



# VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

Heidi's Village  
Animal Shelter, Rescue, Safe Haven  
600 North 40<sup>th</sup> Street  
Phoenix, AZ 86008  
602-241-4640  
[heidisvillage.org](http://heidisvillage.org)

Updated 6/15/2022 GW

## WELCOME TO HEIDI'S VILLAGE

On behalf of the staff and other volunteers at Heidi's Village, we want to welcome you and thank you for your valuable time and talents. Being a shelter volunteer can be extremely exciting, rewarding, educational and fun, and we would like to wish you success in all of our various volunteer opportunities!

We believe that each volunteer contributes directly to the growth and success of Heidi's Village, as well as to the health and well-being of our animal residents. We hope you will take pride in being a member of our volunteer team and want you to feel that you are part of the Heidi's Village family.

We have created this handbook to help you have the best possible experience as a volunteer. It contains information about Heidi's Village, our volunteer program, various policies and procedures, and so much more. Please take the time to carefully read this handbook and refer to it often during your volunteer service.

## ABOUT HEIDI'S VILLAGE

Vision: We envision a world where all cats and dogs live in forever homes whose environment is healthy, safe, and secure.

Mission: We exist to foster a community where animals are treated with respect, dignity, and compassion.

### Core Values:

- Maintain high ethical standards for the safety and security of animals in our care as well as the staff and volunteers who provide that care.
- Create and encourage an inclusive environment for all that respects diverse traditions, heritages and experiences and acknowledges the value of all individuals.
- Advance and utilize best practices for animals, the public, staff, and volunteers in a shelter/veterinary environment.
- Meet the changing needs of animals and animal welfare organizations in our community.
- Help bridge the gap between available animal welfare resources and animal welfare needs in the community.
- Provide state of the art behavioral rehabilitation for animals and training for guardians of cats and dogs to alleviate behavioral issues as a barrier to finding forever homes.

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HOURS OF OPERATION

Adoption hours:

Monday – Friday: 9:00am – 6:00pm

Saturday – Sunday: 9:00am – 4:00pm

General volunteer hours:

Monday – Friday: 7:30am – 6:30pm

Saturday – Sunday: 7:30am – 4:00pm

Please note that this is not an exhaustive list of volunteer hours, and volunteer hours may differ by department and season. Hours are also subject to change during holidays and under special circumstances.

CONTACT

General main phone: 602-241-4640

General volunteer: [volunteer@heidisvillage.org](mailto:volunteer@heidisvillage.org)

General foster: [foster@heidisvillage.org](mailto:foster@heidisvillage.org)

Volunteer and Foster Coordinator:

Gabriele Warehime

602-857-3219

[gwarehime@heidisvillage.org](mailto:gwarehime@heidisvillage.org)

Director of Operations:

Erin Hosty

480-150-1037

[ehosty@heidisvillage.org](mailto:ehosty@heidisvillage.org)

Animal Care Manager:

Sheridan Schilling

602-241-4626

[sschilling@heidisvillage.org](mailto:sschilling@heidisvillage.org)

Behavior Manager

Zach Mills

(602) 224-14637

[smills@heidisvillage.org](mailto:smills@heidisvillage.org)

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## GENERAL GUIDELINES

When you volunteer at Heidi's Village, you are giving the animals one of the greatest gifts of all — your time. Whether you are spending one-on-one time with the animals, cleaning and disinfecting kennels, or assisting at events, you are helping the animals to feel so loved, as well as assisting our staff in providing much needed care. For that, everyone at Heidi's Village is incredibly grateful, especially the animals.

Volunteers willingly provide their time to complete a task at the direction of, and on behalf of, Heidi's Village, whether on-site or at a sponsored event. Volunteers do so without compensation or expectation of compensation.

### Age Restrictions:

Volunteers must be at least 16 years of age to handle animals with a signed volunteer waiver from a parent or guardian.

### Alcohol and Drug Free Workplace:

Your health and safety are of paramount concern. The use or abuse of alcohol, drugs, or other controlled substances affects the safety of everyone present at Heidi's Village. Heidi's Village strictly forbids any alcohol or drug use, or being under the influence of drugs or alcohol, on Heidi's Village property. Heidi's Village also does not allow any abuse of prescription or over-the-counter medication on Heidi's Village property.

