the HAR is treated as confidential and that no disparaging or misinformed statements are made online that would damage or reasonably damage HAR's brand and reputation.

Internal operations and support services are to be treated as confidential and not to be disclosed. For example: donors, customers, partners, or suppliers Identifying customers, partners, or suppliers by name.

Relevant Media Outlets:

It is unacceptable, without prior approval to post any comments or pictures of unavailable animals, wildlife, or any animals subject to confiscation, judicial order, and other restricted or confidential situations.

Pictures and comments in relation to the above should not be posted on to online forums including but are not limited to: personal blogs, LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, Myspace, personal websites, Instagram, and other electronic medium.

Usage:

Employees and volunteers are encouraged to share available animals on their social media to promote adoptions and help foster the mission and vision of the Organization. Remember you are associated and can be construed as representing the overall organization in public forums of this nature. Discretion should be used to prevent any misconceptions.

Communication Protocol:

In the event you are made aware of misrepresentations, as appropriate, or receive any questions about the organization please advise the CEO or other appropriate parties.

Updates on official organization accounts are only to be made by designated users within the organization.

Work Hour Usage:

Social media posts are time-stamped and should not be performed during working hours unless it is part of your job scope or documented permission obtained by your manager on a case-by-case basis.

All policy violations will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Responsibility:

Any material presented online in reference to the HAR by any colleague is the responsibility of the poster. We encourage all communication to be made in an identifying manner, to establish credibility above all else. Along with clear identification, colleagues must state that any opinion is yours individually and not that of HAR .

Emergency Action Plan

Purpose

To proactively protect the health and safety of all HAR employees, volunteers, customers and visitors.

Practice

We recognize that our people drive our business. As our most critical resource, employees and volunteers are safeguarded through training, provision of appropriate work surroundings, and procedures that foster protection of health and safety. No duty, no matter what its perceived result, is more important than employee health and safety.

General Guidelines in an Emergency

Stay calm and think through your actions.

Know important emergency numbers:

- Fire/Police/Ambulance (9) 9-1-1
- Human Resource: 412-345-0347

- Operator 9-0
- or page for help

Be aware of your surroundings.

- Know where stairwells, exits and fire extinguishers are located.
- In the event of any emergency, leave the building via the closest exit.
- Should an event occur that would require evacuation, employees are to meet in the adjoining 7-Eleven (North side), far end of shelter parking lot (East end) for a head count and further instructions. Do not hesitate to call/alert others if you believe that an emergency is occurring.

Fire

Evacuation:

- Employees, volunteers and visitors are notified of a fire by either the fire alarm system or paged announcement.
- Upon hearing the alarm, immediately evacuate the building using the closest exit.
- Do not delay evacuation to get your coat, personal belongings, finish a phone call, or wait for friends.
- Do not delay evacuation to remove animals.
- Any employee, volunteer or customer having mobility, visual, hearing, or other conditions that may hinder them from becoming aware of an emergency or evacuation may require special assistance at time of emergency.
- If any employee, volunteer or known guest/visitor is missing, immediately report the missing person's name to a Director who will in turn report it to the proper company and civil authorities.
- All employees and volunteers should stay together in the location deemed appropriate, so periodic updates on the situation can be communicated.
- Do not go home, wait in your car, return to the building, or go to another building unless directed by a Director to do so.
- Safety Committee members will be responsible for conducting a last sweep of their areas to make sure everyone has evacuated their area of the building.

Medical Emergency

- Upon discovering a medical emergency, call (9) 9-1-1.
- Call the receptionist or page an emergency announcement.
- Stay with the ill/injured person. Be careful not to come into contact with any bodily fluids unless properly trained and protected.
- Send one person to alert Human Resources so they can notify family members of the ill/injured person.
- Employees in the immediate vicinity of the emergency, but not involved in the emergency effort, should leave the area.

Workplace Violence

- Any employee or volunteer who feels that (s)he has been threatened should immediately report their concern to a manager and Human Resources.
- If you observe anyone, including customers, exhibiting threatening behavior or making threatening statements, warn others in the area and immediately notify Human Resources. Stay away from the person exhibiting the threatening behavior.
- Depending upon the level of concern, (9) 9-1-1 may be called immediately.
- Never attempt to confront any person exhibiting threatening behavior.

Safety

Humane Animal Rescue wants to ensure that our employees and volunteers remain safe and injury-free when accidents are preventable. We expect our employees and volunteers to refrain from horseplay, careless behavior and negligent actions. It is HAR's policy to maintain a safe and secure working environment for all employees, volunteers, visitors and clients.

