

2024 Volunteer Handbook

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Off-Site/Retail & Volunteer Manager
Humane Society of El Paso

2024



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Hello!

Thank you for choosing to volunteer with the Humane Society of El Paso. We are so grateful and extremely excited to have you as part of our pack!

We know that you will meet some amazing people and furry friends during your time volunteering. You will fall in love with many different dogs and cats along the way. Not only will you change their lives, but they will also change yours. We hope that you understand how much the organization relies on you and needs your help. Every hour that you donate to HSEP, is another hour towards making a difference in the lives of homeless animals.

Volunteers are vital members of the HSEP family, so I hope we make you feel valued and welcomed during your time here. On behalf of the Humane Society of El Paso team and our furry residents, we are so grateful you chose to be here, thank you!

Sincerely,

Braelyn Wong

Off-Site/Retail & Volunteer Manager

About the Humane Society of El Paso:

The Humane Society of El Paso was originally founded in 1947 to tackle the rabies crisis in El Paso. Once the cases decreased, HSEP changed its mission. In the 1960s, the shelter became focused on pet overpopulation and homelessness.

In 2009, HSEP became the first no-kill shelter in our community. This means the shelter does not euthanize healthy or treatable animals, does not euthanize for space, and has a live release rate of at least 90 percent. Pets with untreatable health conditions, poor quality of life, and dangerous behavior issues may be euthanized. Throughout the many years of operation, one thing has remained the same. HSEP is dedicated to bettering the lives of homeless pets.

Mission Statement:

“To prevent suffering, neglect, abuse and cruelty to animals by providing information, raising public awareness of animal issues and promote responsible guardianship and kindness toward all living things.”

Funding:

The Humane Society of El Paso is a private 501(c) (3), non-profit organization. We rely solely on our service fees, donations, fundraisers, and grants for funding. We have no affiliation with the Humane Society of the United States, ASPCA, or any local animal rescue. We do not receive any funding from the city, state, or federal government.

Policies:

- HSEP does not take in stray animals.
- Everyone must follow the surrender process, there are no exceptions.
- Everyone must follow the adoption process, there are no exceptions and HSEP does not place holds on any animals.

Contact Information:

- **Braelyn Wong**
 - **Off-Site/Retail & Volunteer Manager**
 - **915-242-8816**
 - **volunteershselpaso@gmail.com**

Key Staff:

- **Deb Benedict**
 - **Executive Director**
- **Robert Shamy**
 - **Director of Finance & Administration**
- **Edgar Armendariz**
 - **Director of Programs**
- **Courtney Roszak - Moore**
 - **Director of Marketing & Community Relations**
- **Vanessa Steele**
 - **Shelter Coordinator**
- **Samantha Gambill**
 - **Medical Services Coordinator**
- **Patti Hack**
 - **Foster Care & Mary Speer Spay/Neuter Program Coordinator**
- **Kim Lambert**
 - **Animal Care Supervisor**
- **Mike Metzger**
 - **Facilities/Health & Safety Coordinator**
- **Tania Dasilveira**
 - **Customer Service Supervisor**

Roles of a Volunteer:

The Humane Society of El Paso cares for nearly 2,000 homeless dogs and cats in a year. With a staff of just over forty, we need help taking care of these animals when things get busy at the shelter. This is where the volunteer comes in. A volunteer plays a crucial role at HSEP. You ensure the animals receive socialization, walks, a clean kennel, enrichment, and more!

As a volunteer, you are dedicating your time to HSEP. The staff understands that, so if you are more comfortable with cats, then you get to work with cats. If you would rather handle paperwork, we can get you there! Our goal is to give you the opportunity to volunteer in the area you love! HSEP tries to create a fun and welcoming environment for everyone, so we ask that volunteers remember to always be professional and polite.

The most important role of a volunteer is, and always will be, to help the shelter animals feel safe and cared for during their time here.

