



# Volunteer Handbook

Version 2.2 10-2024



10040 Victoria Way · PO Box 830 · Jamestown, CA 95327  
209.984.5489 · [hsotc.org](http://hsotc.org)



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Welcome.....	3
About the Volunteer Handbook.....	4
Volunteer Guidelines.....	4
Representing the HSOTC.....	5
Attendance Policies and Procedures.....	5
Volunteer Records.....	6
Code of Conduct.....	6
Dress Code.....	6
Safety.....	7
Injuries or Accidents.....	7
Confidentiality and Nondisclosure Policy.....	7
Sexual Harassment Policy.....	7
Drugs, Alcohol, and Smoking.....	8
Parking, Personal Belongings, and Designated Eating Areas.....	9
Overview of Volunteer Positions.....	9
Services and Programs.....	12
Adoptions.....	12
Spay and Neuter Vouchers.....	12
Special Events and Fundraisers.....	13
Frequently Asked Questions.....	13
Glossary of Terms.....	16
Notes.....	17



## **ABOUT THE HUMANE SOCIETY OF TUOLUMNE COUNTY**

The Humane Society of Tuolumne County (HSOTC) is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization established December 12, 1947. In 1997, the shelter acquired its current facility in Jamestown, CA. In 2010, the HSOTC became a limited intake/no-kill shelter where animals are only euthanized if they are too sick to be treated or too aggressive to be suitable for adoption. The no-kill shelter designation rejects euthanasia as a means of population control and instead works toward reducing the number of animals born through increased spay and neuter programs. The HSOTC also has programs available that assist low-income individuals and families with financial hardship of spaying or neutering their pets. We provide a safe haven for animals in transition, serve as advocates for animals and their people, work to end animal overpopulation, and educate the public about compassion and responsibility towards all animals.

## **MISSION**

The mission of the Humane Society of Tuolumne County (HSOTC) is to find homes for abandoned, abused, and unwanted animals, promote humane education, and maintain a clean and safe environment for homeless animals awaiting adoption.

## **VISION**

The vision of the Humane Society of Tuolumne County (HSOTC) is to inspire, educate, and engage our community in helping to end animal suffering.

Humane Society of Tuolumne County (HSOTC)  
10040 Victoria Way  
PO Box 830  
Jamestown, CA 95327  
209.984.5489 • [hsotc.org](http://hsotc.org)



## **WELCOME**

Welcome to the Humane Society of Tuolumne County (HSOTC) volunteer program. We want to thank you for choosing to participate in our program. As a volunteer, you are a valuable asset to our organization and the many animals in our care. Being a volunteer is extremely rewarding, educational, exciting, and fun. There are a variety of volunteer tasks to choose from – dog walking, cat socialization, cleaning, special events, and fundraising to name a few. No task is ever too small! We wish you a long, happy, and rewarding relationship with the HSOTC as a member of our volunteer team.

The HSOTC staff and Board of Directors value your service and dedication to caring for homeless pets and giving them your time, energy, and affection. As a member of our volunteer team, we strive to:

- Treat you as a valued team member in our organization.
- Provide you with adequate information, training, and assistance so you can be successful in your volunteer position.
- Provide you with guidance, goals, and feedback.
- Respect your skills, dignity, and individual needs.
- Be open-minded and receptive to your comments and suggestions.

## **ABOUT THE VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK**

This handbook summarizes some of the most important policies and procedures of the HSOTC volunteer program. The HSOTC retains the sole right in its business judgment to add, modify, suspend, interpret, or cancel in whole or in part the provisions outlined in this handbook at any time. It is impossible for this handbook to be all inclusive. The HSOTC is responsible for administering all policies described in this handbook and if you have a question about a particular provision or about the policies and procedures governing volunteers within this organization (Policies #42 and #43) or regarding a situation not mentioned in this handbook, please contact the Director of Shelter Operations (DSO) for clarification. As a volunteer with the HSOTC we ask that you read and become familiar with this handbook. Nothing in this handbook creates a contractual relationship or employee relationship between the volunteer and the HSOTC.

