



VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

For volunteers of the Humane Society Yukon

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Welcome

We are pleased that you have chosen to volunteer with us at Humane Society Yukon (HSY). Volunteers play a vital role in helping us care for hundreds of abused, neglected, injured and abandoned animals in the Yukon each year.

We wish you every success while volunteering with us and hope that you will enjoy all the satisfaction that comes from investing your time with HSY.

Welcome to Humane Society Yukon.



Executive Director

1. Introduction

1.1. Purpose of this Volunteer Handbook

This Volunteer Handbook was developed to help you understand our organization, describe the expectations that HSY has for volunteers, and to outline the current policies and practices. It is the responsibility of each volunteer to read the handbook in its entirety. If at any time you have a question about how to implement or understand the handbook, please consult the Executive Director.

1.2. Acknowledgment

Before your scheduled first shift, you are asked to read the HSY Volunteer Handbook and acknowledge that you understand and will comply with the following:

- the volunteer Rights & Responsibilities as outlined in the handbook.
- all policies and procedures outlined in the handbook.

- that HSY may change any part of this manual or any policy at any time with or without notice.
- that breaching conduct standards may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination or other legal remedy available to the HSY.
- policies in the manual are for my safety and protection as a volunteer as well as for the animals in my care, other volunteers and staff.
- HSY accepts the service of all volunteers with the understanding that such service is at the sole discretion of the HSY.
- you are devoting your time to HSY on a purely voluntary basis and primarily for your own benefit. You are serving with no expectation of compensation for your services.
- HSY may at any time, for whatever reason, decide to terminate my volunteer participation in the HSY.
- you may at any time, for whatever reason, decide to end your relationship with the HSY.

1.3. About the Humane Society Yukon

HSY was founded in 1987 as a direct result of a local Yukon outfitter allowing his horses to starve to death. The organization originally consisted of nothing more than a fenced-in dog area on Andrea and Florian Lemphers' rural acreage and a second telephone line in their home. In 1989, HSY was officially registered as a non-profit society in the Yukon. Today, HSY focuses on animal welfare education initiatives throughout the territory, as well as the operation of the Mae Bachur Animal Shelter in Whitehorse.

Our mission at Humane Society Yukon is to help animals in need. To give them a safe warm place to stay while we try to find the best forever home for them.

2. Volunteer Guidelines

HSY commits to the following best practices and guidelines for volunteer involvement.

2.1. Role of Volunteers

The HSY acknowledges that volunteers are an integral part of our team and are essential in providing the best possible care for the animals taken in by the HSY. Volunteers work directly to improve the welfare of shelter animals, assist in fundraising initiatives, and promote responsible pet care in our community. The HSY is very fortunate to have a committed core of volunteers who contribute to its success.

2.2. Rights of Volunteers

- Be treated as a part of the HSY team
- Be appreciated and recognized for your contributions
- Have a rewarding experience
- Receive appropriate onboarding and training
- Be given guidance, direction and support
- Volunteer in a safe, welcoming and supportive environment
- Volunteer in an environment free from violence, harassment & discrimination (defined in the [Glossary](#))

2.3. Responsibility of Volunteers

- Perform duties as assigned to you effectively and honestly
- Follow HSY policies and procedures
- Direct questions from the public to a staff member
- Honour your commitments for volunteer shifts

- Give as much notice as possible if you are unable to attend your shift
- Notify staff immediately if you or someone else are injured while volunteering
- Use only safe and humane handling and training techniques with the animals as directed by HSY
- Ask questions if you are unsure of anything
- Ensure privacy and confidentiality in all matters at all times
- Act in a manner that is safe and supportive
- Provide an environment free from violence, harassment & discrimination

Note: The Society reserves the right to change or terminate a volunteer contract at any time without notice.

2.4. Communications

Volunteers are representatives and ambassadors for HSY.

Answering questions

- Only designated spokespersons may publicly comment on HSY policies and procedures or answer questions related to HSY from the media or the public.

HSY affiliation

- Volunteers may not use their affiliation with HSY in connection with partisan politics, religious matters or community issues contrary to positions taken by the organization. HSY resources must not be used to support an individual's personal or political activities. As a society, HSY needs to remain politically nonpartisan in all matters.