How to Become a Volunteer:

Thank you for choosing to volunteer with HSEP! Now, let's get you started:

- Submit a volunteer application.
- Attend an orientation.
- Complete core training with a staff member to become a Whisker Warrior.
- Be able to work independently and on a team when needed.

If you are under the age of 18-years-old, a parent or guardian will need to complete the minor consent form on the volunteer application.

HSEP does not accept volunteers under the age of 16-years-old.

Core Values:

- Adaptable
- Caring
- Compassionate
- Consistent
- Dependable
- Efficient
- Honest
- Motivated
- Open-Minded
- Positive
- Respectful

Often Heard & Used Acronyms

- HSEP - The Humane Society of El Paso
- CSA - Customer Service Associate
- KCA - Kennel Care Associate
- ACA - Animal Care Associate
- TNR - Trap, Neuter, & Return
- MS - Mary Speer
- O.R. - Owner Requested Euthanasia
- D.R. - Disposal
- C.R. - Cremation

Volunteer Positions/Tiers Overview:

All training past the core training will depend on the interest selected during the application process.

- **Whisker Warriors (Core Training - Tier One):**

- Beginner Kennel Care Duties

- You MUST complete 20 hours of core training before moving on to another tier.
- During the first 10 hours, the volunteer must be trained by HSEP staff.
 - Training for Beginner Kennel Care begins at 8 A.M.
 - Once the required staff training is completed, you can create your own schedule.
- Duties Include:
 - Spraying out kennels, vehicles, & crates (18+)
 - Laundry
 - Dishes
 - Scoop poop
 - Clean kennels
 - Help maintenance (Grounds keeping, trash duty, painting, etc.)
 - Put away donations
 - Sanitizing door handles/other areas in kennels
 - Scent spray for animals
 - Prep enrichment (Kongs, bubbles, read, olfactory, mental, & more)
 - Prep food/treats/toys
 - Put blankets in kennels

- **Continued Kennel Care and Animal Care (Tier Two)**

- **Tail Waggers (Intermediate Animal Handlers)**

- Whisker Warrior training required.
- You MUST complete 20 hours before moving into another position.
- The first 10 hours must be spent in training with a staff member or lead volunteer.
- Training starts at 9:00 A.M. with our Animal Care Team or Lead Volunteers.
 - Once the required staff training is completed, you can create your schedule.
- Duties Include:
 - Groom (bathe and brush) dogs on a pre-approved list
 - Walk pre-approved dogs (green dots)

- Kennel reactivity training
- Poop and food charts
- Prep and deliver food
- Complete enrichment activities
- Stock kennel with needed supplies
- Pre-approved playgroups
- **Paw-tastic Partners (Advanced Animal Handlers)**
 - Whisker Warrior and Tail Wagger training required.
 - Must complete 15 hours of training with a staff member before becoming independent.
 - Training will be scheduled and will be dependent on the Animal Care Supervisor's schedule.
 - Training will include:
 - Leash training
 - Walking yellow-dot dogs
 - Walking red-dot dogs
 - Clicker training
 - Kennel reactivity training
 - Creating playgroups.
 - Grooming (bathe/brush/nail trims)
 - Taking photos of animals
 - Field trips out of the shelter
- **Homeward Hounds (Adoption Counselors)**
 - Requires Whisker Warrior, Tail Wagger, and Paw-tastic Partner training.
 - Volunteers must complete an additional 20 hours of advanced animal handling (independently).
 - Training will include:
 - On-site Meet and Greets with customers
 - Assisting with adoptions at the shelter
 - Assisting ACAs with customer Meet and Greets
 - Assisting with red-dot animals Meet and Greets

