



# Volunteer Manual

**Helping Hands Humane Society, Inc.**

*Updated: 11/28/2025*

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## Welcome

Thank you for considering the opportunity to volunteer for Helping Hands Humane Society (HHHS). HHHS regularly admits over 6,000 animals each year. Caring for such a large number of animals can be an overwhelming task. Our volunteers help ensure we provide our animals with quality care by playing an integral role in the health and happiness of our animals. Volunteers keep our animals' living areas clean, give enrichment, and provide an essential social outlet for them. Volunteers also play active roles in promoting the adoption of our pets. From reading to shy cats to playing with dogs outside, setting up for fundraisers or unloading pallets of donated pet food, volunteers are everywhere at HHHS.

This manual is to serve as a reference guide to help provide you with a thorough understanding of our volunteer program. If at any time you have questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact the Volunteer Coordinator. We appreciate your help and value the time you donate to us.

Thank you!

## Meet the Volunteer Coordinator



Caroline Rea is our Volunteer Coordinator. She has two Siamese cat siblings at home. Her door is always open for volunteers who have questions, comments, or concerns!

Email: [volunteer.coordinator@hhhstopeka.org](mailto:volunteer.coordinator@hhhstopeka.org)

Phone: (785) 233-7325 ext. 103

## HHHS Contact Information and Hours of Operation

Helping Hands Humane Society  
5720 SW 21st Street  
Topeka, KS 66604  
(785) 233-7325  
(785) 233.8151 fax  
www.hhhstopeka.org  
helpinghands@hhhstopeka.org

### Adoption & Admission Hours

**Monday-Saturday:** 11:30am to 6:00pm

**Sunday:** 1:00pm to 5:00pm

*Adoptions stop 30 minutes prior to close*

### Volunteer Hours

If you have interest in volunteering early before we are officially open, please speak to the Volunteer Coordinator about where and how to enter the building and what activities you are allowed to do.

Monday-Saturday 8:00 am - 5:45 pm

Sunday 8:00 am - 4:45 pm

*There are occasions when these hours may change, such as in extreme weather conditions.*

### We are closed on the following holidays

- New Year's Eve
- New Year's Day
- Easter
- Memorial Day
- 4th of July
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day

## Operations Team

Kathy Maxwell	Executive Director
Grace Clinton	Director of Philanthropy
Margaret Price	Behavior Director
Dr. Heather Eller	Veterinarian
Dr. Deanna Center	Veterinarian
Dr. Morgan Huffman	Veterinarian
Marrissa Stark	Adoptions & Customer Relations Manager
Shelby Reich	Admissions Manager
Angel Martinez	Animal Care Tech Manager
Chris Miller	Accountant
Emi Griess	Communications Coordinator
Caroline Rea	Volunteer Coordinator
Rachel Coover	Cat Care Coordinator
Kaileah Amaro	Fundraising and Finance Assistant

## Mission Statement

*"Caring People Promoting the Human-Animal Bond"*

## Who Is HHHS?

To be an effective volunteer, we believe it is important that you know who you are volunteering for. HHHS is a not-for-profit 501(c)3 organization. We are funded through corporate and public donations. HHHS exists to serve several purposes: sheltering companion animals in need of care, advocating for anti-cruelty protection of animals, and promoting humane education and animal welfare issues.

## Mission

As advocates for animal welfare, Helping Hands Humane Society, Inc. provides sanctuary for animals in need of compassionate care and protection. We accept responsibility for: Fostering the adoption of healthy animals into responsible homes and reuniting lost animals with their owners

**Reducing** overpopulation by promoting sterilization of animals

**Providing** an accessible facility with effective leadership and well-trained staff

**Serving** the community through education and addressing animal welfare issues

**Maintaining** a fiscally responsible organization by adhering to the highest standards of integrity

## What Does HHHS Do?

**Animal Adoptions:** HHHS finds homes for thousands of animals each year. HHHS adopts dogs, cats, and other small mammals to responsible, loving homes. The organization employs Adoption Counselors who are trained to assist the public in finding their perfect match. People interested in adopting must be approved for adoption (Appendix A: Adoption Guidelines).

**Admission of Animals:** HHHS is an open-admission shelter meaning we will accept any domesticated companion animal from our county that comes to our door for any reason. We will not deny an animal admittance based on their breed, health, age, behavior, or any other factor. All animals are vaccinated upon entrance to the shelter. Animals admitted as strays will be held for at least a 72-hour period to allow time for their owner to claim them. Once the three days have passed, unclaimed animals officially belong to HHHS and will go through health and behavior assessments to determine their next step (foster, rescue, adoption, etc.).

**Lost and Found:** HHHS keeps both lost and found reports. People who have lost their pets or people who have found a pet may call HHHS and leave a description. HHHS will compare all incoming animals and found reports with lost reports. HHHS encourages people who have lost their pets to come to the shelter daily and look at the animals. Their description of their animal may be different from ours, and nobody will be able to identify your pet as well as you can. We

suggest bringing in any found pets to be scanned for a microchip, even if you don't plan to leave them at HHHS.