## **VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES**

Prior to volunteering, all volunteers must attend a volunteer orientation, complete the required paperwork, and acknowledge receipt of this handbook. Volunteers must be at least 14 years of age to work and all volunteers under 18 years of age must have a valid work permit. During orientation a HSOTC staff member will provide a tour of the shelter and review rules and procedures. Training is provided so all volunteers know how to handle animals in a shelter environment. Volunteers are expected to handle animals kindly, with common sense, and concern for both the animals' safety as well as their own. Appropriate, safe, and humane methods of handling and restraint will be taught at the HSOTC and must be used at all times. Volunteers must ask the HSOTC before giving treats to any dogs or cats.



## **REPRESENTING THE HSOTC**

As a volunteer for the HSOTC, what you say and do reflects on the organization as a whole. Volunteers are expected to represent the HSOTC in a helpful, friendly, and professional manner at all times. Our existence and effectiveness are dependent upon the goodwill of the community. For this reason, it is important for volunteers to always represent the HSOTC in a positive manner and promote the beliefs and practices of the organization. Approaching your assignment with enthusiasm and dedication will positively impact the public, potential adopters, and staff.

Our public image may be based on client contact with volunteers. The image the HSOTC holds in our community is strongly affected by our portrayal in the media. For that reason, it is extremely important that the media receives accurate and appropriate information regarding our organization. At no time should a volunteer contact or address the media without the specific consent of the HSOTC. Please send all media inquiries directly to the DSO. Volunteers must not oblige the HSOTC to take any action, financial commitment or sign contracts on behalf of the HSOTC.

## **ATTENDANCE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

When you commit to a volunteer position, you become a valuable member of our team and play an important role in the success of the HSOTC. When a volunteer signs up for a volunteer shift, the shelter staff are relying on you to follow through with that commitment and you are expected to take the responsibility seriously.

Volunteers are expected to complete their scheduled shifts or notify the HSOTC if the need arises to leave early. If you find that you are unable to fulfill the responsibilities of your volunteer position, please inform a HSOTC staff member as soon as possible. We ask that you please do not make a commitment that you may be unable to fulfill or take on responsibilities for which you feel unqualified. If you cannot perform the duties of your volunteer position or meet required deadlines and do not notify the HSOTC in advance, your participation in the volunteer program may be adversely affected. Volunteers are expected to notify the HSOTC if they wish to terminate their position.

## **VOLUNTEER RECORDS**

Volunteer records are very important to the HSOTC. Our volunteer statistics reflect the degree to which the HSOTC involves and interacts with the community, are a recognition of your contribution, and are helpful for grant applications. Please remember to complete your volunteer timecard located at the front desk each time you volunteer. Please notify the HSOTC of all changes of telephone numbers, mailing addresses, e-mail addresses, and any other pertinent information.



## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

Below is a list of expectations the HSOTC has for every volunteer.

### **DRESS CODE**

As a representative of the HSOTC, the impression you create will be a lasting one. We must be conscious of our appearance, hygiene, and attire to the public. Volunteers must always wear their name badge and have it visible. Volunteers should be clean and well-groomed.

For safety and modesty, volunteers may not wear:

- Slip-on shoes (flip-flops, sandals).
- T-shirts with controversial or offensive messages.
- Torn, ripped or dirty clothing.
- Eating, drinking, and gum-chewing are not recommended at event booths when visitors are present. No volunteer should ever smoke, drink alcohol or use drugs when representing the HSOTC in public.

## **SAFETY**

Do not perform any duty or task that you do not feel comfortable with or have not been trained to do. It is extremely important that volunteers follow all safety regulations. In addition, please report any unsafe practices or conditions to the DSO or a HSOTC staff member immediately.



## **INJURIES OR ACCIDENTS**

Any injuries or accidents occurring on the job must be reported to the DSO immediately. Animal bites must be reported to the HSOTC Animal Caretaker and the DSO. Failure to report a bite will result in termination of your volunteer status.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY AND NONDISCLOSURE POLICY**

As a volunteer for the HSOTC, you may have access to confidential information. Volunteers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all proprietary or privileged information of the HSOTC to which they are exposed while serving as a volunteer. Disclosure of confidential information might seriously damage the HSOTC, our clients and staff, and therefore will not be tolerated. This non-disclosure applies during and after your volunteer time with the HSOTC. Any copying, reproducing or distributing of confidential information in any manner must be authorized by the DSO. Confidential information remains the property of the HSOTC and must be returned to the HSOTC on demand. Questions concerning whether information is confidential should be directed to the DSO. Failure to maintain confidentiality will result in termination of volunteer service.

