



SAN ANTONIO  
**HUMANE  
SOCIETY**

## Shelter Helpers Service Club Parent Handbook

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## **Introduction**

### **About the San Antonio Humane Society**

The San Antonio Humane Society (SAHS) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, no-kill organization that has served Bexar County and its surrounding areas since 1952. The SAHS shelters, medically treats, and rehabilitates thousands of dogs and cats every year. Many of the dogs and cats in our care have been abused, injured, surrendered by their owners, or found as strays. As a limited intake organization, every treatable pet in our care stays in our care until they find a home or necessary placement with another limited intake organization. No pet in our care is ever euthanized to create space. Thousands of dogs and cats in San Antonio and its surrounding areas are saved from euthanasia every year due to the mission and practices of the SAHS.

Through our adoption, volunteer, foster, spay/neuter, and educational programs, we inform and educate the public on the importance of responsible pet ownership. We serve as one of the largest dog and cat adoption organizations in San Antonio, Texas, helping to decrease the community's large pet overpopulation problem in a humane manner. As a local nonprofit, we are not affiliated with the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS). We do not receive funding from the federal government, the HSUS, or the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA).

*Our Mission is to protect and improve the lives of dogs and cats by providing shelter, care, adoption, rescue, spay/neuter programs, and community education.*

*Our Vision is to end pet overpopulation and to create a community where every dog and cat is treated with respect and compassion and has a permanent and loving home.*

### **About the Shelter Helpers Service Club**

The Shelter Helpers Service Club is an extension of the popular SAHS youth program, Camp Humane. Shelter Helpers is a single-day camp experience for middle school and high school students who are interested in going behind-the-scenes and lending a helping hand around the shelter. Campers will have a guided and structured opportunity to assist with various service projects throughout the shelter, including cleaning kennels and crates, preparing newspapers to line puppy kennels, preparing pet enrichment, and more! Available once per month, participants can earn up to 5 service hours per session. Additionally, interested participants can register for one session or multiple over the course of the school year.

Children in grades 6-12 are eligible to participate in the Shelter Helpers Service Club. Once your child has graduated from high school or has turned 18 years old, they are no longer able to participate in the program and may register to become a SAHS General Volunteer. At that point, they will be able to do additional volunteer tasks on a schedule that works for them!

## **Participant Drop-Off and Pick-Up**

### **Check-In Location**

Participants will be checked in at the entrance of the Education Building located at 4804 Fredericksburg Rd, San Antonio, TX 78229.

### **Check-In Process**

Check-in will be conducted from 8:45 AM-9:00 AM. Upon arrival, please ring the doorbell and wait for a SAHS Humane Educator to greet you. A SAHS Humane Educator will then escort your child into the building. Please allow approximately 5-10 minutes for check-in.

### **Pick-Up Location**

Participants will be picked up at the entrance of the Education Building located at 4804 Fredericksburg Rd, San Antonio, TX 78229.

### **Pick-Up Process**

Pick-up will be conducted from 1:50 PM-2:00 PM. Upon arrival, please ring the doorbell and wait for a SAHS Humane Educator to greet you. Once you've been greeted, a SAHS Humane Educator will verify the identity of the pick-up person. Any person attempting to pick up a child from the program will be required to show a valid state or military-issued photo ID. This person must also be listed on the authorized pick-up list provided during registration. Upon verification, a SAHS Humane Educator will escort your child out to you. Please allow approximately 5-10 minutes for pick-up. A late pick-up fee will be assessed in 15 minute increments for participants who are picked up after 2:00 PM. Please refer to the Fees, Rescheduling, and Cancellations section.

### **Late Drop-Off, Early Pick-Up, and Absences**

If you are running late to drop off your child, please call as soon as possible at (210) 226-7461 ext. 136 or 140. The program may already be in progress and your child may miss activities or presentations that cannot be made up.

If you need to pick up your child early, please communicate your pick-up time with the SAHS Humane Educators upon drop off in the morning. In the event of an emergency that will require your child be picked up early, please call (210) 226-7461 ext. 136 or 140.