### Heidi's Village Property:

The equipment and facilities of Heidi's Village are to be used only for the benefit of Heidi's Village. Personal use of Heidi's Village equipment is not allowed. Employees and volunteers are expected to exercise appropriate care for furniture, supplies, and equipment at Heidi's Village.

In the event of damage, theft, or sabotage to property of Heidi's Village, its animals, or any employee or volunteer, Heidi's Village reserves the right to ask you to assist and cooperate in necessary investigations. In addition, Heidi's Village reserves the right to conduct routine inspections of all areas on Heidi's Village premises, including lockers. Personal belongings located on the property of Heidi's Village may be subject to search.

This policy extends to all items received through in-kind donations from volunteers and members of the public, which are considered Heidi's Village property upon donation.

### Parking:

Heidi's Village is not liable for theft or damage to your personal vehicle while you are volunteering or visiting the shelter. We advise you to keep your doors locked and bring all valuable items with you or leave them at home.

### Personal Pets On-Site:

Due to the high-stress environment of an animal shelter, Heidi's Village does not allow volunteers to bring their personally-owned animals on-site at Heidi's Village while volunteering or otherwise, unless given explicit permission from management.

## VOLUNTEER SAFETY

Safety is of the utmost importance at Heidi's Village. Please read the following guidelines to know how and where to report and/or respond to safety issues or concerns. The animals in our care depend on all of us – please report to staff immediately any observations of concern, such as signs of illness or untreated wounds, or behavioral issues, so they may be addressed.

### Animal Bites:

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Per state law, whenever an animal tooth breaks skin, it is considered a bite. You are required to report all bites, regardless of how minor the injury. Failure to report a bite, whether the bite happened to you or you witnessed the bite, could result in the ending of your volunteer agreement.

If you witness or sustain a bite, first address any first aid needs, including cleaning the bite wound thoroughly, or if necessary, calling for emergency medical assistance. Then immediately report the bite to a staff member and fill out an incident report with your contact information and all details surrounding the bite, including what activity you (or the person you witnessed) were doing with the animal and the animal's body language immediately before the bite occurred. Depending on the severity or circumstances of the bite, Heidi's Village management may choose to send the volunteer(s) home for the day.

Animal bites can occur for many reasons and do not necessarily reflect poorly on that animal's behavior. If we have all the relevant information, we will be better prepared to handle the situation in the best interest of the animal and our community.

### Fire and Emergencies:

Familiarize yourself with the location of fire evacuation routes that you could use to leave your work area in the event of fire or emergency. Please make every effort to guard against fire hazards. In the event of an emergency elsewhere in the facility, you will receive directions on what to do (evacuate, lock-down, etc.).

### Weather:

Great value is placed on punctuality and reliability, but in the event of inclement weather, Heidi's Village does not expect volunteers to report for their shift when doing so endangers their personal safety. Please remember to contact the Volunteer Coordinator and/or remove yourself from the schedule online, if needed. Please always remember to stay hydrated, but especially during our hotter months!

### Intake Area:

You must not enter the intake area when staff or volunteers are unloading stray animals unless asked. This is for your safety and the safety of our animals. If you are unsure where this area is, please contact the Volunteer Coordinator or a member of management.

### Safety:

An effective safety program requires the full cooperation of all employees and volunteers. For that reason, employees and volunteers are expected to exercise care for their own safety and that of fellow workers by observing all safety rules. Volunteers may be required to use safety and personal protective equipment (PPE) during volunteer hours.

If you see an unsafe condition, it is imperative that you immediately report it to the Volunteer Coordinator or a member of management as soon as possible. If you are ever directed to take an action that you believe to be unsafe, you should immediately report the incident to the Volunteer Coordinator or a member of management. Questions or comments regarding safety issues should be discussed with the Volunteer Coordinator or a member of management.

### Weapons:

To ensure a harmonious, safe, and healthy workplace and to minimize the opportunity for violence, Heidi's Village has adopted a "zero tolerance" policy toward workplace violence. Any and all acts of intimidation, threats (even if apparently facetious), possession of lethal weapons, or acts of violence will be considered a serious Infraction. These acts will be referred to legal authorities when appropriate. A threat, threatening behavior, or any other act of aggression by an employee or volunteer while they are on-site or off-site on official Heidi's Village business is a violation of this policy. Volunteers should report any knowledge of a direct, or indirect, threat made toward themselves, another volunteer, an employee, or a visitor. Confidential reports can be made to the Volunteer Coordinator, the CEO, or the first available member of management.

