



CITY OF SAN ANTONIO
**ANIMAL CARE SERVICES
DEPARTMENT**

Policy Title	Volunteer Program
Policy Number	37-12-011
Initial Effective Date	4/2/2013
Revision Number(Date)	V.03 (5/6/16)
Policy Owner	Live Release Manager

Purpose

To describe the available volunteer programs, volunteer selection, volunteer conduction, and the department and volunteer responsibilities.

Primary Audience¹

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|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> All ACS Staff | <input type="checkbox"/> Education/Outreach | <input type="checkbox"/> Shelter Operations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Administration | <input type="checkbox"/> Field Division | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clinic Operations | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Live Release | |

I. Policy Details

1. A *volunteer* is defined as any person who is not directly employed by ACS and has completed an application, background check, and necessary training is considered a volunteer and will be assigned to perform jobs that support departmental goals. This provision is not applicable to Foster Volunteers.

2. **VOLUNTEER PROGRAM.**

- a. ACS Volunteers

- i. Minimum age to volunteer onsite is 12 years. Volunteers ages 12 – 15 must have a parent or guardian volunteer with them.
 - ii. Minimum age to volunteer offsite is 10 years of age. Volunteers ages 10 – 15 must have a parent or guardian volunteer with them.
 - iii. Offsite events are defined as those that take place anywhere but the ACS facility.
 - iv. Volunteers between the ages of 16-17 can volunteer on their own with their parent or guardian's consent.
 - v. The following offenses will exclude an individual from volunteering at ACS:
 1. Any crime related to theft, burglary, fraud, arson, or breaking/entering
 2. Any drug related crime
 3. Any violent crime including, but not limited to:
 - a. Animal cruelty
 - b. Assault and battery
 - c. Household assault
 - d. Injury to a child
 - e. Domestic violence
 - vi. Minimum commitment of 3 months with 3 shifts required, or a minimum of 10 hours.
 - vii. \$10 donation to cover the cost of a t-shirt, nametag, background check and lanyard.

- b. Court-Appointed Community Service

- i. All court-appointed community service volunteers must meet with the Volunteer Coordinator prior to beginning their service hours.
 - ii. Court appointed community service hours must be signed the day they are served by the volunteer coordinator or a supervisor/manager on-duty.
 - iii. The minimum age is 16 years.

¹ While every employee is responsible for adhering to all policies, the primary audience section of this policy simply identifies those divisions whose operations will heavily rely on the content of this policy.

- iv. Assignments and tasks for community service hours will be predetermined by the discretion of the Volunteer Coordinator, Community Programs Supervisor, and/or Live Release Manager. Assignments and tasks approved for court appointed community service hours will be notated in the volunteer database.
 - v. Exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the Volunteer Coordinator, Community Programs Supervisor, Live Release manager, Assistant Director, or Director for supervised court-related transformation programs.
 - c. Groups
 - i. A minimum of 2 week's notice is required to schedule a group.
 - ii. There are a maximum number of 15 people allowed in a group for onsite assignments. The maximum number for offsite groups will be determined for each event.
 - iii. Due to safety issues with animals and groups, animal handling may be excluded for group assignments.
 - iv. All groups must sign the group volunteer release and agreement.
- 3. **VOLUNTEER SELECTION.** All volunteers (except groups) must complete and submit an application via fax, email, or in-person.
 - a. Any volunteer application can be denied at the discretion of the Volunteer Coordinator, Community Programs Supervisor, Live Release Manager, Assistant Director, or Director. The application may appeal their decision, in writing, to the Live Release Manager and then to Directors Office.
 - b. Upon approval by the volunteer coordinator, Volunteers must complete an orientation, bite prevention session, and pass a criminal background check prior to receiving their first assignment.
 - i. Any application deemed questionable will be subject to final approval by the Director.
 - c. After 6 months of no activity and/or communication, volunteers will be deemed inactive. If a volunteer becomes inactive they must complete another application, orientation, bite prevention, and background check.
 - d. Volunteers who are absent, without at least 72 hours notice, for 3 consecutive shifts in predetermined and recurring assignments will be replaced for those shifts and/or assignments.
- 4. **VOLUNTEER CONDUCT.** As a representative of ACS, volunteers are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner. Disrespectful or unprofessional behavior, sexual harassment, discrimination, vulgar language, or inability to be in compliance with ACS *Patron Code of Conduct Policy (37-15-006)* will not be tolerated and volunteers may be asked to cease their volunteer work as a result. The following policy guidelines apply in all volunteer situations:
 - a. The Volunteer Coordinator will be the main point of contact for all ACS Volunteers. If the Volunteer Coordinator is not available, the next point-of-contact will be the Community Programs Supervisor or Live Release Manager.
 - b. Any complaint, issue, or concern regarding a fellow volunteer, staff member, or ACS Policy should first be brought to the attention of the Volunteer Coordinator. If the Volunteer Coordinator is unavailable then contact should be made with the following staff in order: the Community Programs Supervisor, the Live Release Manager, and then the Director's office.
 - c. Volunteers may not bring children who are not approved ACS volunteers or personal pets to ACS while volunteering.
 - d. All current ACS policies, procedures, and directives are applicable to volunteers as well. Volunteers who commit minor violations of policy and procedure will be verbally counseled and coached.