If it is determined that your child will be absent or can no longer attend the program, please call as soon as possible at (210) 226-7461 ext. 136 or 140. The SAHS will make every effort to reschedule your child into another program date; however, rescheduling is subject to availability. No refunds will be issued for a missed program.

## **Fees, Rescheduling, and Cancellations**

### **Late Pick-Up Fee**

A late pick-up fee will be assessed in 15 minute increments for participants who are picked up after 2:00 PM. Please refer to the following chart for fees:

Late Arrival	Fee
≤ 15 min	\$5.00
16-30 min	\$10.00
31-45 min	\$20.00
46-60 min	\$40.00

### **Rescheduling and Cancellations**

Cancellations made no later than two (2) weeks prior to your scheduled session will receive a full refund. Cancellations made within two (2) weeks of your scheduled session will be subject to a 50% cancellation fee. Sessions may be rebooked whenever possible; however, rebooking is subject to availability. Each rescheduled reservation will be subject to a \$10 rebooking fee.

At the discretion of the SAHS, your program may be cancelled due to events including but not limited to inclement weather, low enrollment, electricity or water issues, or any other unforeseen circumstances. In the event that the SAHS cancels your session, a full refund may be issued.

## **Program Policies**

### **Attire/Dress Code**

Participants should wear their camper t-shirt, closed-toe shoes with rubber, non-slip soles, and pants or shorts of at least knee-length. Participants will receive their volunteer t-shirt upon arrival to the program and will be allowed to change into their shirts in the bathrooms.

Please keep in mind that some activities throughout the day may cause damage to your child's clothing. Clothing or headwear containing images of violence, profanity, or discrimination are not permitted.

### **Behavior Concerns**

Upon arrival to the program, SAHS may review examples of acceptable and unacceptable behavior and participants are expected to adhere to these guidelines. If a behavior problem arises, a SAHS Humane Educator will first discuss the problem with the individual. If the problem continues, the participant may forfeit participation in future program activities. If the problems are severe, the parent will be contacted to discuss the problem. Finally, if the problem is not rectified, the parents are responsible for returning to the shelter to pick up their child from the program. A refund will not be issued.

A SAHS Humane Educator may wish to discuss your child's behavior during the day (positive and negative) at pick-up. Please help us in enforcing all program rules and let us know if there is anything we can do to help your child be the best that they can be while visiting the San Antonio Humane Society.

### **Program Regulations**

- While at Shelter Helpers Service Club, weapons and firearms are strictly prohibited.
- The use of alcohol, drugs, and smoking is prohibited.
- Personal pets are not allowed at Shelter Helpers Service Club. This includes dogs, cats, hermit crabs, lizards, birds, etc.
- Personal sports equipment, such as bats, balls, etc., is not allowed at SAHS. If sports equipment is to be used in an activity it will be provided.
- Participants are never permitted to ride in any vehicles unless accompanied by their parents or by a SAHS Humane Educator. At NO time will SAHS staff members' personal vehicles be used.
- Participants should stay with their group at all times.
- Cell phones should not be used at Shelter Helpers Service Club. Participants will be asked to keep their phones off and put away throughout program hours. The San Antonio Humane Society is not responsible for theft or damage to cell phones at Shelter Helpers Service Club. Please notify a SAHS Humane Educator if your child needs to carry a cell phone.

## **Code of Conduct**

- Participants will be respectful of all other participants, volunteers, and SAHS staff, their ideas, and their opinions.
- Participants will be polite and courteous to all other participants, volunteers, and SAHS staff at all times.
- Participants will respect the personal information and privacy of other participants, volunteers, and SAHS staff.
- Participants will be mindful and follow additional directions from SAHS staff while on campus.
- Participants will not engage in bullying or aggressive behavior toward any other participants, volunteers, or SAHS staff at any time.
- Participants will not threaten or intimidate, nor engage in any behavior that may cause injury or harm to the physical or mental well-being of other participants, volunteers, or SAHS staff.
- Participants will not write, use, or display any information that is hostile, insulting to others, obscene, threatening, or otherwise offensive.
- Participants will not engage in cursing, inappropriate, or vulgar language.