If you encounter a member of the public that you suspect is potentially dangerous or hostile:

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- Immediately alert the Volunteer Coordinator, a supervisor, or other staff member to the situation
- Do not risk harm to yourself
- You should not take any action that might put yourself or others in danger

Heidi's Village does not allow weapons, including concealed handguns or other weapons (to include knives with blades longer than three inches), to be carried onto its property. Possession of any deadly weapons anywhere on-site at Heidi's Village is strictly prohibited and may result in immediate termination from the volunteer program.

### Injuries:

Every injury, no matter how slight, must be reported immediately to the Volunteer Coordinator or a member of Heidi's Village management. Even seemingly minor injuries can result in serious complications if proper medical attention is not obtained. If you are injured while volunteering with Heidi's Village, it is your responsibility to report the accident immediately, and you may be required to complete an incident report.

### Dress Code:

Long pants and closed toed shoes are required at all times when volunteering. When working directly with an animal, appropriate gear per each department must be worn at all times. This may include the use of personal protection equipment (PPE) or other coverings to prevent the spread of disease.

## VOLUNTEER RESPONSIBILITIES

Our volunteers are part of the Heidi's Village team and therefore we uphold you to similar standards as our employees.

### Attendance:

Absences of volunteers can put a strain on the ability of Heidi's Village to provide adequate care for the shelter animals. If you cannot report to your scheduled shift for any reason, we ask that you notify us at least 24 hours in advance by either removing your scheduled shift online or emailing the Volunteer Coordinator.

If a volunteer repeatedly misses scheduled shifts with no advance communication (as noted above), the individual may be asked to meet with the Volunteer Coordinator. During that discussion, the individual can explain their current situation and reconfirm their level of commitment to Heidi's Village.

### Code of Conduct:

As a volunteer of Heidi's Village, you are representing our organization any time you interact with people and animals, even outside of your volunteer duties. We ask that you are polite and courteous when interacting with visitors to Heidi's Village and potential adopters. We also ask that you treat all employees and volunteers with respect, dignity, and compassion. Further, treat all animals in a humane and safe manner and report any instances of inhumane conduct to a manager. Do not wear Heidi's Village T-shirts, emblems, or name badges while drinking or engaging in any questionable or illegal activities, both on-site and off-site.

Disrespectful or unprofessional behavior, harassment, discrimination, retaliation, threats, disparaging remarks, and discriminatory or vulgar language will not be tolerated. This code of conduct applies to online and/or written material as well as personal interactions with staff, other volunteers, and members of the public.

Heidi's Village is a unique organization that houses animals from other rescues. We ask that you do not answer questions on behalf of other rescue organizations and instead direct those with questions to the appropriate point person within the rescue in question.

Heidi's Village also asks that you stay up to date with our current information to ensure anything shared is as accurate and complete as possible.

### Communication with the News Media:

Media relations can be complex. For that reason, we require all media inquiries be sent directly to the Volunteer Coordinator or other Heidi's Village management. Please note that media inquiries are extremely time-sensitive and

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should be forwarded as soon as they are received. Do not contact or speak with the media on behalf of Heidi's Village without express permission from Heidi's Village management.

### Confidential Information:

Volunteers are not allowed to share any confidential information they may encounter while volunteering for/at Heidi's Village, unless required by law or approved by the CEO. Confidential information includes personal identifying details (names, phone numbers, addresses, email addresses, etc.) of staff, volunteers, adopters, previous animal owners, DO NOT ADOPT lists, and animal rescue organizations. Confidential information may also include an individual's credit card numbers, social security numbers, medical history, family member's information, or other personal characteristics.

Volunteers are expected to exercise care not to disclose confidential information unintentionally, by indiscreet conversation, or by careless handling of confidential information.