## **SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY**

We are committed to providing an environment free from all forms of sexual harassment, discrimination or intimidation. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature will not be tolerated. In accordance with all federal, state, and local laws, the HSOTC expressly prohibits

discrimination or harassment based on race, color, religion, creed, gender, pregnancy, age, national origin, ancestry, physical or mental disability or handicap, citizenship, marital status, sexual orientation, military or veteran's status or any other protected classification.

The HSOTC expressly forbids and will not tolerate any actions (i.e., words, jokes, comments, or gestures) that unreasonably interfere with a person's work performance or create an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment. Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature where: submission to such conduct is made a term or condition of volunteering, either explicitly or implicitly and submission to or rejection of such conduct has the purpose or effect of creating an offensive, hostile or intimidating work environment. Anyone engaging in sexual or other unlawful harassment, retaliation or intimidation will result in corrective action, up to and including termination of volunteer service. The HSOTC will not tolerate any retaliation, harassment or intimidation of any employee or volunteer who makes a complaint under this policy. Any volunteer who is subject to and aware of such harassment is expected to report it immediately to the DSO. If you believe you are the victim of harassment or have witnessed harassment of any kind, immediately notify the DSO.

## **DRUGS, ALCOHOL, AND SMOKING**

The HSOTC is committed to a safe, healthy, and productive work environment free from the effects of substance abuse. Abuse of alcohol, drugs, and controlled substances impair judgment, resulting in increased safety risks, injuries, and faulty decision making. The HSOTC prohibits the use, sale, dispensation, manufacture, distribution, and possession of alcohol, drugs, or controlled substances on the HSOTC facility or other worksites.



Our objective is to provide a smoke-free working environment within our organization; therefore, smoking is strictly prohibited in all internal areas of the building and while working at volunteer events. Any violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of volunteer service.

## **PARKING, PERSONAL BELONGINGS, AND DESIGNATED EATING AREAS**



Please allow our clients the use of the most convenient parking spaces as our parking is limited. We have limited space to house your personal belongings. The HSOTC is not responsible for lost or stolen articles. Food and beverages are not allowed in the animal areas. Volunteers are welcome to eat and/or drink in the designated conference room kitchen area. Please refrain from bringing any glass items to the shelter.

Volunteers may not bring friends along for their volunteer shifts. Anyone interested in volunteering should fill out a volunteer application and attend a volunteer orientation session.

## **OVERVIEW OF VOLUNTEER POSITIONS**

### **VOLUNTEER POSITION TITLE: DOG CAREGIVER/WALKER**

*Reports to:* Director of Shelter Operations (DSO)

*Organizational Impact:* Provides essential playtime, potty breaks, training, “in suite” maintenance, and social interaction for our dogs to keep them happy and healthy during their stay. Dogs are taken out of their kennels to go for walks several times a day. Socializing with the dogs on long walks or working on manners and tricks.

*Location of Work:*

- HSOTC facility, approved Dog Day Out locations, event locations.

*Core Responsibilities:*

- Playtime, training, and social interaction
- “In Suite” maintenance/cleaning
- Potty breaks
- Dog walking
- Socialization and/or working on manners and tricks
- Enrichment
- Laundry
- Kong prep
- Clean food dishes and water bowls
- Shelter maintenance and cleaning



*Qualifications/Requirements:*

- Enjoys working directly with dogs, giving them plenty of attention and care.
- Must be 16 years or older.
- Kennel staff will determine what dogs each walker is best suited for. There may be restrictions as to the size, weight, and temperament of the dogs each walker is assigned.
- Each dog has a corresponding color (green, yellow, red) that indicates the experience level required for walking.
- Walkers must be comfortable interacting with dogs they are assigned.
- Trained in the use of slip collars, easy walk harnesses, and gentle leader.

**VOLUNTEER POSITION TITLE: CAT CAREGIVER**

*Reports to:* Director of Shelter Operations (DSO)

*Organizational Impact:* Provides essential playtime, brushing, “apartment” maintenance, social interaction, and even training to keep the cats happy and healthy during their stay.

*Location of Work:*

- HSOTC facility, event locations

*Core Responsibilities:*

- Playtime, brushing, and training
- “Apartment” maintenance and cleaning
- Training and attention
- Laundry
- Litter box prep



- Clean food dishes and water bowls
- Shelter maintenance and cleaning

*Qualifications/Requirements:*

- Enjoys working directly with cats and giving them plenty of attention and care.
- Must be 14 years of age or older.