Social media

- When volunteers express themselves in social media on issues related to, or about the HSY, they contribute to public perception of the HSY reputation. Volunteers are strongly urged to clarify that they are not speaking on behalf of HSY unless they are expressly authorized to do so.

- Disclaimer example: “This is my personal opinion and does not necessarily reflect the views of the Humane Society Yukon.”
- Use of this disclaimer does not exempt you from being accountable and/or potentially legally culpable for comments made online. Volunteers are personally responsible for the content you publish online, and can be held liable for any commentary deemed defamatory, obscene, proprietary or libellous.
- It is important that volunteers ensure that at all times they act as ambassadors for the HSY and protect the privacy of yourself, HSY and others.

Information

- If you come across a negative comment or potential misinformation involving the HSY, we ask that you bring it to the attention of the Executive Director immediately so that the organization can respond accordingly.
- We appreciate your support in this area as communications and public image are important for our continued success.

2.5. Privacy & Confidentiality

HSY values the trust of those we deal with and with the public. Maintaining this trust requires transparency, accountability and protection of privacy and personal information.

All HSY representatives have a legal obligation to protect personal information obtained in the course of their duties with HSY. All reasonable measures must be taken to ensure personal information is collected, used and disclosed only as needed to conduct the business of the Society.

Examples of possible breaches include, but are not limited to:

- unauthorised viewing or modification of an adoption/foster application or an animal file

- sharing information about a potential adopter or donor
- leaving an adoption application in public view
- sharing passwords that were given to you for specific purposes

It is your duty to ensure the protection and privacy of all information you have access to as part of your volunteer role.

3. Recruitment and Selection of Volunteers

3.1. Information Session

All prospective volunteers are required to attend an information session covering the HSY's structure and its mission, safety procedures, and the work to which the volunteer may be assigned.

3.2. Non-Discrimination

HSY accepts, supports, and practices the concept of non-discrimination (defined in [Glossary](#) at the bottom of this handbook).

4. Working as a Volunteer at the Shelter

4.1. Starting Out

- On the first day you will be introduced to the staff and volunteers you will be working with
- You will be shown where to sign-in/out
 - we track volunteer hours to highlight the value and impact of volunteers
- You will be shown where the tools of the job are located and how to use them
- It often can take a few visits to feel comfortable
 - Give yourself time and ask a lot of questions

- No question is too small or too trivial
- If you are uncomfortable during your shift this should be reported to the staff person on shift and the Executive Director
 - It's essential that everyone feels part of the HSY team and is free to express any suggestions, concerns, and praise
- Remember, everyone is here for the same purpose – to support and care for the animals in our charge

4.2. Orientation and Training

The HSY strives to develop and provide meaningful training for every volunteer. You will receive a comprehensive orientation encompassing workplace health and safety, and procedures.

4.3. Tracking Volunteer Hours

Volunteers are asked to use the short [Volunteer Tracking Form](#) to track their volunteer hours. Use this form after each volunteer shift; it takes less than 1 minute. This helps HSY tally individual volunteer hours for recognition purposes as well as track the value of volunteer time towards the organization to share with funders, donors, sponsors and the public.

4.4. Recognition

HSY is committed to recognizing the contribution of volunteers to. HSY will share information about recognition events and initiatives throughout the year. If you have ideas of how volunteers could be recognized, please share them with the Volunteer Coordinator(s) or the Executive Director.

4.5. Moving on From HSY

You are asked to notify the Executive Director as soon as you know of any changes that will affect your volunteer commitment so that HSY can make the necessary arrangements.

5. Adopt a Dog for the Day Program

5.1. About the Program

Volunteers get to enjoy the day with one of our shelter dogs. You come and pick up a dog for a day of socializing and maybe a little adventure.

- Program days are Sunday & Monday.
- You must apply by Thursday of the previous week.
- One piece of ID with your name and current physical address is required upon pick up of the dog.
- Pick up time is 10:30am. Drop off time is before 5:30pm.

5.2. Guidelines

- Kennel attendants will make the decision on which dogs are suitable for the client profile.
- Dogs must always be on leash and/or harness to avoid runaways and possible accidents.
- Food and medication instructions will be provided by shelter staff and must be followed while the dog is in your care.
- You must stay within driving distance to return the dog back to the shelter. We're ok if you're going to bop out of town to a lake or your favourite hiking spot, but you must return by 5:30pm. Dogs cannot be taken out of the territory.