- **Rescue Rangers (Volunteer Leads)**
 - Requires an additional 15 hours of training with the Volunteer Manager or another lead volunteer.
 - Must complete all levels of training listed above.
 - Including 15 hours (independently) in adoption counseling.
 - Must lead a mock orientation with the Volunteer Manager present.
 - Training will include:
 - Building relationships with new volunteers
 - Training new volunteers
 - Conducting volunteer orientations
 - Keeping in contact with your trainees
- **Specialized Training Options**
 - **Pur-fect Pals (Tier 3)**
 - *In order for a volunteer to become a Pur-fect Pal, they must complete Whisker Warrior training.*
 - **Beginner Mary Speer (18+)**
 - Training starts at 8:00 A.M. on Thursdays, Fridays, and every other Saturday.
 - Volunteers **MUST** train with a staff member for their first 15 hours.
 - This will be split into shifts.
 - Thursday: 8:00 A.M. to 10:00 A.M. and 12:00 to 4:00 P.M.
 - Friday and Saturday: 8:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M. and 1:00 to 4:00 P.M.
 - Training will include:
 - Paperwork
 - Prepping pee-pads
 - Setting up surgery areas
 - Cleaning surgery areas
 - Tagging traps
 - Cleaning traps

■ **Foster**

- Training will start at 9:00 A.M. on weekdays and 8:00 A.M. on Saturdays.
- Volunteers **MUST** train with a staff member for their first 15 hours.
- This will be split into shifts.
 - Monday through Friday: 9:00 to 10:00 A.M. and 4:00 to 6:00 P.M.
 - Saturday: 8:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M.
- Training will include:
 - Cleaning foster kennels
 - Doing the dishes
 - Doing laundry
 - Sweeping and mopping
 - Promoting the foster department off-site
 - Decluttering storage areas

■ **Beginner CSA (Customer Service Associate)**

- The first 8 hours must be spent in training with HSEP staff.
- Training will include:
 - Using copy machine
 - Filing
 - Making pet tags
 - Preparing microchips
 - Sorting and shredding
 - Cleaning the lobby (mop, windows, tables, trash)

■ **Retail Cats**

- Must attend an additional orientation for the **specific retailer** you are interested in.
 - HSEP is currently in five retail locations: PetSmart Fountains, PetSmart East Montana, PetSmart Artcraft, Petco Zaragoza, & Petco Basset
- Training will include:
 - Signing in
 - Cleaning cat kennels

- Critter sitting
- Replacing food and water
- Cleaning playrooms and cat areas
- **Off-Site Adoptions**
 - Requires Whisker Warrior training.
 - Must view an additional orientation.
 - Training will include:
 - Prepping off-site tote
 - Prepping the dogs for off-site
 - Meeting with potential adopters
 - Feeding and monitoring puppies
 - Monitoring adult dogs
 - Cleaning up after the dogs
- **Clinic**
 - Training will be dependent on the clinic staff's schedule.
 - The first 15 hours must be spent in training with HSEP staff.
 - Must be able to volunteer on a regular basis.
 - Training will include:
 - Washing dishes
 - Washing clinic laundry
 - Transporting puppies to/from surgery
 - Watching recovering puppies
 - Bathing puppies
- **Critter Consultants (Tier Four)**
 - Requires Whisker Warrior and Pur-fect Pals training.
 - **Advanced Mary Speer (18+)**
 - Must complete 20 hours of Beginner Mary Speer Training to move into Critter Consultant.
 - Volunteers will continue to do beginner tasks, but these additional tasks will be added:
 - Transport cats to/from vehicles
 - Help care for/handle surgery cats

- **Advanced CSA (Customer Service Associate)**
 - Must complete 25 hours of Beginner CSA to move into Advanced.
 - Volunteers will continue to complete beginner-level tasks, but additional responsibilities will be added:
 - Answer incoming and outgoing phone calls
 - Greet and usher potential adopters
 - Assist with adoption paperwork
 - Produce labels for urns
 - How to use the radio
- **Off-Site Lead**
 - Requires Homeward Hounds, Rescue Rangers, and Advanced CSA training.
 - Must complete an additional 10 hours of training with Off-Site Staff or a volunteer lead.
 - Training will include:
 - Selecting dogs to take off-site
 - Properly harness and leash each dog
 - Preparing off-site kennel cards, vaccines, and any other materials needed
 - Preparing van
 - Safely driving van
 - Processing adoption paperwork and payments
 - Promoting HSEP programs
- **Marketing (Experience Required)**
 - Requires Paw-tastic Partners Training
 - Must complete an additional eight hours of training with Marketing staff.
 - Training will include:
 - Social media
 - Photography
 - Videography
 - Special events

Disclaimer: If a volunteer has been trained how to do a task, they will be asked to help with all tasks around the shelter, regardless of the volunteer's position/title.