### Cell Phone Use and Photos:

We understand that the service you provide to Heidi's Village is very important and you may want to post or share photos of animals with friends, family, or on social media. We greatly appreciate you are spreading the word about Heidi's Village and the dogs and cats we care for. It does help us to find homes for our wonderful cats and dogs. Please, be sure that when working directly with animals, it is imperative that you provide your full attention to the tasks at hand to ensure the safety of the animal and of yourself as well.

### Harassment Policy:

Heidi's Village is committed to providing an environment that is free from harassment and unlawful discrimination. In accordance with all federal, state, and local laws, Heidi's Village 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.

Heidi's Village expressly forbids and will not tolerate any actions (e.g., words, jokes, comments, or gestures) that unreasonably create an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment. Anyone engaging in sexual or other unlawful harassment will be subject to release from volunteer service. If you believe you are the victim of harassment or have witnessed harassment of any kind, immediately notify the Volunteer Coordinator.

### Corrective Action:

Heidi's Village reserves the right to end any relationships between a volunteer and Heidi's Village at any time, with or without notice or explanation. Failure to comply with this Handbook, Heidi's Village guidelines, policies, and procedures may result in removal from the volunteer program. Released volunteers are not permitted entry to Heidi's Village beyond areas of public access.

Although the goal is that with proper training and support, there will never be a need to address inappropriate behavior or conduct, it is important to outline Heidi's Village's corrective action process for volunteers in the event such issues need to be addressed. To accomplish this goal, everyone must hold themselves to certain standards of conduct and behavior. To ensure everyone is informed of those standards and possible consequences for inappropriate conduct, the following outline is provided:

#### Zero Tolerance Actions – Immediate Cancellation of the Volunteer Agreement with Heidi's Village:

- Animal cruelty/abuse, including kicking or hitting an animal
- Insubordination
- Fighting or threats of violence
- Intoxication/under the influence (no drug or alcohol use permitted)
- Harassment of any kind, including sexual harassment and/or inappropriate sexual behavior
- Improper use or disclosure of confidential information stored by Heidi's Village

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- Theft and/or intentionally damaging property
- Using and/or duplicating building and/or office keys without written authorization
- Failure to immediately (or as soon as possible) report a bite or other injury
- Carrying and/or bringing weapons on to the property
- Unauthorized access to Heidi's Village property (including access outside of volunteer hours)
- Disparaging or negative comments about Heidi's Village staff, management, volunteers, patrons, or rescue partners

### OUR STAFF COMMITMENT

The staff members at Heidi's Village truly appreciate your service and your dedication to help us in our mission. We want to make sure you have a positive and enjoyable experience. As such, we strive to:

- 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
- Treat you as a valued team member which we feel is vital in successfully implementing our Heidi's Village Mission

### VOLUNTEER COMMITMENT

When you serve as a Heidi's Village volunteer, we ask the following;

#### Computer Related:

- Have regular access to the internet and a private email address. Email is our main form of communication to share information, such as volunteer instructions, opportunities, and confirmations
  - If you do not have computer access, we ask that you find a friend or family member who can help you with your communications with the volunteer department
- Respond to emails from the Heidi's Village volunteer staff in a timely manner. Staff are committed to answering emails within 48 hours during regular business hours
- Use the Heidi's Village Volunteer Portal (known as Vic Touch) to schedule your volunteer shifts, as well as to sign in and out when you arrive for your shift and when you are done for the day. Clocking in and out will log your volunteer hours and can be added to a report easily if you need access to them.

#### Volunteer Profile and History:

- Please visit the volunteer portal to create or access your volunteer profile
- Complete all required paperwork for acceptance into our volunteer programs
- Supply references as requested – for certain volunteer positions, Heidi's Village may be required to perform criminal background checks. Heidi's Village may perform these checks at its sole discretion. Be sure to list all criminal convictions on your volunteer application.
- Keep your volunteer record updated with your current email address, phone number and USPS mailing address
  - Your name and address will not be sold, traded, or given to any other organization
- Complete any assignments/shifts for which you volunteer. If you cannot complete the assignment/shift, please notify your staff supervisor or the Volunteer Coordinator ASAP.
- Stay within the parameters of your volunteer positions, shifts, and assignments

#### Expenses:



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- Volunteers will receive one free shirt but will be asked to pay \$10.00 for further shirts. This \$10.00 will help support the resources we provide
- Cover all your own expenses associated with volunteering for Heidi's Village. In certain instances, and with prior authorization, some expenses may be reimbursable. To be reimbursed for any expenses, prior approval must be received in writing (i.e., email) from your staff supervisor or volunteer coordinator
- Carry your own insurance coverage. Heidi's Village does not carry health, medical, liability, automobile, worker's compensation or disability insurance coverage for any volunteer

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## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

**Administrative volunteer:** This position is needed to assist in providing smooth operations at Heidi's Village. As one of the faces of our organization, the volunteer should be able to relay Heidi's Village mission and vision when asked.