- You are responsible for the care of the dog while they are with you. You cannot pass the animal off to a friend or family or any third party or leave them in the care of children under the age of 18 years.
- You will be responsible for the animal if anything occurs while in your care. If the animal becomes injured or deceased in your care, you will be responsible for any costs incurred.
- The dog must be properly restrained or crated within your vehicle. No truck boxes, riding on laps or anything that would cause dangerous driving or harm to the animal.
- Humane Society Yukon is not liable for any behaviour of the animal arising from agitation, being frightened, or put in a situation where they may bite to protect themselves.
- If any problems arise, you are responsible to bring the dog back to the shelter immediately and report on the occurrence.
- If the dog is not returned to the shelter, you will be responsible for the full adoption cost of the dog.

6. HSY Health and Safety for Volunteers

6.1. Minimizing Risks

Your personal safety, as well as the safety of other volunteers, staff, and the animals, is paramount when volunteering. As it relates to COVID-19 and other public health matters, HSY will follow the guidelines as outlined by the Chief Medical Officer of Health.

When working directly with animals, take the following steps to minimize risks:

- Familiarize yourself with staff and other volunteers on your shift.
- Only perform tasks you have been trained to do and ask for assistance when needed.

- Wash your hands frequently. Wash hands after cleaning any animal or cage, after handling dirty laundry, before eating, before touching your mouth/eyes, and when leaving your shift.
- Stay home when you are ill or show symptoms of any illness or virus.

6.2. Minimizing Risks with Animals

The animals at the shelter are not your pets. For your own safety, please treat them with respect and common sense.

- Use only humane and positive handling and training techniques with the animals.
- Only handle animals with proper training. Ask staff to help if you feel uncomfortable handling an animal.
- Wear closed-toed shoes, long pants, and t-shirts to prevent injury from scratches and bites.
- Inform a staff member immediately if you get scratched, bitten or cut.
- When you are working with animals, do not use your cell phone.
- Refrain from running, loud noises, or quick sudden movements around the animals.
- Refrain from hovering or going face to face with the animals.
- Discourage dogs from jumping on you, chewing on you or your stuff.
- Be extremely cautious when approaching strangers or other animals in public.
- Refrain from letting shelter dogs meet other dogs on the street.
- When walking a dog, keep it on a leash at all times until the dog is securely back in its kennel.
- Please inform a staff member if any animal growls, snaps, or lunges at you, other people, or other animals.
- If at any time you are uncomfortable with an animal, please let us know and do not handle the animal.

6.3. Euthanasia

HSY is a “no kill shelter,” which means we do not euthanize healthy, adoptable animals in our care. However, animals who pose a significant risk to other animals or to humans may be humanely euthanized to protect public safety. As well, animals suffering from severe injuries or painful terminal illness may be euthanized for humane reasons.

Personal attachment to certain animals and empathy for those who may be euthanized is normal and understandable, but final decisions regarding euthanasia need to be respected. The euthanasia decision is emotionally difficult for all involved. Some mental health resources are available online and in the community and volunteers are encouraged to access them. Some examples include:

- [Canadian Mental Health Association - Yukon Division](#)
- [Wellness Together Canada](#)
- [Yukon Mental Wellness and Substance Use Services](#)

6.4. Tetanus Vaccinations

All volunteers who will be working directly with the animals are encouraged to have their tetanus vaccination up-to-date.

6.5. Violence, Harassment, Bullying & Discrimination

Humane Society Yukon is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment that is free from violence, harassment, bullying and discrimination. Any act of violence, harassment, bullying or discrimination committed by, or against, any volunteer will not be tolerated. HSY encourages the reporting of all incidents.

In responding to a potential or actual threat of violence in the workplace, the volunteer should immediately contact the Executive Director (ED) for assistance. If



the ED is unavailable, the volunteer should excuse themselves and call 911 for emergency assistance.

Under no circumstances should a volunteer put themselves in danger to attempt to remove a member of the public from the premises. If a member of the public is potentially violent and demonstrates an intention to steal money, take an animal or destroy equipment, the volunteer should allow them to proceed and call 911 immediately.

See [Glossary section](#) at the back of the Handbook.

6.6. Alcohol & Substance Use

Volunteers who report for their shifts impaired by drugs or alcohol will be asked to leave and their volunteer placement may be terminated.