**Humane Education and Community Outreach:** HHHS hosts presentations on a variety of educational topics for kids and adults. These presentations can be at the shelter or off-site. As part of our education program, HHHS does community outreach events with educational booths and works with other community organizations. In addition to these items they also now have a Community clinic that helps provide reduce costs for dog, cat, and rabbit sterilizations and provide treatment for Parvovirus and Ringworm for individuals who qualify.

**Foster/Rescue:** Many animals admitted to HHHS are in need of special care. Often they suffer from injuries and illnesses, or they may be a mother with newborns. Foster care offers these animals the chance to heal, grow up, or simply receive the socialization they need. Foster caregivers are volunteers. If you're interested in our foster care program, please contact our foster care coordinator at (785)233.7325. We also partner with many rescues and other animal welfare organizations where we can transfer animals when we're low on resources.

**Training and Behavior Assessment:** The goals of our training department are to improve relationships between people and their pets and to help with any behavioral problems that may interfere with permanent adoptions. Training focuses not only on the animals but also on adopters and volunteers. The best way to train an animal is to train the people. Our classes are open to the public and their dogs. We also offer shelter dog training classes and shelter dog agility classes for volunteers and adoptable dogs.

## Policies and Procedures

HHHS requests that all volunteers follow all guidelines, policies, and procedures in this manual. All of which are subject to change without warning or prior indication.



## **Volunteer Code of Ethics**

As an HHHS volunteer, I pledge to:

### ***Respect***

Respect others even though I may not agree with them;  
Display courtesy, sensitivity, consideration, and compassion for people and animals;  
Use good judgment in recognizing the scope of authority of staff members.

### ***Safety***

Keep safety at the forefront of all volunteer activities;  
Follow the rules presented to me in training;  
Respect and use equipment and supplies as they are intended;  
Report all injuries immediately to a staff member.

### ***Quality***

Perform all tasks to the best of my abilities;  
Ask for help when needed;  
Recognize training is essential to maintain safe shelter practices.

### ***Self-Discipline***

Recognize my limitations and those of others;  
Set boundaries for myself – know my limits with the animals and other activities;  
Hold myself accountable for the commitments I undertake.

### ***Communication***

Recognize I communicate both verbally and non-verbally;  
Listen to the needs of others;  
Advise shelter personnel of relevant information regarding the animals and my involvement at the shelter.

### ***Commitment***

Recognize true commitment comes from within;  
Respect that people and animals count on me to honor my commitments;  
Work together with staff and other volunteers to meet HHHS goals.

### ***Welfare***

Value my role in the maintenance and growth of the organization;  
Strive to promote a positive environment;  
Respect and support all people and animals.

## **Animal Handling Policy**

It is expected that HHHS Volunteers treat all animals in the shelter with care, compassion, and respect. It is also required that before handling any animal a volunteer takes the corresponding training. Volunteers are not to take any animal from the shelter without approval from HHHS staff. While we understand that volunteers have the best of intentions, it is ultimately the responsibility of the staff to make policy and procedure decisions concerning the shelter and the animals in its care. If you are interested in taking any of our animal handling classes please contact the volunteer coordinator.

## **Animal Intake Policy**

Volunteers are not allowed to take an animal from someone who is bringing in a stray or surrendering. This is because intake needs to speak to the individual and receive information about where they were found or other general information about the person and animal. In the case of an emergency (like a person threatening to abandon an animal) please tell the individual that you are going to get a staff member and then find the closest staff member. At that time the staff member will take it from there.

## **Communication and Social Media Policy**

Volunteers represent HHHS both at the shelter and through communications and social media presence. HHHS encourages responsible use of social media and communications with other individuals and organizations. We recognize that social media provides unique opportunities to connect, and we encourage individuals to take responsibility for what they write and say. The following section provides common-sense guidelines to follow:

- Volunteers must not post or communicate defamatory statements about:
  - HHHS
  - Staff, our adopters, volunteers, or animals
  - Sponsors
  - Other Affiliates

- Volunteers are not to contact other shelters, rescues, or animal care facilities about animals in our care without expressed permission from the rescue coordinator.
- You are personally responsible for what you post and communicate with others.
- Do not create or share internet media communication that negatively impacts the Helping Hands Humane Society brand or reputation.
- Do not discredit, disparage, challenge or defame the mission, services, public policy positions, operational or animal status decisions of HHHS. Do not reveal any confidential or proprietary information about HHHS. This includes:
  - Fostering the adoption of healthy animals into responsible homes and reuniting lost animals with their owners
  - Reducing overpopulation by promoting sterilization of animals
  - Providing an accessible facility with effective leadership and well-trained staff
  - Serving the community through education and addressing animal welfare issues
  - Maintaining a fiscally responsible organization by adhering to the highest standards of integrity
- Do not criticize individual staff or volunteer performance (by name, title or role.) Do not disclose the name or any personal identifying information of any staff or volunteer without his/her permission.
- Do not post information that adversely reinforces negative breed-specific stereotypes.
- As a volunteer and representative of HHHS it is not unusual for the public to ask questions about HHHS, its policies, and animals in our care. You are never required to answer these questions if you feel uncomfortable doing so and you can always refer them to a member of our staff.

