



THE HUMANE SOCIETY OF ST. THOMAS VOLUNTEER CODE OF CONDUCT

The Humane Society of St. Thomas, Inc. (“HSSTT”), relies on volunteers in every aspect of our organization and values the time, talents, and passions volunteers contribute to achieving of our mission, through leadership, programs, special projects and serving the needs of animals in our care. Engaging individual volunteers and connecting with our animals strengthen our capacity to meet the evolving needs of our community. We are committed to creating an inclusive environment where the unique gifts of volunteers are recognized and nurtured and where dedicated staff and resources support meaningful volunteer opportunities. It is important to note that volunteers are not employees of HSSTT and they may not provide oversight or direction to HSSTT employees. Accordingly, all volunteers report to the HSSTT Volunteer Coordinator for all matters.

Proper Dress:

Volunteers are asked to convey a professional public image. Overall appearance should be clean and neat. 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. Volunteers are likely to get dirty while volunteering, please wear comfortable clothes that are easy to wash!

Media Procedures:

In order to maintain accuracy in information dissemination and branding, it is essential that volunteers not talk to the media about their work at Humane Society St Thomas unless it is coordinated through the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR.

- Media is anything that will be printed, broadcast, or televised about the Humane Society St Thomas. We welcome any contacts or story ideas you may have.
- Please refer to the Social Media section in this document for policies specific to that medium. Suggestions:

Discipline and Terms of Service:

The Humane Society St Thomas’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.

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. You must sign in at the start of your shift and sign out at the end of your shift using the Volgistics VicTouch monitor located at the Volunteer Center. If you are at an offsite event, volunteers are to log hours in VicNet.

Volunteer/Employee Conflict Resolution:

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

PROCEDURES

Informal Resolution

HSSTT 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 to achieve conciliation.

Formal Grievance Procedure

If an informal resolution is not successful, a volunteer may make a formal complaint to the Volunteer Coordinator. Upon receipt of the formal complaint, the Volunteer Coordinator must schedule a meeting with the volunteer within five (5) working days to discuss the complaint. Within approximately five (5) working days after the discussion, the Volunteer Coordinator will discuss the complaint with the Executive Director and issue a decision both in writing and orally to the volunteer filing the complaint.

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

Humane Society St Thomas 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 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.

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 Coordinator and/or Executive Director and may include:

- Additional supervision
- Reassignment and/or Retraining with possible suspension
- Referral to another volunteer position
- Dismissal from the HSSTT program

Volunteer Dismissal

Volunteers who do not adhere to the policies and procedures of HSSTT or who fail to satisfactorily

perform their volunteer assignment are subject to dismissal. Dismissal is within the discretion of the Volunteer Coordinator and/or Executive Director. Notwithstanding anything herein, a volunteer may be dismissed for any reason or no reason at all by the Volunteer Coordinator and/or the Executive Director.

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

- Any abuse or maltreatment of an animal while volunteering
- Violation of program policies and procedures or animal laws
- Gross misconduct or insubordination
- Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs while performing volunteer duties
- Theft of property or misuse of program equipment or materials
- Change of treatment plan to any animal without prior consent (i.e. change in medications, euthanasia, changes to habitat)
- Mistreatment or inappropriate conduct toward customers, other volunteers or agency personnel
- Making unauthorized statements to the media
- Taking action with an animal without program approval for off-site visits, events, etc.
- Failure to complete required initial or ongoing training
- Breach of confidentiality, including defamatory language or postings related to HSSTT
- Failure to satisfactorily perform assigned duties
- Criminal activities

End of Volunteer Service Policy

If at any time you wish to end your volunteer position for any reason, please alert the Volunteer Coordinator as soon as possible. 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.

GENERAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Standards of Conduct:

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

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

- Any inhumane treatment or harm caused to HSSTT animals or animals served through our clinics
- 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
- Sexual or other unlawful or unwelcome harassment
- Unauthorized disclosure of confidential information
- Violation of personnel policies
- Unsatisfactory conduct

Drug-Free Workplace Policy

Humane Society St Thomas 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, cannabis, 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 HSSTT shelters, or for any off-site events:

- 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 HSSTT 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.

Violence-Free Workplace

It is Humane Society St Thomas’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 Society St Thomas employees, volunteers, clients, customers, guests, vendors, and persons doing business with HSSTT.

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 shelter property, in a vehicle being used on shelter business, or at a shelter-related function.
- Any other conduct or acts which management believes represents an imminent or potential danger to workplace safety/security.

Anyone with questions or complaints about workplace behaviors which fall under this policy may discuss them with the Volunteer Coordinator. Humane Society St Thomas 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 volunteers. Where such actions involve non-employees/volunteers, Humane Society St Thomas will take action appropriate for the circumstances. Where appropriate and/or necessary, HSSTT 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 Society St Thomas's policy is to provide a work environment that is free from harassment. Therefore, Humane Society St Thomas 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 Society St Thomas 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 is defined 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;
- 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 the Volunteer Coordinator.
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 HSSTT's obligation to investigate and act upon reports of such harassment. Appropriate actions will be taken by Humane Society St Thomas 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. A 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 dismissal as a volunteer.

Social Media

HSSTT recognizes the benefits of social media and appreciates online expression and encourages an online presence using sound judgement. This policy will set forth guidelines that staff and volunteers shall follow for all online communications in reference to HSSTT and applies to any person associated with HSSTT including but not limited to: employees, volunteers, contract employees, etc.

HSSTT volunteers are free to publish or comment via social media in accordance with this policy.

Volunteers are subject to this policy to the extent they identify themselves as being associated with HSSTT.

Guidelines and Usage:

- Volunteers are encouraged to share available animals on their social media to promote adoptions and help foster the mission and vision of HSSTT.
 - Remember you are associated and can be construed as representing the overall organization in public forums of this nature. Discretion must be used to prevent any misconceptions.
- 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 HSSTT'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 posts should display professionalism, be respectful and truthful.
 - To ensure clarity of message and to avoid any internal or external confusion in relation to the HSSTT's official position and message, HSSTT must not be identified online. For example, logon IDs and usernames may not include the HSSTT's name or logo without prior approval from the Executive Director.

Social media is a very public forum and can also be educational. Photos that depict inappropriate handling of animals will send the wrong message to uninformed people. Volunteers are expected to abide by the rules listed below.

- Volunteers must get the express consent of the staff prior to taking photos of the animals, procedures, education programs, and events. All submitted photos may be used by HSSTT for promotional purposes.

Preferred Photos:

- Depict rehabilitation in action with staff, interns, and volunteers.
- Depict circumstances requiring interventions (as in orphaned or injured animals).
- Depict medical conditions that result in the need for rehabilitation. These types of photos are good for credibility of our work.
- Demonstrate key concepts that are aligned with our messaging (fostering, respect for animals, respect for our community, etc).
- Depict outreach such as educational programming and events.

Confidentiality and Disparagement:

It is acceptable to talk about your volunteer 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 HSSTT is treated as confidential and that no disparaging or misinformed statements are made online that would damage or reasonably damage HSSTT'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:

Usage:

Volunteers are encouraged to share available animals on their social media to promote adoptions and help foster the mission and vision of the HSSTT. 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 Executive Director or other appropriate parties.

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

Responsibility:

Any material presented online in reference to the HSSTT 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, you must state that any opinion is yours individually and not that of HSSTT.

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