Volunteer Waiver & Release of Liability Agreement

PLEASE, READ CAREFULLY

Volunteers can agree and accept this agreement on the [Volunteer Application form](#) or download, sign and submit to HSY.

In consideration of being permitted to volunteer at the Humane Society Yukon (HSY), I _____ understand and voluntarily agree to the following:

Disclaimer

1. The Humane Society Yukon (Hereafter HSY) and its staff, volunteers, directors, and representatives (collectively, "HSY and its Representatives") are not responsible for any injury, personal injury, damage, property damage, expense, loss of income or loss of any kind suffered by a volunteer during, or as a result of, the volunteering activities, caused in any manner whatsoever including, but not limited to, the negligence of the HSY or its Representatives.

Risks

2. I acknowledge the risks and dangers inherent in handling animals and in otherwise volunteering with the HSY.
3. I FREELY ASSUME and FULLY ACCEPT all such risks and possibility of personal injury, death, property damage, expense and related loss, including loss of income, resulting from volunteering with the HSY and the use of the equipment, facilities, and premises of the HSY.
4. I agree that all my volunteering services are performed at my own risk and that it is my responsibility to act in such a manner as to be responsible for my own safety while volunteering. I agree to take every precaution to provide for my



own safety and well-being while volunteering at the HSY and/or included but not limited to the use of the equipment, facilities, and premises for the HSY.

Consent for Treatment

5. I authorize HSY to contact the emergency contact provided to the HSY and seek emergency medical care in case of accident, illness, or injury.

Release of Liability

6. In consideration of the HSY allowing me to volunteer, I agree to WAIVE any and all claims that I may have now or in the future against the HSY and its Representatives.
7. I hereby forever release the HSY, its Representatives and each of their respective heirs, executors, administrators, successors, and assigns, from any and all liability for any and against all claims, actions, demands, damages (including direct, indirect, special and/or consequential), loss, actions judgments, and cost (including legal fees) (collectively the "Claims" which I may have or may in the future, that might arise out of, result from, or relate to my volunteering and the use of equipment, facilities, and premises, even though such Claims may have been caused by any manner whatsoever, including but not limited to, the negligence, gross negligence, omissions, carelessness, breach of contract and/or breach of any statutory duty of care of the HSY and its Representatives.

Acknowledgement

8. I acknowledge that I have read and understand this Agreement, that I have executed this Agreement voluntarily, and that this Agreement is to be binding upon myself, my heirs, spouse, children, parents, guardians, next of kin, executors, administrators and legal or personal representatives. If any portion of this Agreement is later found to be invalid or unenforceable, it is agreed that the balance of the Agreement shall continue in full legal force and effect. It is agreed that any litigation involving the parties to this Agreement shall be



brought solely within the Yukon Territory and shall be within the exclusive jurisdiction of the Courts of the Yukon Territory.

Dated this _____ day of _____ 20_____

Signature:_____

Print Name:_____

Witness Signature:_____

Witness Print Name:_____

IF THE VOLUNTEER IS A MINOR, A PARENT OR GUARDIAN MUST SIGN AND AGREE TO THE ABOVE AS WELL AS TO THE CONDITIONS BELOW:

I _____ as the parent or the guardian of the volunteer, acknowledge that by signing this document, I am, in addition to the Volunteer, assuming the responsibility of educating and informing the Volunteer of the Volunteer Agreement and will be bound by the above terms as if same have been directly agreed to by me. Also, in consideration of the HSY permitting the Volunteer to volunteer for the HSY, I agree to save harmless and indemnify the HSY and its Representatives from any claims arising out of the action of the Volunteer or made by the Volunteer while volunteering for the HSY.

Dated this _____ day of _____ 20_____

Signature:_____

Print Name:_____

Witness Signature:_____

Witness Print Name:_____

Glossary

Discrimination

- When a person or group is treated unfairly on the grounds of race, nationality, ethnic or linguistic background, religion or creed, age, sex, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, criminal charges or record, political belief, marital or family status or income.

Harassment

- Unwarranted intrusion upon the dignity of a person including sexual solicitation or advance; any act of intimidation or threat; objectionable acts, comments or displays that demean, belittle or cause personal humiliation or embarrassment. It can include jokes, innuendos, insults, negative remarks and displaying derogatory pictures.