If you are comfortable answering some of these questions, then here are some FAQs that we get and how we answer them.

- I saw an animal on the HHHS lost and found page and would really like to adopt them if they are not claimed.

We are so glad to hear that you are interested in adopting a pet and HHHS would love to be a part of that journey! The dogs and cats on HHHS Lost and Found Facebook

page come in as strays or are surrendered, so we cannot guarantee the outcome of any of those animals, but we have many adoptable animals at this time and you can see them all on our website <https://www.hhhstopeka.org/adoptable-pets/> and our website is updated daily with new animals that are available for adoption.

- Is HHHS a No-Kill shelter?

HHHS is an open admissions shelter with a city and county municipal contract. That means that we have to take any animal in Shawnee County regardless of health or behavior and cannot turn an animal away. We often take in animals from outside counties (many no-kill shelters have to close their doors at some point when they become too full or overwhelmed...at that point, those animals who get turned away may be brought to an open admission shelter like HHHS). We are always working to lower our euthanasia rates and save as many lives as possible, and our statistics have improved greatly since moving to our new facility, but because many of the animals brought to us have serious health or behavior problems, this leads us to have to make difficult decisions when an animal is severely injured or could potentially cause harm to another animal or person. These decisions are not taken lightly, as there is a multiple-person committee that decides if there are any other options for these animals. You can see our statistics on the website if you're interested. Here is a good video that talks about the different kinds of shelters and why it's so important for community members to support them all:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lpKT6v\\_mAw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lpKT6v_mAw)

For more FAQs and how to answer them please look on the volunteer home page on [www.hhhstopeak.org](http://www.hhhstopeak.org)

## **Non-discrimination & Harassment Policy**

We are committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment to all of our volunteers, staff, and visitors. It is the policy of Helping Hands Humane Society to ensure equal opportunities without discrimination or harassment based on race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, disability, marital status, citizenship, national origin, genetic information, or any other characteristic protected by law. Helping Hands Humane

Society prohibits any form of discrimination or harassment. We encourage the reporting of any incidents of harassment or discrimination and prohibit retaliation of any sort.

## **Medical Emergency Policies**

HHHS is not responsible for an injury that occurs during the time of volunteering. Animal rescue operations entail known and unanticipated risks which could result in physical or emotional injury. HHHS may call an ambulance for any perceived emergency and does not need the expressed permission of the volunteer or staff.

## **Potential Adopter Policy**

Adoptions are a very important part of HHHS and as representatives of HHHS, we ask that you follow several guidelines.

1. It is best practice for adoption counselors to make first contact with potential adopters. This is for several reasons:
  - a. Not everyone is suitable to adopt
    - i. This can be hard to discern when first meeting someone, but adoption counselors are able to look at their profile and see more than what is on the surface.
  - b. They are able to see a more complete view of their lifestyle.
    - i. When an adopter fills out a profile they are able to see more about how a person lives and how they expect an animal to integrate into their life.
2. Try not to make black and white statements about an animal, outside of what is on their kennel card. This is for several reasons:
  - a. Animals may act one way with one person and completely different with another.
    - i. For example, an animal may be very cuddly with one person, but might not be when it is a child or another person.
  - b. It also helps reduce confusion for potential adopters.

- i. That way it is not two different representatives of HHHS saying two different things.

## **Privacy Policy**

At HHHS we require that all volunteers respect the privacy of all donors, clients, volunteers, staff, and anyone who seeks any service from HHHS. As a volunteer you will have access to areas in the HHHS building that the public doesn't and by having this access volunteers may overhear or see confidential and/or privileged information. Unauthorized disclosure of this information by any method may result in termination of volunteer privileges.

## **Tobacco, Alcohol, and Drug Policies**

**Tobacco-Free Campus:** Because HHHS is committed to providing a safe and healthy work environment and to promoting the health and well-being of its employees, volunteers, and the animals, it is the policy of HHHS to prohibit smoking and use of any tobacco products on all company premises or in HHHS vehicles.

**Alcohol and Illegal Drugs:** HHHS is strongly committed to providing a quality work environment for its employees, volunteers, and animals. Illegal use of drugs and alcohol abuse can result in impairment on the job, which compromises the safe work environment that is essential to our well-being. HHHS will not tolerate or condone substance abuse. HHHS's policy is to maintain a workplace free from the effects of alcohol and drug abuse.

The use of alcoholic beverages while volunteering is prohibited. This prohibition includes HHHS vehicles and all-volunteer locations occupied while conducting HHHS business. A volunteer must not have any measurable alcohol in his/her breath or bodily fluids while volunteering.

It is a violation of policy for volunteers to engage in the sale, use, possession, or transfer of illegal drugs or controlled substances (as defined under the Controlled Substances Act of state

law), to offer to buy or sell such substances while at HHHS, or to volunteer while under the influence of such substances. This prohibition includes all HHHS property, HHHS vehicles, private vehicles used while conducting HHHS business, and all-volunteer locations. Volunteers are expected to know those drugs that are illegal to use.

Any volunteers found in violation of these policies will be dismissed from HHHS.