Rules for Volunteering:

- All volunteers must be 16-years-of-age or older.
- All volunteers must attend an orientation.
- All volunteers must complete the required training.
- Volunteers must sign in and out on Volunteermatters.
- Volunteers must wear a colored vest or HSEP shirt.
- No shorts, torn jeans, leggings, or open-toed shoes are allowed when volunteering at any time.
- NO volunteer is allowed to handle a dog 16-weeks-or-younger without direct permission from the staff.
- If a volunteer finds a stray or needs to surrender an animal, they must follow the same procedures as the general public.
- If a volunteer is interested in adopting, they must follow the same procedures as the general public.
- Volunteers must treat other volunteers, staff, customers, and animals with the utmost respect.
 - Be mature and speak kindly of/to one another.
 - Keep your hands to yourself.
- Report all incidents to HSEP staff immediately.
 - Including, but not limited to, bites, scratches, and falls.
- Volunteers must not enter staff locker rooms, the clinic, sick rooms, surgical holding rooms, or intake rooms without permission.
- Do not hesitate to ask a staff member a question if you are unsure of a procedure or are faced with a question you do not know the answer to.
- Know your limits with the animals.
 - Do NOT handle an animal if you are unsure if you can.
 - Do NOT create playgroups with the animals if you are not trained in Advanced Animal Handling.
 - Do NOT help separate dog fights if you are not trained in Advanced Animal Handling.
 - ALWAYS read the enrichment/kennel board before handling an animal.
- If you see a loose dog, please notify the staff immediately.
 - If there is a loose dog while you are walking another dog, find an empty run and lock yourself in.

- Do NOT help catch a loose dog if you have not completed Advanced Animal Handling training.
- Clean up after yourself.
- If you notice an animal looks ill or injured, please notify a staff member immediately.
- If you notice a potential safety hazard, please let the Volunteer Manager or staff member know immediately.
- Sanitize and wash your hands between animals frequently!
 - Rule of thumb: Sanitize between each animal and wash between every three!
- Return all supplies to the proper area.
- Please bring all complaints and concerns to the Volunteer Manager first.
 - If you are uncomfortable doing so face-to-face, there is an anonymous suggestion box available near the volunteer station.
- No cell phone use is allowed when volunteering.
 - Lockers are provided, please store your personal belongings there.
- Do not enter the O.R. room (the room connected to the Big Laundry room).
- Be aware of your surroundings at all times.

Rules Per Position/Tier Level:

- **Whisker Warriors (Core Training - Tier One)**
 - Do not handle the animals under any circumstances.
 - Ensure the dogs are secured on the opposite side of the kennel (using the kennel dividers) before entering the kennel.
 - If a customer asks you a question, refer them to a staff member.
 - Ensure you are using the proper chemicals when cleaning the kennels.
 - Make sure the animals do not have any specific food requirements/restrictions before feeding the animals treats or food.
- **Continued Kennel Care and Animal Care (Tier Two)**
 - **Tail Waggers (Intermediate Animal Handlers) & Paw-tastic Partners (Advanced Animal Handlers)**
 - You must complete ALL required training before working with the animals independently.
 - Only handle pre-approved animals.
 - You may answer simple questions for customers, but you are not allowed to conduct Meet-and-Greets.
 - EX. Where is the ____ kennel?