While working, employees and volunteers must observe safety precautions for their safety and the safety of others. All work and public areas must be kept clean and free from clutter and debris. Any hazards or potentially dangerous conditions must be corrected immediately or reported to a supervisor.

If you are involved in an accident, you must comply with the following procedure:

- Report incident occurring at the HAR shelter to the Volunteer Manager immediately, or another department manager if Vol Manager is not available.
- If working at the WLC, report the accident to the WLC Volunteer Manager or other staff member
- Fill out an incident report regardless of the severity of the injury
- HAR is not responsible for volunteer injuries on-site or at off-site events.
- While volunteers are not covered under the agency's Workman's Compensation Insurance, it is recommended that in the case of an injury that involves broken-skin, medical care is obtained

Incident reports can be found in the Volunteer Center.

Please adhere to all rules and procedures learned throughout your training to reduce the chance of injury while working with the animals. Failure to do so may result in injury to you or other people and animals or dismissal from the volunteer program.

Smoke-Free Environment

Our goal is to have a smoke-free environment. Smoking is not permitted at any time in Humane Animal Rescue's work areas, including Company vehicles or customer or client areas.

Smoking is allowed outside of the building but smokers must be at least 5 feet away from doors and building entrances. Smokers should be considerate of coworkers, volunteers, customers, and members of the public. Help to maintain a clean entryway by depositing cigarettes in appropriate containers and staying far enough away from doors so that smoke does not blow into the building.

Volunteer Service Record

The volunteer service record is the method of reporting and documenting volunteer hours. This documentation of volunteer service hours is often used by nonprofits in board reports, to obtain funding, etc. This documentation must occur every time you participate in a volunteer activity. Different programs have different reporting procedures which will be explained in greater detail by your supervisor.

Western Ave and Hamilton Ave Locations:

1. All dog, cat and rabbit handlers, Humane Education and on-site non-animal handlers must sign in at the start of your shift and sign out at the end of your shift using the Volgistics VicTouch monitor located in or near the Volunteer Center.
2. If you are at an offsite event, volunteers are to log hours in VicNet.

Please ask the Volunteer Manager if you need help logging into VicNet

Volunteer Corrective Action and Dismissal Policy

Corrective Action

Corrective action may be taken if the volunteer's work is unsatisfactory. Corrective action is within the discretion of the Volunteer Manager and/or Chief Administrative Officer and may include:

1. Additional supervision
2. Reassignment Retraining with possible suspension
3. Referral to another volunteer position
4. Dismissal from the HAR program

Volunteer Dismissal

Volunteers who do not adhere to the policies and procedures of HAR or who fail to satisfactorily perform their volunteer assignment are subject to dismissal. Dismissal is within the discretion of the Volunteer Manager and/or CAO and CEO.

Grounds for dismissal may include, but are not limited to:

1. Any abuse or maltreatment of an animal while volunteering
2. Violation of program policies and procedures or PA state animal laws
3. Gross misconduct or insubordination
4. Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs while performing volunteer duties
5. Theft of property or misuse of program equipment or materials
6. Mistreatment or inappropriate conduct toward customers, other volunteers or agency personnel
7. Taking action with an animal without program approval for off-site visits, events, etc.

8. Failure to complete required initial or ongoing training
9. Failure to accept assignments over a period of twelve months
10. Breach of confidentiality, including defamatory language or postings related to HAR
11. Failure to satisfactorily perform assigned duties
12. Criminal activities

Shelter Intake Procedures

Incoming Animals

Animals come to us through many sources, such as the City of Pittsburgh Animal Control to our Hamilton Ave location, and from the public. As part of our Open Door Policy, we take in any animal that is brought to us and give them a chance. Incoming animals are classified as stray animals or owned surrendered animals.

Stray and Lost Animals

Stray animals come to us from animal control and from the public. A stray animal is held for a minimum three days to see if an owner can be found. If the animal is wearing tags or has a microchip they are held for ten days while the owner is contacted. During the time they are stray, animals are kept in the shelter's holding areas, and are off limits to volunteers and the public. Lost and found checks are done twice daily on every animal in these areas. Every effort is made to return lost animals to their owners. If the animal is not reclaimed during their stray period, they continue through the process.

Owned Surrendered Animals

These are animals that are given up by their owners for various reasons. The owner is asked to fill out some information about the animal's history, to help us in placing the animal. Owned surrenders are held for a minimum of 24 hours to adjust to the kennel environment, before they continue through the process.