**VOLUNTEER POSITION TITLE:  
FOSTER CARE**

*Reports to:* Director of Shelter Operations (DSO)

*Organizational Impact:* Our foster care program provides a temporary home for HSOTC kittens, puppies, cats, and dogs in need. The length

of fostering can vary from a few days to several months depending on the amount of care or behavioral modification needed. The rewards of being a foster parent are many, from offering an animal a second chance to the added benefit of receiving the love and attention right back from the animal you nurture.

*Location of Work:*

- Home

*Core Responsibilities:*

- Provide a safe and comfortable home for the dog or cat to live
- Feed, socialize, groom, and training
- Provide positive human interaction
- Observe animal's health, behavior, and communicate any changes or concerns to the DSO

**VOLUNTEER POSITION TITLE: COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND FUNDRAISING EVENTS**

*Reports to:* Marketing Specialist and Event Coordinator (EC)

*Organizational Impact:* Volunteers set up, tear-down, cleanup, distribute materials, and staff informational tables at special events and fundraisers in a variety of settings. Depending upon the type of event, there are a variety of tasks to be completed.

*Location of Work:*

- Event location, some weekend availability.

*Qualifications/Requirements:*

- Professional demeanor with excellent customer skills
- Ability to work with the public answering their questions
- Good communication skills and ability to work with a variety of individuals
- Valid driver's license and reliable personal transportation



## **SERVICES AND PROGRAMS**

Below is a list of most of the services and programs provided to the public.

### **ADOPTIONS**

The HSOTC has many animals available for adoption. We are committed to achieving 100% placement of adoptable animals. There is a 10% discount on adoptions for seniors 65 years and older and a 15% discount for members of the HSOTC. Volunteers may adopt animals from the shelter. Adoption is contingent upon the volunteer meeting the HSOTC adoption requirements and payment of all applicable fees. While we encourage you to tell your friends and neighbors about the wonderful pets we have available for adoption, we cannot “hold” a pet for anyone.

### **SPAY AND NEUTER VOUCHERS**

The HSOTC has a targeted spay/neuter low-income voucher program aimed at assisting those Tuolumne County residents most in need. The voucher(s) help reduce the cost of spaying or neutering the dogs and cats of qualifying residents (verification of a gross total household income must be provided). Helping to reinforce this program is our local participating veterinarians who reduce their fees in accordance with the terms and conditions of the voucher. If an application is approved and funding is available, the voucher covers a portion of the cost with the balance covered by the client.

## **SPECIAL EVENTS AND FUNDRAISERS**

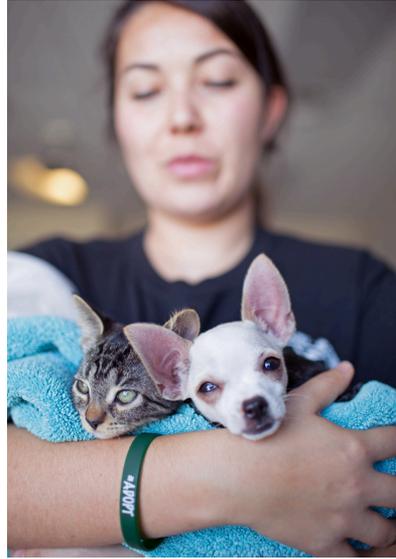
There are many opportunities to assist with and participate in community events each year and it takes many people to help build a successful event. If you can help prepare, plan, and/or spend time at any of these events, we will greatly appreciate your help!

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

In order to best serve the public and be effective in getting shelter animals adopted, the HSOTC asks all volunteers to become knowledgeable about our shelter animals and the basic policies and procedures of the HSOTC.

### **HOW IS THE HSOTC FUNDED?**

Contributions from individuals, fundraising events, public appeal campaigns, memberships, grants, corporate support, and bequests make up the majority of our operating budget, with secondary support from service revenue such as adoptions, surrender fees, and our crematory. We receive no funding from federal, state or county entities. We are not affiliated with the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) or the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA). The HSOTC receives funding only in the form of donations and fundraising efforts. We receive no government funding and our staff and dedicated volunteers work tirelessly to care for these animals, providing them with the second chance that they so greatly deserve. Providing food, shelter, exercise, medical care, and love until our residents find their new home offers extremely rewarding work.