- Only enter the playroom, runs, or field of dreams with pre-approved animals.
- ALWAYS read the enrichment board before handling an animal.
 - If you are taking an animal out of their kennel, write the time on the board under the correct category.
- Do NOT take an animal out of their kennel if:
 - There is a staff-only or ACA-only sign.
 - They are labeled “Medical to Feed or Handle.”
 - The animal has a “Red Card” or “Purple Card.”
 - They are on “Rest & Relaxation” from surgery.
 - The animal is in a quarantine (i.e. bite, scratch, illness, etc.)
 - They do not have a kennel card.
 - You are unsure if you can handle the animal.
- Always provide fresh water prior to placing the animal in a playroom, run, or in the Field of Dreams.
- Make sure the animals do not have any specific food requirements/restrictions before feeding the animals treats or food.
- Do not take a dog out of the kennel if someone else is moving a dog nearby.
- Ensure the play areas are empty before retrieving an animal.
- When taking a dog out of the kennel, try to always do so from the outside of the kennel.
 - If you have to take the dog from the inside, please use the exit closest to the kennel.
- Clean up after each animal.
 - Dogs cannot go into a dirty play area. If a run of the field has poop from a previous dog, it will need to be scooped before another dog can enter the field or run.
- Keep a safe distance between dogs when walking.
- NEVER create an unsolicited playgroup with the dogs, unless trained to do so.
- If you are grooming an animal:
 - Be mindful of how the animal is reacting to the new environment.
 - Do not force the animal to continue the grooming, if they are uncomfortable.
 - Do not make excess noise, it may make the experience more stressful.
 - If the animal will not get into the tub for you and you do not feel comfortable lifting the animal, bring the animal back to its kennel.

- Put ALL grooming equipment back where you found it.
- ALWAYS clean up after you finish.
- If taking an animal on a field trip out of the shelter (Paw-tastic Partners):
 - Only approved animals are allowed to go on field trips.
 - ALL field trips must be approved by the Animal Care Supervisor or a Manager on Duty.
 - NEVER let the dog off-leash
 - Only take the dog to pre-approved locations.
 - You will receive this list once you are trained.
 - Keep your phone on you at all times, in case HSEP needs to contact you.
 - Place a field trip card on the dog's kennel, so shelter staff knows where the dog is.
 - Field trips can only take place in the morning before the shelter opens. The dog will need to be back at the shelter by:
 - Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, & Sunday: 11:00 A.M.
 - Wednesday: 1:00 P.M.
- Return ALL supplies (leashes, poop bags, etc.) to the proper places.
- If you are walking a dog, please make sure all dogs are back in their kennels 15 minutes before closing.
 - 5:45 P.M. on the weekdays.
 - 4:45 P.M. on the weekends.
- **Homeward Hounds (Adoption Counselors) & Rescue Rangers (Volunteer Leads)**
 - MUST complete all required training before meeting with potential adopters.
 - You may show the customers the shelter animals.
 - Homeward Hounds can assist ACAs with customer dog-to-dog, but they cannot do it alone.
 - If trained and given approval, you may conduct them independently.
 - Please remember that staff makes the final decision on approving or denying adoptions.
 - If you have a concern, please let us know in a respectful, calm, and timely manner.
 - NEVER lie to the adopter about the animal. We always tell the adopter the truth.
 - Remember you are a representative of HSEP.
 - Be mature and speak kindly.