What Happens Next?

Every animal, from cats and dogs to birds and alligators, is given a chance in our system to be placed in an appropriate home or rescue situation.

Cats

All cats that are able to be handled by the vet tech on incoming are vaccinated and treated for fleas and worms immediately. If they are scared or grumpy at that time, they are given a chance to adjust to the environment and the vet tech again tries to handle the cat. After their holding period they are tested for feline leukemia and AIDS and then spayed or neutered. They can then be placed on the floor for adoption. If it is an underage kitten or nursing mom and kittens, we will try to find a foster home if it is available.

Dogs

Dogs are vaccinated on intake if the vet tech is able to handle the dog. After their holding period they go through a behavior evaluation to make sure the dog seems safe for adoption. This evaluation is done by our staff and it puts the dog in a variety of situations to observe the dog's reaction. If the dog passes the evaluation, they are spayed or neutered and placed for adoption before going to their new home.

Other Animals

Rabbits, small mammals, birds or other exotics are kept for adoption unless a rescue can be found. Rabbits are spayed and neutered before adoption. Wildlife is sent to our Wildlife Center in Verona.

Adoption

The adoption department screens adopters and helps them find an appropriate animal for their home. We also work with breed rescues to place some of our special needs dogs. We do not have a time limit that an animal is up for adoption, if they remain healthy and friendly we keep them until a home is found.

What's included in the price of the adoption?

All animals are spayed or neutered, microchipped, treated for fleas and worms, and have their vaccines up to date. Dogs have been tested for heartworms and cats have been tested for feline leukemia and FIV. Animals are also sent home with a bag of the food we feed at the shelter.

What's the process for adopting an animal?

Potential adopters will fill out a questionnaire and application that must be approved before they can interact with an animal that fits their criteria. The customer meets the animal and gets to know the animal through interaction and input from staff and volunteers. Once the adopter has found an animal they sign an adoption contract and pay the adoption fee.



Euthanasia

Euthanasia is an extremely difficult aspect of working in an animal shelter. Every effort is made to protect and humanely preserve the lives of animals in our care. Euthanasia is seen as a last resort and will be carried out in a caring, responsible, and humane manner by staff members that are trained in euthanasia technique. Decisions to euthanize will be based on health and welfare of animals, staff, volunteers and community. Animals that are medically or behaviorally unfit to adopt out to the public will be humanely euthanized.

Euthanasia policies undoubtedly raise many emotions for all involved. We are committed to helping people deal with the difficulties of euthanasia in the best way possible.

Please take the time to read the letter we have attached in order to better help you understand the euthanasia process and possible questions or comments that may arise during your time with us.

Dear Colleague:

In spite of the fact that it is an intensely emotional and difficult subject, euthanasia is something that we must consider before making the commitment to volunteer in any animal shelter.

Unfortunately, due to the nature of sheltering unwanted animals, it is sometimes necessary to euthanize some of the animals that we receive. Depending on the individual circumstances of each case, you may never even see the animal, or you may have interacted or even become attached to an animal that is euthanized.

Please understand that the decision to euthanize (for every single animal) is carefully considered and *all* options are weighed. It is extremely difficult to make the decision to euthanize, hold the animal and then actually perform euthanasia. It is the policy of Humane Animal Rescue to perform euthanasia in the most humane manner possible, using euthanasia by injection as our only method.

Decisions regarding euthanasia are unpopular and among the least favorite staff activity, but they must be made on a daily basis. Please do not confront the staff involved with questions like:

- “Why is Fido being put to sleep?”
- “How can you just kill them?”
- “You are so cold hearted.”
- “Are you going to kill this one?”
- “I hope you’ll consider Fido’s (age, breed type, temperament, etc.) before you decide whether or not to put him to sleep.”

These types of negative comments only make a necessary part of their job much more difficult. Staff members work at Humane Animal Rescue because they genuinely like and want to help animals. Performing euthanasia and making the decisions regarding which animals are euthanized is immensely hard on the people who are tasked with this responsibility as part of their daily job duties.

As a volunteer, be prepared to answer questions concerning euthanasia from your friends and from people you meet who know that you volunteer at an animal shelter. It is important that you both understand and are able to discuss the subject in a calm and objective way.

If you have any questions or concerns about the euthanasia process in general or about a specific decision, please bring your concerns to the Volunteer Manager for discussion. We understand that your questions and feelings need a forum for discussion. Because compassion fatigue associated with dealing with these issues is very common, HAR can offer assistance in working through the stages of grief associated with our care of animals. We are all here to work together for the benefit of the animals. Trust is one of the most basic needs in any relationship. It is only with your help and understanding that we can work together to achieve our goals.