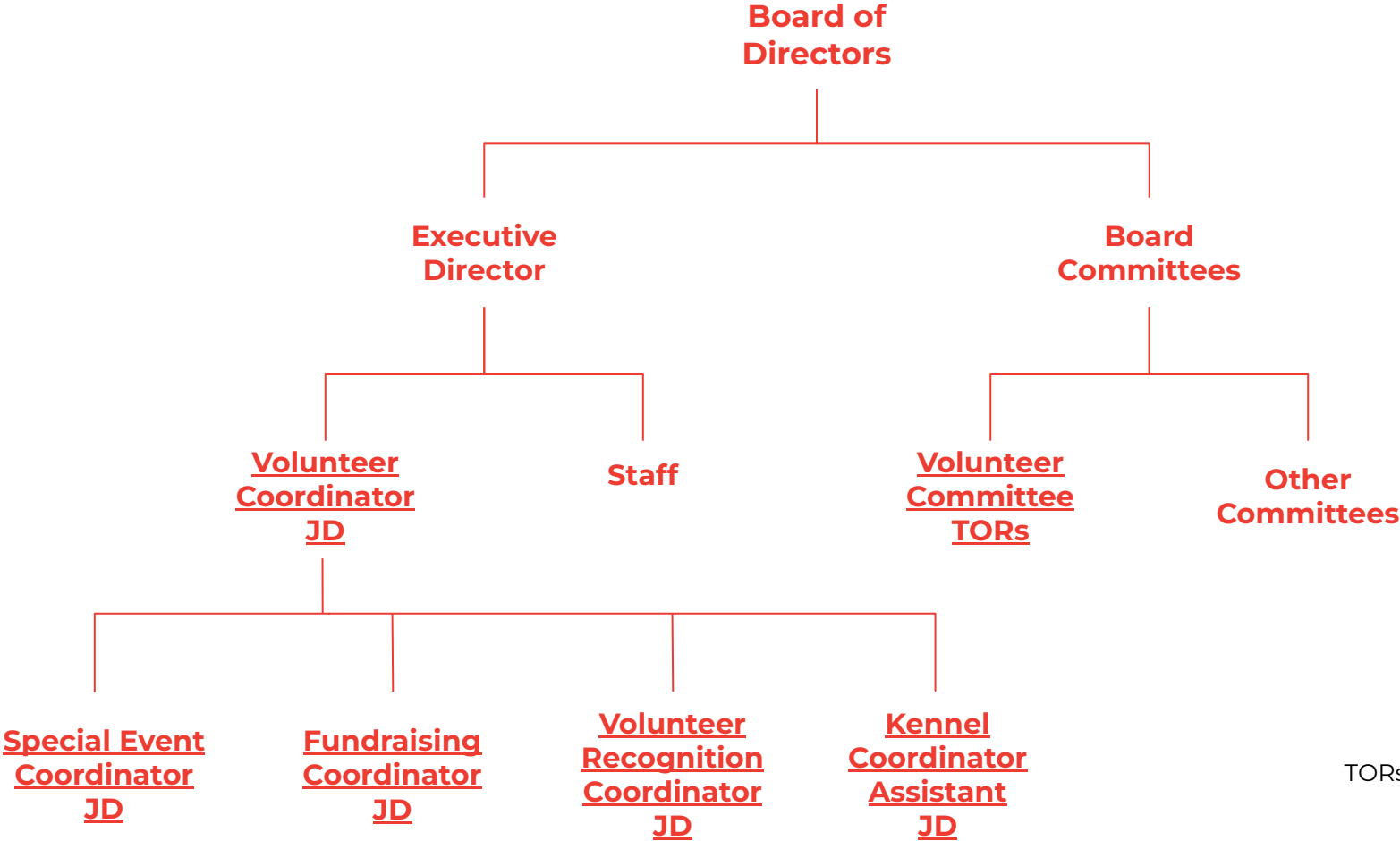
Nondiscrimination

- HSY will not refuse to allow a person to volunteer or discriminate against a person with respect to any term or condition of their volunteer engagement, because of race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, political belief, religion, marital status, family status, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation or age of that person.

Workplace Violence

- Can include abuse, threats, intimidation or assault. Workplace violence can occur between staff, volunteers, customers or visitors to our shelters or other work sites.

Volunteer Organization Chart



Acronyms:

JD - Job Description
TORs - Terms of Reference

Items underlined are hyperlinks to JDs & TORs