## **Volunteer Activities Policy**

Although uncommon, HHHS reserves the right to demote or remove a volunteer from specific activities if the volunteer is deemed unfit or is compromising the safety of the animals or people around them. Any member of the HHHS admin team can ask a volunteer to stop or step down from the activity they are engaging in and continuance or renewal of those activity privileges may require the volunteer to be paired with another volunteer or further education. Suspension of participating in the activity may also be deemed permanent.

## **Volunteer Privileges and Disciplinary Process Policy**

HHHS reserves the right to deny volunteer applications and to revoke or terminate volunteer privileges at any time. Volunteers may also suspend or terminate their working relationship with HHHS at any point.

Although uncommon, HHHS does have a volunteer disciplinary process. It is a case-by-case situation and the seriousness of the offense is taken into consideration. If the action is considered harmful to any of our animals, staff, or volunteers or violates any non-discrimination or harassment policies, said volunteer may be terminated effective immediately. We expect all volunteers to follow all policies and procedures, any deviation from said policies and procedures can result in disciplinary action.

**First offense:** the first offense is considered a warning and will be documented by the volunteer coordinator. Depending on the offense, corrective actions like additional training sessions in the corresponding area may be advised.

**Second Offense:** upon demonstration of a second offense of a similar nature additional training will become mandatory. You will receive a written final warning from the volunteer coordinator.

**Third Offense:** the third offense of a similar nature will result in volunteer suspension and/or termination. The duration of such is determined by management.

HHHS may choose to terminate volunteer privileges at any time without cause, as can the volunteer.

## **Weapon Policies**

HHHS is a "Gun-Free Zone" and it is a violation of policy for any person to carry a firearm or dangerous weapon to the HHHS premises or other facilities being used exclusively for HHHS activities.

The following persons may carry firearms, as necessary, on the premises:

- A. Persons engaged in military, law enforcement, or security activities;
- B. Any federal, state, or local law enforcement officer

## **Volunteer Guidelines**

HHHS provides a list of guidelines for volunteering. This is not an all-inclusive list and may be amended at any time by HHHS management.

1. Volunteers must engage in professional behavior when working for HHHS.
2. Volunteers will wear name badges and HHHS t-shirts or vests at all times when working on or off-site for HHHS.



3. Volunteers must wear enclosed shoes with good traction (the shoe must cover the entire heel, toe, and top of the foot) while volunteering. We recommend wearing durable pants and jeans are preferred. Jeans must be worn when volunteering in intake. We ask that volunteers refrain from wearing shorts, sandals, and anything that may be potentially offensive or overtly political.
4. Volunteers must record all of their hours using Volgistics. There is a log-in computer located in the volunteer room.
5. Volunteers are here to give their time to the animals and shelter. Please limit all use of cell phones, and please do not bring guests unless pre-approved.
6. Any volunteer or staff member who demonstrates abusive behavior towards animals or people will have their status terminated immediately. Abusive behavior includes physical, mental, or verbal threats.
7. Volunteers may not get animals out for the public, without prior permission from an Adoptions Coordinator, Manager of Adoptions and Customer Care, or the Volunteer Coordinator. Volunteers should direct interested adopters to the front desk.
8. Volunteers must respect HHHS and its property by observing all rules and paying close attention to posted signs. Repeated breaking of the rules or ignoring direct instructions from a staff person may result in termination of volunteering privileges.
9. HHHS or the volunteer may end the working relationship at any time, without reasoning or prior indication.
10. Volunteers should refrain from making absolute guarantees or promises about the outcomes of animals brought to HHHS. This is particularly important if a volunteer is commenting or posting on social media. Making promises about an animal going into foster care or guaranteeing an animal won't be euthanized can lead to mistrust with the public if the shelter has to make difficult decisions regarding an animal's adoptability.

## **Basic Volunteer Information**

### **Things You Need to Know**

To ensure your volunteer experience is positive, please follow these guidelines:

- **Personal Property:** For your own protection, please do not bring valuables or large sums of money with you when you volunteer. You may consider leaving purses/wallets at home or locked in the trunk of your car. HHHS cannot be held responsible for the loss of personal belongings. Lockers are available (first come, first served) in the break room; you may bring your own lock for daily use.
- **Cell Phones:** Please do not use your cell phone while volunteering except for capturing images/videos of our adoptable pets. The animals need your undivided attention. Consider leaving cell phones at home, in your car, bag, or locker. Please send pictures or videos of animals you are socializing with to our Communications Coordinator for use on our social media sites.
- **HHHS Telephones:** HHHS telephone lines are for shelter business only. Exceptions can be made to this policy if volunteers need to coordinate their transportation. Long-distance phone calls may not be made without permission from the Volunteer Coordinator.
- **Loud and/or Profane Language:** It is vital to the image of HHHS that loud or profane language, which may disturb or offend members of the public, employees, or other volunteers, not be used.
- **Maintenance and Care of HHHS Property:** HHHS assumes responsibility for normal "wear and tear" of equipment. Please make sure you take proper care of all items (towels, brushes, combs, etc.) and return all items to their original place. If an item breaks, please inform an HHHS staff member.