Sincerely,

Humane Animal Rescue Staff

Volunteer Training Requirements

After the general orientation you will attend a training for area(s) specific to your interests.

Cat volunteers will attend a Shelter Cat Handlers training, and then be mentored by a staff member or senior volunteer before they are able to volunteer independently.

Dog volunteers will attend a Shelter Dog Handlers training, and then be mentored by a staff member or senior volunteer for 3 shifts before they are able to volunteer independently.

Bunny volunteers will attend a Shelter Bunny Handlers training and then be mentored by a staff or senior volunteer before they are able to volunteer independently.

To ensure the safest and most rewarding volunteer experience, we offer comprehensive trainings. Training for the other volunteer opportunities will be on an as needed basis. Monthly, quarterly and specialty training sessions will be posted on the volunteer announcement boards and through our email groups. Please contact the Volunteer Manager with your interest in other opportunities.

Our training programs address the mental needs of animals in the very stressful shelter environment. These programs provide the animals with mental stimulation in their cages, and training to become adjusted and well behaved in the shelter. Through the comprehensive volunteer training program we strive to provide structure to help under socialized, stressed and undertrained animals improve their behavior to quickly find permanent homes.

Volunteers who wish to work with STAR/BAT dogs and/or Circle/STAR cats will need to go through specialty trainings with our Behavior Department, be assessed and then certified in order to handle these animals.

Frequently Asked Questions

What are “open door” and “no-kill” shelters?

In order to operate a “no-kill” facility, an organization must limit the number of animals it may take in at any given time. *This means many animals are turned away when the shelter is at maximum capacity to maintain a “no-kill” status.* The animals turned away are usually taken somewhere else to either be adopted or euthanized. While a “no-kill” shelter can help some of the animals in the community, they do not meet the needs of the majority of stray and at-risk animals who are served by an “open door” shelter like the Humane Animal Rescue.

Can I volunteer to fulfill required community service hours for school or other programs?

Yes, though we will only take a limited number of volunteers who are interested in volunteering for just community service hours. Community Service Volunteers will not be permitted to handle the shelter animals due to lack of training and liability issues. CS volunteers will log in and log out on the volgistics VicTouch system. Please see the Volunteer Manager for more information.

Why do you have so many Pit Bull Terrier mixes?

In our community and the surrounding area Pit Bulls are a very popular breed. Many people that own them do not have them spayed and neutered, which leads to many unwanted litters of puppies and many young adults. Pit Bulls can be wonderful, loving, and well behaved family pets, but like all dogs they need socialization and training as puppies and young dogs. Many people who get them as puppies do not put in the time and effort to train and socialize them. This leads to them being surrendered to the shelter when they are no longer cute and manageable pups but undertrained and very active young dogs around 10 months to 2 years old.

Volunteer Positions

Dog Coach: Level 1

- Take dogs on walks around the shelter, socialize and spend quality time with the dogs
- Use basic dog handling skills and behavior modification techniques

Cat Handler

- Socialize and groom the cats, give them a break from the cage in the cat cuddle rooms.

STAR Dog Trainer

- Work with dogs that need some training to help them get adopted; learn about behavior modification and dog training. Advanced training required for this position.

Bunny/Small Animal Handler

- Socialize the bunnies and other small furries.

Foster Parent

- We use foster care for underage animals, sick animals, animals needing socialization, and also when our kennels are full. We have a huge influx of cats and kittens in the warmer months and can have up to 300+ cats and kittens in foster care.

Adoptions Assistant – Advanced training is required for this position.

- Help the adoption counselors match people with pets during our busy times.
- Have customers fill out pre-adopt forms.
- Show available animals to customers in meet and greet rooms

Events Assistant

- Attend with planning and execution of events
- Represent the HAR at events
- Provide general shelter information to attendees

Non Animal Handler

- Shelter Greeter
- Laundry and shelter maintenance/cleaning
- Donation management

Services offered by the ARL

- Sheltering of and medical care for stray and surrendered animals
- Adoption of animals
- Lost and Found animal registry
- Low cost veterinary clinic
- Low cost Vaccines
- Low cost spay and neuter surgeries
- Humane education programs
- Pet supply gift shop
- Private and group obedience training classes for owned dogs and puppies
- Wildlife Center at our Verona PA location

All profits go towards helping animals in our care

**Thank you for your interest in becoming a Humane Animal
Rescue Volunteer!**