## **WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE HSOTC AND TUOLUMNE COUNTY ANIMAL CONTROL?**

The HSOTC is not the same as animal control – we are two very distinct agencies, and it is important to understand the differences. The HSOTC is a 501(c)(3) non-profit independent organization that does not receive funding from federal, state or county entities. The County of Tuolumne is a government agency that operates Animal Control (AC) and employs their own Animal Control Officers (ACO) who enforce state laws and county ordinances pertaining to animal care and control of domestic animals. AC provides shelter for lost, found, and seized animals. It has the authority to investigate suspected or reported acts of animal cruelty or neglect, animals causing a nuisance, and rabies/license violations. An ACO may take possession of dangerous animals as well as pets who have been abandoned, lost or unwanted. We work closely with AC and most of our animals are transferred from AC. AC animals are available for adoption.



## **WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I HAVE A LOST OR FOUND ANIMAL?**

Call to report the animal to Tuolumne County Animal Control at 209.694.2730.

## **DOES THE HSOTC WORK WITH OTHER RESCUE GROUPS?**

Yes, we have established relationships with local and out-of-area rescue groups and organizations to ensure our animals have the best opportunity for adoption.

## **DOES THE HSOTC TURN ANIMALS AWAY?**

Yes, as a no-kill facility, we are limited in the number of animals we can accept.

## **DOES THE HSOTC HAVE A VETERINARIAN ONSITE?**

No, we use the services of our local veterinarians that belong to the Tuolumne County Veterinarians Association.

## **DOES THE HSOTC PROVIDE CREMATORY SERVICES?**

Yes, the HSOTC has its own on-site crematory and performs pet cremations for the public's pets as well as veterinary clinics. We offer individual and communal pet cremation. Our Paw Prints in Heaven Crematory Services provides:

*Individual Cremation* – our crematorium allows us to complete the process while safeguarding the identity of the pet's remains. All animals for individual cremation are kept separate and the equipment used is such that we can confidently guarantee the correct ashes are returned to the owner.

*Communal Cremation* – in a communal cremation, several pets are cremated together, and their ashes are spread in our In Loving Memory memorial garden. The garden is cared for by the HSOTC staff. Visitors are welcome during regular business hours.



# GLOSSARY OF TERMS

*Adoptable* – a healthy or treatable animal that can be placed into a typical home

*Board of Directors* – individuals elected by the HSOTC membership to manage, oversee, and assume overall responsibility for the HSOTC

*Community Cat* – any free-roaming cat in a neighborhood

*Development* – refers to fundraising and donor relations

*DA2PP* – canine vaccine administered to all shelter dogs: Distemper, Adenovirus 2 (Hepatitis), Parvovirus, and Parainfluenza

*Donor* – anyone who contributes money, in-kind goods, or service to the HSOTC

*Euthanasia* – derives from the Greek words – Eu = good; Thanos = death, meaning the intentional causing of a painless and easy death

*Feral Cat* – unsocialized cat unable to be safely handled or placed into a typical home

*Foster Care* – individualized, in-home care for special needs animals

*FVRCP* – feline vaccine administered to all shelter cats: Rhinotracheitis, Calicivirus, and Panleukopenia

*Iso or Isolation* – areas where ill animals or animals that have been surrendered are kept separate from the rest of the general animal population

*Kennel* – area that houses our adoptable canine residents

*Kennel Card* – information about an animal that enters the shelter

*Kennel Cough* – contagious airborne virus easily spread among dogs

*Neuter* – castration, the surgical removal of the testicles of a male animal

*No-kill* – a no-kill shelter is a facility with a save rate where 90% or more of the animals taken in are treated, rehabilitated, saved, and adopted out to loving homes

*Parvo* – a very contagious and often deadly virus that dogs are susceptible to; all dogs with Parvo or with the symptoms of Parvo must be isolated from other animals to prevent the spread of the virus

*Paws-A-While Newsletter* – this newsletter is published every month and highlights events and accomplishments at the HSOTC

*PSA* – public service announcement

*Shelter Management* – refers to the HSOTC staff in supervisory, management or Board of Director positions

*Spay* – ovariectomy of a female animal to prevent reproduction

*URI* – upper respiratory infection that affects cats