## Junior and Youth Volunteers

### ***Junior Volunteers (10 to 15 years of age)***

HHHS encourages the involvement of younger members of our community. Children are an essential group of volunteers at HHHS, and their active participation in our volunteer program is necessary for the animals to receive a full range of socialization.

Children below the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult during their entire volunteer experience or until they turn 16 years of age. A parent or legal guardian must complete the Volunteer Orientation with their child. Parents volunteering with their children must fill out their own Volunteer Applications as well. After attending either Dog or Cat Handling Class with an adult, children may handle animals that they are comfortable and capable of handling under the supervision of an adult (for example: walking a dog on a leash).

It is the responsibility of the adult accompanying the child to keep a close watch on all animal handling and be prepared to intervene when necessary. If the child wants to get animals in/out of a kennel, they must be observed by an approved staff member to demonstrate their skills.

### ***Youth Volunteers (16 to 17 years of age)***

Youth volunteers are 16 to 17 years of age and may volunteer without a parent or legal guardian. A parent/legal guardian must attend the in-person Training Tour with their child and sign the liability waiver (during the tour), then the youth volunteer may continue to volunteer on their own.

## **Recording Your Volunteer Hours**

It is very important that you track your volunteer hours by logging in and out of Volgistics on the computer in the volunteer room. First, we need to know who is volunteering and at what time for safety reasons (if we have exited the building, we can see who is clocked in and needs to be accounted for).

Second, HHHS can receive grants, awards, or donations based on the number of volunteers and volunteer hours served. Third, you may need to know the number of days or how much time you have volunteered for your own benefit. If you need a list of your documented hours, ask the Volunteer Coordinator.

## **Communication**

To stay the most up-to-date on the goings-on at the shelter, search for "HHHS Team" on Facebook. You will have to request to join this group and the Volunteer Coordinator will have to

approve the request before you can post/see posts (let them know if your Facebook name is different from your registered volunteer name). Staff members and volunteers regularly post in this group about shelter events, animals, policies, etc.

We also encourage you to like and follow the Helping Hands Humane Society Facebook page. The more you interact (like, comment, share), the more engagement we get meaning the more people we reach and the more animals' lives we save!

We are fairly active on Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok @hhhstopeka. If you are interested in helping enhance our social media presence, please let the Volunteer Coordinator know.

Our website is [www.hhhstopeka.org](http://www.hhhstopeka.org).

## **Volunteer Program Structure**

- Entry Level Volunteer
  - Non-animal handling tasks like
    - Laundry
    - General cleaning
    - Donation sorting
    - Enrichment making
    - Special event help
- Dog Handling Levels
  - Level 1
    - Getting A Kennel dogs in and out of their kennels and to the play yard or socialization rooms
    - This includes tasks like
      - Quiet time
      - Exercise time
      - General socializing

- Level 2
  - Walk dogs off-premises
  - Handling dogs at off-site events
- Level 3
  - Form and oversee playgroups

All the levels require additional training, but level 2 and 3 also require a minimum number of volunteer hours (level 2 – 20 hours, level 3 – 30 hours). To schedule a class please contact the volunteer coordinator.

- Cat Handling Levels

- Level 1
  - Interacting with cats in the adoptable areas
- Level 2
  - Interacting with “crabby tabbies”
- Level 3
  - Helping care for cats that are unavailable

All the levels require additional training, but level 2 and 3 also require a minimum number of volunteer hours (level 2 – 20 hours, level 3 – 30 hours). To schedule a class please contact the volunteer coordinator.

## Non-Animal Handling Activities

### Donation Sorting

Donation sorting is one of the key things that volunteers help with. As a not-for-profit organization, this is one of the many ways we are able to provide the animals with what they need.

How to sort donations:

Donation bins are located by the front door and in intake. We recommend sorting the bins by the storage room because that is where most of the items will be put.

Sort the items into the correct category

1. Storage Room

1. Blankets
2. Towels
3. Toys
  1. Cat
  2. Dog
4. Pet beds
5. Laundry soap
6. Soap, sanitizer, wipes
7. Dog treats
8. Cat treats
9. Leashes, harnesses, collars
10. New items (these can be sold in the gift shop)

2. Garage

1. Dog food
2. Cat food
3. Cat litter
4. Soda cans

3. Dock

1. Small mammal food
2. Small mammal bedding
3. Timothy hay
4. Paper lunch sacks
5. Empty cereal boxes
6. Cardboard tubes
7. Pipe cleaners

4. Volunteer Room

1. Egg cartons
2. Newspaper
5. Admin Offices
  1. Laminating pouches
  2. Copy paper
  3. Dry erase markers
  4. Dry erase boards
  5. Cork boards
  6. Pens
  7. Permanent markers
  8. Tape
  9. Stamps
  10. Stapler and staples
  11. Whiteout
  12. Post-its
  13. Binder clips
  14. Card stock
2. Move the items to those places

**Important**

- Please do not keep anything that is soiled, please throw these items away.
- Please put any towel or blanket into the laundry to be washed before it is put away.
- Please pay attention to the whiteboard on the storage room door it will say what we are currently donating to other facilities.