- When training a new volunteer, please remember to be patient and welcoming.
- When conducting an orientation, you must remain professional at all times.
- **Pur-fect Pals & Critter Consultant (Tiers 3 & 4)**
 - Must complete Whisker Warrior training and any additional training specified by the program.
 - **Mary Speer Program**
 - Must be 18-years-old or older to assist in this department.
 - ALWAYS alert the staff if something looks questionable.
 - NEVER open the trap, unless you have been trained by Mary Speer staff.
 - Pee pads in the trap must always be clean.
 - Volunteers must check on the cats regularly.
 - ALWAYS verify the correct person is picking up the correct cat by checking the paperwork.
 - NEVER handle or touch any cat. Notify Mary Speer staff if a cat requires help.
 - ONLY handle the cats if you are trained to do so.
 - Ensure that traps are securely closed before moving or handling them.
 - REMAIN in the recovery room unless you are instructed to go somewhere else.
 - ALWAYS follow the safety instructions given to you by the Mary Speer staff.
 - **Foster**
 - DO NOT pet or handle any of the animals.
 - MUST help in the foster department before going elsewhere in the shelter, to avoid cross-contamination.
 - **CSA (Customer Service Associate)**
 - Volunteers are not allowed on computers or phones unless trained by staff
 - **Retail Cat**
 - Volunteers must notify the Retail Manager or Retail Staff if you cannot make it to your shift.
 - If you miss your retail shifts more than twice **without notifying staff**, you will be terminated from HSEP's volunteer program.
 - ALWAYS alert HSEP staff if the retail cats look ill or injured.
 - Do not conduct customer meet and greets. If a customer is interested in adopting, alert a store associate.
 - ALWAYS sign in and out when volunteering at a retail store

- **Off-Site**

- Must present themselves in a professional and respectful manner, we are in the public representing the shelter.
 - Always speak to the customers kindly.
- Volunteers MUST sanitize between EACH dog.
 - The public is NOT allowed to handle any puppy 16-weeks-or-under.
 - If a customer wants to meet a puppy 16-weeks-or-under, alert off-site staff or lead.
 - Puppies are NOT allowed to touch the ground. Always make sure they have blankets/towels in their kennel, covering the ground.
- Puppies must be fed lunch at 1:00 P.M.
- The dogs must always have access to water.
- We NEVER lie to a customer about a dog's personality or behavior.

- **Marketing**

- You must have prior marketing experience to volunteer in this department.
- Guidelines are dependent on tasks.

Volunteer Testimonials

“A passion for animals & and helping homeless dogs stay at the shelter be a little less stressful led me to volunteer for the Huamne Society of El Paso. The experience is rewarding as I get lots of exercise and have made new friends who share a common interest.”

-Marilyn Brooks, Volunteer since 2015

“Volunteering at the Humane Society of El Paso has been a rewarding experience for me. It’s a great way to socialize with new friends, improve mental and physical health, and provide enrichment to shelter dogs.”

- Melody Marez, Volunteer since 2018

“I started to volunteer because I wanted to help and give a little something back. I chose the Humane Society of El Paso because I had read that they needed volunteers. Since I love dogs and like cats, I figured maybe I could bring a little normalcy to their lives in the shelter. Turns out you get more back from them than you give. I enjoy it because of this, and also the camaraderie and friendships developed between fellow volunteers and staff. The one memory that stands out, of course, is meeting Chipp. Chipp came to the shelter terrified, so I started working with him, alongside staff. Eventually, I fell in love and decided to foster him. During all that time, Chipp started to trust me. He opened up and showed me just how fun and loving he was. After that, I decided Chipp had found his forever home and I added him to my pack for good.”

-Pat Arrabito, Volunteer since 2023

“I have volunteered at the Humane Society of El Paso for the past six years and have found that every job I do is important in the success of HSEP’s mission. Whether it is ensuring that the dogs/cats have a clean place to live, spending time sitting with the dogs to build trust, walking the dogs to help relieve stress, fostering underaged puppies and kittens, or assisting people with the adoption process, I know I am making a difference in the lives of the animals at HSEP. ”

-Susan Barron, Volunteer since 2017

Current Volunteer Testimonials

“I have been volunteering for HSEP for about five years. The Humane Society of El Paso provides me with an outlet to enhance my mental, physical, and emotional well-being. Spending time with the animals offers a much-needed break from the hectic world around me. When I’m at the shelter all that matters is the relationship between me and the animal. Walking the dogs creates an exercise routine that I wouldn’t have without volunteering at the shelter. Giving back to the animals fills me with joy and warms my heart to know that these animals are getting the care and love they have always deserved.”

-Tina Ramirez, Volunteer since 2018