**Animal Care volunteer:** This position will assist animal care technicians with the daily cleaning, enrichment, and exercise activities to provide a safe environment for socialization and housing of dogs and cats in our care.

**Animal Care volunteer, behavior:** The volunteer in this position will work with the behavior team to learn how to walk and socialize dogs and cats that require advanced handling skills as well as provide socialization and enrichment to these animals. These animals may require extra care, patience and advance skills due to fear, shyness, high arousal behavior, kennel stress, etc. This position is appointment by the Animal Behavior Manager.

**Kitten Nursery volunteer:** This position will provide support in the nursery with 0–4-week-old kittens that require round the clock care. This is a very special position that will assist staff with providing life-saving care for orphaned kittens.

**Veterinary Department volunteer:** This position provides support to staff in the veterinary department. This volunteer will be working near the medical staff while they are performing exams and surgery.

**Facilities volunteer:** This volunteer will be assisting with various landscaping and maintenance tasks around Heidi's Village.

**Special Events volunteer:** This position will be ever-changing as events arise. This volunteer will assist on the day of an event to ensure things run smoothly and help where needed within their appropriate volunteer designation.

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VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT, CERTIFICATION AND RELEASE

In consideration for this opportunity to volunteer for Heidi's Village, I understand and agree to the following terms and conditions:

1. All services performed by me will be performed on a strictly voluntary basis, and I will receive no remuneration, pay or compensation of any kind.
2. I will not be an employee of Heidi's Village, and I will not receive any benefits normally available to employees of Heidi's Village.
3. I will abide by the mission, rules, regulations, policies, and programs of Heidi's Village while I am a volunteer.
4. I will volunteer a minimum of once a month for at least 2 hours per shift for Heidi's Village.
5. I will be supervised by a Heidi's Village staff member or designee and will work as a team member with all other volunteers and employees.
6. I will treat all animals, Heidi's Village volunteers, staff, and the general public with dignity and respect.
7. I have and will continue to accurately and truthfully complete my Volunteer Application and this agreement, release, and waiver.
8. I will attend volunteer orientation prior to volunteering. I understand that:
  - If I don't sign up for and complete a shift within 30 days of the volunteer orientation, I will have to attend another orientation before I will be able to volunteer.
9. Heidi's Village strongly recommends: (1) that I keep my tetanus immunization current; and (2) that I ensure that any dogs and/or cats that live with me are immunized.

I certify that I have not been convicted of, nor am I currently charged with, any of the following crimes:

- any felony within the past five (5) years
- cruelty to animals at any time
- robbery within the past five (5) years
- burglary within the past five (5) years
- theft within the past five (5) years
- fraud within the past five (5) years
- money laundering within the past five (5) years

WAIVER

I understand and agree that as a volunteer for Heidi's Village: (1) I assume all risks of loss or injury, including death to myself or damage to my property while on the property of Heidi's Village and elsewhere, while participating in the volunteer program; (2) Heidi's Village shall incur no liability of any nature as a result of my volunteering for Heidi's Village; (3) in handling animals and performing other volunteer tasks there is a risk of injury, including physical harm or death, and that all services performed by me will be done at my own risk. On behalf of myself, my heirs and personal representatives, I hereby release, discharge and indemnify and hold harmless Heidi's Village and its assigns, successors, agents, staff, officers, board of directors, employees, contractors and representatives from any and all claims, causes of action or demands of any nature of cause whatsoever, including costs and legal fees arising out of, or relating to, my volunteering with Heidi's Village, including, but not limited to, animal bites, disease, accidents, property damage, or injuries. I agree that as a volunteer of Heidi's Village, any violation of this agreement may subject me to action, up to and including termination of my volunteer relationship with Heidi's Village.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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Signature