- i. Such violations include disruptive behavior, habitual absenteeism, misstatement of ACS policies, slander, etc.
 - ii. Continued violations could result in additional counseling or dismissal at the direction of the Community Programs Supervisor, Live Release Manager, Assistant Director, or Director.
- e. ACS is free at any time, with or without notice or cause, to end the volunteer relationship.
- f. In accordance with received training, volunteers must adhere to dress code policies including:
 - i. Sleeveless tops are not acceptable. Every effort should be made to wear the non-altered ACS Volunteer T-Shirt while volunteering.
 - ii. Name tags should be worn at all times.
 - iii. Wear comfortable closed-toe shoes.
 - 1. Sandals or flip-flops are prohibited while volunteering.
 - iv. Shorts must be at knee level; however, pants are preferred. Whichever is chosen, the waist of the shorts/pants must fall on the natural waistline of the volunteer.
 - v. Long, draping or hoop earrings are not permitted and all necklaces must be tucked inside shirt.
- g. Smoking while volunteering with ACS is not permitted.
- h. Under no circumstances shall a volunteer work at ACS or an ACS affiliated event under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- i. Cell phones should not be used while volunteering.
- j. The following areas of the shelter are off-limits to volunteers unless escorted or specifically authorized/assigned to enter.
 - i. Quarantine Kennel
 - ii. EBI Building and Crematorium
 - iii. Livestock Corrals
 - iv. Veterinary Clinic
 - v. Administration Building
 - vi. Field Building
 - vii. Building 1 (currently operated by San Antonio Pets Alive).

5. **STAFF RESPONSIBILITY TOWARDS VOLUNTEERS.** Oftentimes, new volunteers are expected to learn a lot of information in a short period of time. To ensure that all volunteers have a rewarding experience, yet still adhering to ACS policies and procedures, it is the responsibility of all ACS Staff members for the following:

- a. Demonstrate proper procedure/task if volunteer needs further clarification or additional assistance.
- b. Coach the volunteer, in a respectful/non-demeaning manner, if the staff member sees or hears something that may be incorrect.
- c. Work with volunteers to ensure adherence to all ACS policies and procedures.
- d. If a staff member has a question before demonstrating or coaching a volunteer they should refer to their immediate supervisor and/or the volunteer coordinator. It is the intent of this policy that staff members can immediately rectify a situation involving a volunteer, as long as it is done so in a respectful, non-demeaning, and positive manner.

Policy Authorization

Signature: _____

Name (Title): XAVIER URRUTIA (ACS INTERIM DIRECTOR)

Date: _____

06/01/16