**Spot Cleaning**

Spot cleaning is very important because it helps us present well to the public and provides a clean space for our animals, volunteers, and staff.

How to spot clean:

All cleaning supplies are located in the volunteer room and should be labeled. If there are any supplies that you are out of, please let the volunteer coordinator know.

1. Grab supplies from the volunteer room
2. To spot clean A kennel and cat colonies you will need
  - i. Vinegar
  - ii. Newspaper
- b. Please do not open up the kennels instead focus on cleaning the glass so that the animal can be seen well.
3. To spot clean the lobby you will need
  - i. Disinfectant wipes
  - b. Please wipe down all of the table, chairs, benches, and hard surfaces

## **Enrichment Toys**

### ***Frozen Kong Toys***

#### Items needed

- Kong toy
- Wet dog food
- Dry dog food
- Water
- Peanut butter
- Dog Biscuits
- Can opener (depending on cans)
- Spoon
- Bowl

#### Steps

1. Moisten dry dog food in the bowl
2. Combine the dry dog food, wet dog food, and peanut butter in the bowl



3. Scoop the combination into the Kong toy
4. Put a dog biscuit into the know, but leaving the excess hanging out of the top
5. Place in the large freezer (in the volunteer room) labeled “Frozen Kongs”

*There is no exact science or amount to this but it is meant to serve as an entertaining treat for the dogs to have while in our care.*

### ***Frozen Ice Treats***

#### Items needed

- Applesauce
- Pumpkin puree
- Can opener (depending on the type of cans)
- Green beans
- Spoon
- Ice cube tray

#### Steps

1. Scoop applesauce and/or pumpkin puree into the ice cube tray
2. Place green beans into mixture (optional)
3. Place ice cube tray into the freezer

*There is no exact science or amount to this but it is meant to serve as an entertaining treat for the dogs to have while in our care.*

## **Health and Safety**

To ensure the safety and health of both our animals and volunteers, please follow these general guidelines:

- Before and after you interact with an animal, please sanitize or wash your hands. This will prevent the transfer of potential diseases from one animal to another. For your convenience, we have sinks in the kennels, as well as hand sanitizer.
- When you are done in an area wipe down counters and door handles before you leave.
- Only take pairs of animals out together who are in the same kennel. Taking animals from different kennels out together could possibly transfer diseases.
- If an animal or object is too heavy to lift by yourself, ask for help from the HHHS staff or other volunteers.
- Walk slowly when the floors are wet and avoid taking animals outside in the rain or snow.
- Report all injuries, bites, or aggressive behavior to the Volunteer Coordinator or Margaret. We must act immediately to prevent any other injuries to personnel or animals. Even if a bite or scratch is not aggressive, if it draws blood you must report it for health reasons.
- Do **NOT** attempt to break up a fight between animals. Notify a staff member as quickly as possible and they will resolve the conflict.
- Please stay home if you have any of the following symptoms:
  - Fever
  - Coughing
  - Sore Throat
  - Shortness of breath
  - Pain or pressure in your chest
  - Headache
  - Sneezing
  - Sinus or chest congestion
  - Loss of taste or smell
  - Fatigue
  - Joint or muscle pain
  - Intestinal distress like nausea or diarrhea
  - Pink eye

***Note:** If you have been in contact with someone who has been diagnosed with or believes they may have COVID-19 please wait a minimum of 14 days to come into the shelter*

## **Personal Risk**

When volunteering at the shelter it is first important to take an evaluation of yourself. This step requires a volunteer to be aware of one's ability and limitations and activities that fit within that range. This helps not only reduce the risk of personal injury, but it also helps reduce the risk of injury of people and animals around you.

## Environmental Factors

Environmental factors are something that all volunteers must be aware of at all times. It can include a wide variety of things depending on where you are in the shelter. Some of the main things to be aware of are:

- Tripping Hazards (like slippery floors)
- Inclement Weather
- People and Animals Around you

The best way to handle any environmental factor is to be aware of potential hazards and to know and voice your plan confronted with them.

## Contagion and Disease Management

THANK YOU for volunteering your time and talents to help make our shelter more like home for our amazing animals! There are a few important things to remember about the shelter and our animals; there are a large number of animals in a fairly small space, and our animals come in with completely unknown medical histories. This makes disease prevention key in the health of our animals--and you are a part of that too!

Zoonotic illnesses are diseases humans can get from animals. Many infectious diseases can spread from animals to people, and some of these can come from your pet. Know that getting diseases from a pet is pretty uncommon and that you can prevent most of them with some very simple steps.

The most important thing you can do to help prevent the spread of disease is to wash your hands! Wash them thoroughly and between each animal.

The most common way diseases are spread in an animal shelter is via fomites. Fomites are inanimate objects that can carry diseases. Most common fomites: dog dishes, toys, beds, bedding, human hands, shoes, cell phones, door handles and clothing. Some important steps for you take (other than washing your hands!): Have a specific pair of shoes that you only wear to the shelter, change your clothes as soon as you get home, and disinfect your cell phone, keys, car door knobs/steering wheel with bleach wipes.