## **Attending with Siblings or Friends**

At the time of registration, please include the name of the other participant(s) that you are hoping to group with. It is strongly recommended that participants who wish to attend together be registered at the same time. Please note that space is limited within each session. We will make every effort to accommodate your group request.

## **Hydration**

It is strongly recommended that participants bring a reusable water bottle to the program. Refilling stations are available throughout the shelter and participants will be given several opportunities to refill throughout the day. Please make sure that water bottles are clearly labeled with your child's name.

## **Medication**

The SAHS Staff and volunteers are unable to administer medication to any child. The SAHS is not responsible for any lost or stolen medication, or ensuring that your child takes his/her medication. This is the sole responsibility of the child and the parent/guardian.

Should your child be diagnosed with or exposed to COVID-19 and their scheduled session falls within their designated quarantine period, please contact the SAHS Education Team immediately to discuss your options. You can email [education@SAhumane.org](mailto:education@SAhumane.org) or call (210) 226-7461 ext. 136 or 140.

## **Parent/Guardian Notification**

It is our policy to keep the parents or guardians of our participants informed of their child's health concerns and behavior during their child's program experience.

SAHS will notify you for the following health reasons:

- Any minor injury that requires more than a small adhesive bandage.
- Any illness or injury resulting in the SAHS transporting the child to a doctor's office, clinic, or hospital emergency room.

SAHS will also notify parents or guardians in the case of behavioral or social problems while attending the program.

Some of these behavioral concerns might include:

- Flagrant disregard or breaking of program rules and regulations.
- Any behavior that endangers or harms any other participant, volunteer, staff member, guest, or animal.
- Behavioral or disciplinary problems for which the participant has been pulled aside and counseled by the SAHS Humane Educator.

We will contact the parent or guardian by phone, in the presence of the participant, to discuss the situation and conditions for remaining in the program or arrangements for ending the program experience.

## **Lunch/Snack**

Participants will get a 30 minute lunch break during the program. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to provide lunch for their child. Lunch must be packed in a lunch box or disposable bag. Refrigerated space is not available. Products containing nuts are strictly prohibited from Shelter Helpers Service Club. We cannot guarantee that some items may have been packaged within a factory that handles nut products. Accommodations will be made for participants with allergies. If your child has any severe allergies, please disclose this when registering and in discussion with a SAHS Humane Educator.

## **Staff to Participant Ratio & Etiquette**

The SAHS will have a 1:10 staff to participant ratio. In the event of an emergency, groups may be combined so that one of the SAHS staff members can respond to the emergency. Participants will be under the supervision of a SAHS staff member at all times.

## **Weather Protocol**

Weather conditions are monitored closely by our management team, and our enjoyment of any outdoor activities is contingent upon the proximity and nature of weather factors such as lightning or high winds. Rainstorms are common in Texas and a SAHS Humane Educator will determine if activities need to be moved inside or rescheduled due to rain.

SAHS will follow company policies regarding seeking shelter for lightning, high winds, or tornados in the area. Any decision to cancel a program will be decided in a timely manner and a SAHS Humane Educator will notify all parents/guardians.