It is important to understand that you can not only spread disease within the shelter, but you can spread disease to your animals at home. Make sure your animals are up-to-date on their vaccines. Don't let them jump on, kiss, or sniff your clothing or shoes after being at the shelter.

If you are concerned about your animals, please take them to your regular veterinarian for assistance.

**Some zoonotic diseases are:**

**Rabies:** Caused by a virus and spread through bites, rabies is a disease that affects the nervous system and is generally fatal. Although rabies can be spread from pets such as a dog or cat, you are more likely to get it from a wild animal. Tell the Volunteer Coordinator immediately if an animal bites you.

**Toxoplasmosis:** You are most likely to get toxoplasmosis from eating partially cooked meat or from contact with animal feces while gardening, but you can also get it from contact with contaminated cat feces. It is a protozoan organism; if you are pregnant or getting ready to become pregnant, it is particularly important to be aware of this disease.

**Hookworms and roundworms:** These are intestinal parasites routinely found in dogs and cats, particularly kittens and puppies. The worms' eggs or larvae are passed from pets through stool. You can pick them up through your skin from walking barefoot, playing outside, or handling feces and not washing your hands.

**Tapeworm:** Most human tapeworm infections arise from ingestion of contaminated meats. However, children can pick up tapeworm parasites from cats and dogs by accidentally swallowing a flea infected with tapeworm larvae. Tapeworm segments may show up in stool or around the anal area on a pet or human; they look like grains of rice. The single most important control for tapeworms is to control fleas on your pet and in the environment.

**Ringworm:** Not really a worm, ringworm is caused by a fungal infection within the top layer of the skin. It is very contagious and dogs, cats, horses, other animals, and humans can pass ringworm. On skin, ringworm causes a ring-shaped, reddish rash that may be dry and scaly or wet and crusty. It may also be itchy. Although it's difficult to prevent, ringworm responds well to self-care and treatment. It is estimated that 30% of cats are subclinical carriers of ringworm, meaning they have the fungus on them but are not showing any signs or symptoms.

Thank you for all you do! Written by Dr. Jami Grace, HHHS's Veterinarian 2-19-2016

## Emergencies

### *Dog Fights*

Dog fights are uncommon at HHHS, but we do want every volunteer to have a plan of action, just in case they happen to be in this situation. The number one thing to be concerned about is personal safety. We want you to take care of yourself above everything else. We encourage volunteers to follow these steps if ever in that situation.

1. Remove yourself from the environment
  - a. If you are in the play yard leave that area and shut the gate.
  - b. If you are in a socialization room, leave the room and close the door.
2. Call for help
  - a. Tell any staff member what is happening because they are trained to handle the situation
3. Do **not** intervene
  - a. Do **not** try to pull the dogs off of each other. This normally only leads to more injury.
  - b. If you are in the play yard you can spray them with the power washer to get them separated, but do not enter into the yard.
4. Stay calm
  - a. This is easier said than done, but try to stay as calm as possible.

### *Bites*

Although uncommon bites do happen and should be immediately reported. When a dog bite happens at the shelter it does not mean that the dog is going to be euthanized, but is important to report, because the dog gets put on a two-week quarantine to make sure that they are not a carrier of any diseases. If you do get bitten there is a bite wash kept in a couple of areas of the shelter that can help prevent the development of any infection.

## Operational Guidelines and Information

### Adoption Guidelines

While each adoption situation is different, HHHS will attempt to implement a standard of fairness to maintain consistency in adoptions. Although we must place the responsibility of pet ownership in the adopter's hands, HHHS has developed Adoption Guidelines to assist Adoption Counselors, volunteers, and other personnel towards ensuring the adopter and animal will be a successful match.

- Only companion animals will be placed as pets. Wildlife and domesticated livestock will be sent to rehabilitation centers or rescues.
- Animals that are known to have vicious tendencies or other serious behavioral disorders will not be made available for adoption.
- No animals will be knowingly adopted to a residence where no pets are allowed.
- Animals will be adopted only as companion animals. In some instances, they may be adopted as working animals (herding, hunting, etc.) as long as they will still be companions.
- Only dogs that are physically and behaviorally suited to living outdoors may be adopted as such. Dogs that will be housed permanently outdoors must have physical characteristics that make them suitable for this environment including heavy coats and sturdy builds.
  - Adopters who will be housing their dog permanently outdoors must supply the animal with a doghouse and a fenced-in, secure area. Adopters must also be willing to continuously socialize the animal and bring it indoors during extreme weather conditions.
- Dogs will not be adopted to owners who intend to chain them permanently outdoors as a means of housing. Short periods of time are acceptable as long as adopters follow the City of Topeka's Ordinances.
- Cats will not be adopted to owners who intend to allow them outdoors unsupervised unless they are adopted out from our Barn Cat Program or are known to have previously been outdoor or indoor/outdoor cats.
- All adopted animals must be sterilized according to the Kansas Animal Pet Act.
- Animals will not be adopted as gifts. Two exceptions may be made:
  - The person who is receiving the gift is present
  - Parents wanting to adopt the animal as a gift for their child (under 18 years of age)
- Any person adopting an animal must be at least 18 years old.
- All potential adopters must complete an Adoption Profile. Any responses on the profile that may be proven false can disqualify the individual from adopting.
- Potential adopters with a poor history (animals repeatedly stolen, hit by cars, ran away, died, etc.) will require special counseling by the Manager of Adoptions who will also determine if the individual will be able to adopt.
- Adopters must agree to pay all shelter fees applicable to their chosen animal.