## COVID-19 Cleaning and Safety

- All staff, volunteers, and participants are strongly encouraged to wear face coverings over the nose and mouth throughout the duration of the program, the only exception being breaks for snacks and lunch.
- Extra disposable masks will be available should your child's mask get wet or soiled, if you choose to have your child wear a mask.
- Parents should monitor their child for any symptoms of COVID-19 each day prior to the program.
  - Participants who are expressing any of the following symptoms should stay home:
    - Any elevated temperature of 100.4°F (CDC recommendation)
    - Cough
    - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
    - Chills, or repeated shaking with chills
    - Muscle pain
    - Headache
    - Sore throat
    - Loss of taste or smell
    - Diarrhea
    - Known close contact with a person who is confirmed to have COVID-19 (if unvaccinated)
  - Participants who are unvaccinated and have been exposed to COVID-19 or are experiencing any symptoms will not be permitted to attend the program until symptoms are no longer present. Rescheduling your child's session will be subject to availability.
  - Participants who may begin experiencing symptoms while attending the program will be sent home. Refunds will not be issued for missed time; however, every effort will be made to reschedule your child's session.
- Check-ins at morning drop-off and check-outs at afternoon pick-up will be done outside of the Education Building. We ask that guardians and participants queue up maintaining a distance of 6ft between other parties. Staff will need to see photo identification that matches a name on the approved pick-up list before allowing a child to leave or be picked up at the end of the day. Masks are strongly encouraged, but not required, while on SAHS grounds.
- Participants will be escorted into the building after check-in. Guardians will not be permitted to enter the building at this time.
- Activities will take place throughout the shelter grounds, including kennels, behind-the-scenes areas, the education room and adjacent outside play yard. The education room and adjacent play yard are not accessible to the public. Activities outside of the education room and adjacent play yard will only be accessed prior to public opening.
- Each child will be provided their own designated area for lunch boxes and water bottles.
- Spaces will be cleaned and high-touch surfaces will be sanitized frequently by staff each day.
- Reusable water bottles are strongly recommended for each participant and will only be refilled by a designated staff member at the Education Building water dispenser. Use of the drinking fountain will not be permitted.
- Participants, volunteers, and staff will practice social distancing as much as possible while on campus, except in the situations of first aid or emergencies.
- When materials must be shared, they will be sanitized between groups and everyone will wash hands and use sanitizer immediately after use.
- Participants may be placed into a small group or "pack" for group activities throughout the program.
- We will remind participants to refrain from touching their faces.

- Frequent hand washing breaks will be conducted throughout the program and prior to lunch. Participants will be asked to wash their hands for at least 20 seconds.
- There will be hand sanitizer available at all times within the education room and throughout the shelter.
- No food sharing will be allowed. Participants will be seated according to the CDC's recommendations for social distancing.

\*All cleaning will be done with Rescue™. Rescue™, formulated with Accelerated Hydrogen Peroxide®, is approved for use against some of the world's most dangerous pathogens under the EPA's Emerging Viral Pathogen guidance, including SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. Rescue™ Wipes, Ready-to-Use Liquid, and Concentrate can be used effectively against the virus that causes COVID-19 when used in accordance with the directions for use.

### **Disease Prevention Reminders Prior To Arrival**

- Guardians are asked to monitor their children for any symptoms of COVID-19 each day prior to the program.
- Staff, volunteers, and participants should not come to Shelter Helpers Service Club if they show signs of respiratory illness (a new cough, complaints of sore throat, or shortness of breath). If a child, volunteer, or a staff member has a new cough, they should not attend the program, even if they have no fever.
- Participants, volunteers, and staff will continuously be encouraged to always cover their mouth and nose with a tissue or use the inside of their elbow when they cough or sneeze. Tissues will need to be thrown in the trash immediately and they will need to wash hands with soap and water for a minimum of 20 seconds.
- Parents will be informed: By attending this program, you are recognizing the risks associated with participating in group activities. San Antonio Humane Society in no way warrants that COVID-19 infection will not occur through participation in our programs or accessing our facilities. If your child's program has to be cancelled prior to its start due to changes in the current COVID-19 status, you will be issued a full refund. If your child comes to the program, and the session has to be shortened due to suspected COVID exposure, no refunds will be issued. Every effort will be made to reschedule the program to a later date.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What is included in my registration fee?**

Your registration includes a single-day admission to the Shelter Helpers Service Club. This includes guided behind-the-scenes access and specialized activities between the hours of 9:00 AM-2:00 PM each day. Registration also includes a camper t-shirt. Participants will be awarded five (5) service hours upon completion of the program.

### **What is your cancellation policy?**

Cancellations made no later than two (2) weeks prior to your scheduled session will receive a full refund. Cancellations made within two (2) weeks of your scheduled session will be subject to a 50% cancellation fee. Sessions may be rebooked whenever possible; however, rebooking is subject to availability. Each rescheduled reservation will be subject to a \$10 rebooking fee.

At the discretion of the SAHS, your program may be cancelled due to events including but not limited to inclement weather, low enrollment, electricity or water issues, or any other unforeseen circumstances. In the event that the SAHS cancels your session, a full refund may be issued.