Any exceptions to these guidelines must be approved by an Adoption Coordinator, the Manager of Adoptions, or the Executive Director.

## Intake Guidelines

Intake must take any stray animal found in Shawnee County (excluding wildlife, they must go to a wildlife rescue).

- The animal must have been found in Shawnee county
- When the animal is brought in the individual who brought them in must provide
  - ID
  - Phone number
  - A profile is created for the person on Shelter Buddy (our online database to track people and animals) this helps us keep track of how many animals a person surrenders in a year or if the animal becomes sick we will be able to notify them.

Intake also takes in surrendered animals, but the individual must schedule an appointment to do so. This is because a surrender typically takes longer because we ask questions about the animal's personality and habits.

- The individual must live in Shawnee county or it costs \$80 to surrender them
- When the animal is brought in the individual who brought them in must provide
  - ID
  - Phone number
  - A profile is created for the person on Shelter Buddy (our online database to track people and animals) this helps us keep track of how many animals a person surrenders in a year or if the animal becomes sick we will be able to notify them.
- The person must also sign paperwork stating that they cannot call and check on the animal that they are surrendering and there is no guarantee that this animal will go to the adoption floor (this is because there might be health or behavior issues.)

At the time of admission, the animal is checked for a microchip. For dogs, they must be given their Distemper/Parvo and rabies vaccines immediately if they are the appropriate age. Cats also need to be vaccinated and they receive them once processed by the intake staff. The vaccines that the animals receive before they go into our general kennels helps to protect the other animals under our care.

Tracking the individuals who bring in animals also helps us with adoptions, because it allows us to determine if an individual is suited to adopt based on their history.

## Behavior Test

Every animal under our care must go through a behavior test for the safety of the people and animals around them. This crucial step also helps us determine what type of family would best suit them. When doing a dog behavior test we look at 6 main components:

- General body handling

- How the reacts and handles being touched
- Resource guarding/ Food aggression
  - This test helps us determine if the animal guards their food and if they would be able to eat around other animals and people.
- Child test
  - This test uses a child doll to help us determine if a dog would be able to live with a child or if they have aggressive towards them.
- Dog test
  - This involves them meeting another dog on a lead and gauging their reaction.
- Kennel behavior
  - This is an observation not only to see how they act in their kennel but to compare their kennel behavior to their behavior when they are outside of the kennel.
- Socialization
  - This refers to how they act around people and if they seek out attention or if they avoid it.

## Euthanasia

HHHS admits over 6,000 animals each year. Many of these animals have medical or behavioral issues that are quite severe and necessitate difficult decisions. Euthanasia is considered only when all other realistic alternatives have been exhausted. It is never a decision that's made lightly. The problem of euthanasia does not exist solely for HHHS. Nearly 1.5 million animals are euthanized per year in shelters across the nation. The primary goal of HHHS is to be a resource for animals with nowhere else to go and to find the best possible outcome for each of those animals. The performance and consideration of euthanasia are conducted by HHHS in accordance with the guidelines set forth by The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS), American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA), and state and federal laws.

For the purposes of HHHS, euthanasia is the process of providing a painless, comfortable death to an animal. Euthanasia is a term derived from the Greek word *eu* meaning good and *thantos* meaning death. A "good death" for HHHS requires that the animal undergoes the process as free of stress as possible and in a quick and painless manner.

The primary reasons HHHS must do euthanasia are a service to the community or because of severe health or behavioral issues. Euthanasia of dangerous animals protects the health and safety of our community. It's always a last resort and all other options are explored first.

Animals come into the shelter for a variety of reasons. Some come in as strays and others are owner surrenders. Owners surrender their pets for numerous reasons: moving, having a baby, pet behavioral issues, or simply not having enough time for the animal. Despite the surrender reason, it is HHHS policy that no animal from Shawnee County is turned away. The organization is an open-admission facility that admits every animal seeking refuge. Due to the open-admission



policy, HHHS admits more animals than most other shelters in Kansas. The reality is that because we admit all animals some will have serious health or behavioral issues that require euthanasia.

Decisions about euthanasia are never done lightly and only after all other options have been perused. First, we look at working with other rescues, getting assistance from local veterinarians, or placing the animal in a foster home. Euthanasia decisions are made by a committee that includes our executive director, our veterinarian, and our behavior team.

Animals are selected based on their behavior, health, and temperament. It is not the policy of HHHS to choose animals to be euthanized simply to make space. If you have additional questions pertaining to euthanasia, please contact the HHHS Executive Director Kathy Maxwell at [kathy.maxwell@hhhstopeka.org](mailto:kathy.maxwell@hhhstopeka.org) or (785) 233-7325. HHHS believes in the importance of thoroughly understanding such a complex and emotional topic. Resources are available to answer all of your questions.