### **How has COVID-19 impacted Shelter Helpers Service Club?**

The San Antonio Humane Society is dedicated to providing a safe and fun environment for all of our guests. In order to provide this experience safely, the SAHS is limiting the number of program participants to accommodate social distancing as recommended by the CDC. Our facilities will be deep cleaned prior to and immediately following the program. Parents are asked to monitor their child for any symptoms of COVID-19 each day, prior to attending the program. Additionally, face masks are strongly encouraged to be worn on campus at all times, unless eating or drinking, by program participants, volunteers, and SAHS staff. Anyone who is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, including volunteers and staff, will be asked to stay home.

### **What if my child gets COVID-19 before the program?**

Should your child be diagnosed with or exposed to COVID-19 and their scheduled session falls within their designated quarantine period, please contact the SAHS Education Team immediately to discuss your options. You may email [education@SAhumane.org](mailto:education@SAhumane.org) or call (210) 226-7461 ext. 136 or 140.

### **What will my child be doing throughout the day at Shelter Helpers Service Club?**

Participants of this program will have an opportunity to go behind-the-scenes of the SAHS and will be engaging in several service activities including but not limited to, cleaning kennels and crates, preparing newspapers to line puppy kennels, preparing pet enrichment, and more! Activities may vary by session and schedules are subject to change. For the safety of your child and our pets, no participant will be permitted to handle any pet while attending the program. Any animal interaction will be led by and under the supervision of a SAHS staff member. It should be noted that while this program takes place at the San Antonio Humane Society, your child should not expect to spend the entire day working with pets.

### **What should my child bring with them on the day of the program?**

Each participant will need to bring their lunch in a lunch box or disposable bag and a reusable water bottle that is clearly labeled with their name. Please note that refrigerated space is not available. It is also strongly encouraged that each participant wear or bring a face mask.

**What should my child wear to the program?**

Participants should wear their camper t-shirt, closed-toe shoes with rubber, non-slip soles, and pants or shorts of at least knee-length. Participants will receive their volunteer t-shirt upon arrival to the program and will be allowed to change into their shirts in the bathrooms. Please keep in mind that some activities throughout the day may cause damage to your child's clothing. Clothing or headwear containing images of violence, profanity, or discrimination are not permitted.

**What is the difference between the Shelter Helpers Service Club and becoming a general volunteer?**

At this time, the SAHS does not have an opportunity that calls for volunteers under the age of 16. General volunteers must be at least 16 years old and must have a signed release form from a parent in order to volunteer. People who are interested in becoming a general volunteer must attend an orientation and are subject to a background check for those who are 18 years of age and older. The Shelter Helpers Service Club is an opportunity designed with our younger guests in mind! This single-day camp allows us to conduct a safe, structured, and supervised opportunity for those who are too young and/or cannot commit to the general volunteer program. As an added benefit, participants of the Shelter Helpers Service Club may transition into the general volunteer program once they are of age.

**What are the acceptable age groups for this program?**

This program is available to children in grades 6-12. Once your child has graduated from high school or has turned 18, they are no longer eligible to participate in the Shelter Helpers Service Club and may register to become a SAHS General Volunteer, beginning at 16 years of age.

**Can my child get COVID-19 from the dogs and cats at the shelter?**

According to the Center for Disease Control, "In the United States, there is no evidence that animals are playing a significant role in the spread of COVID-19. Based on the limited information available to date, the risk of animals spreading COVID-19 to people is considered to be low. However, because all animals can carry germs that can make people sick, it's always a good idea to practice healthy habits around pets and other animals." We will continue to have participants sanitize hands after animal interactions.

## **Contact**

### **Jenna Elizondo**

*Humane Educator*

[jelizondo@SAhumane.org](mailto:jelizondo@SAhumane.org)

(210) 226-7461 ext. 136

### **Nicole Dearstine**

*Humane Educator, Certified Humane Education Specialist*

[ndearstine@SAhumane.org](mailto:ndearstine@SAhumane.org)

(210) 226-7461 ext. 140

### **SAHS Education (Outreach) Department**

[education@SAhumane.org](mailto:education@SAhumane.org)