



# Volunteer Handbook



San Antonio Humane Society  
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San Antonio, TX 78229  
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[SAhumane.org](http://SAhumane.org)

## A message from the Volunteer Supervisor

Thank you for your interest in the San Antonio Humane Society (SAHS) Volunteer Program. We know your time is valuable and we appreciate that you're thinking about spending some of it with us! Volunteers are vital in helping us continue our mission to protect and improve the lives of dogs and cats in our community. The information provided in this handbook is intended to provide you with an overview of the SAHS volunteer guidelines and opportunities. If you have any questions or concerns please contact Sarah Rihn, Volunteer Coordinator, by emailing [volunteer@SAhumane.org](mailto:volunteer@SAhumane.org).

~ Sarah Rihn, Volunteer Supervisor



# San Antonio Humane Society History, Mission & Core Values

## *History*

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 no-kill organization, every treatable pet in our care stays in our care until they find a home or necessary placement with another no-kill 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).

The most effective way to positively change your local community is by donating to your local nonprofit.

## *Mission*

To protect and improve the lives of dogs and cats by providing shelter, care, adoption, rescue, spay and neuter programs, and community education.

## *Vision*

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.

## *Volunteer Mission*

To aid the SAHS in its mission to protect and improve the lives of dogs and cats by donating time and talents to care for the pets, support staff in their daily activities, and assist in Connecting Friends for Life.

# San Antonio Humane Society Values

## *Customer Service*

- We treat every customer, internal and external, with courtesy.
- In order to meet our customer's needs, we strive to learn about each pet and to promote each pet to customers.
- We greet our customers when they enter our work areas and thank them when they leave.
- We provide quick, responsive service.

## *Adaptability*

- We are willing to accommodate unpredictability in the workplace.
- We are willing to accept challenges.
- We are willing to consider others' perspectives and remain open-minded.

## *Respect*

- We listen to others and acknowledge their needs.
- We practice patience and tolerance of others.
- We are honest with ourselves and with others.
- We demonstrate care and understanding with all animals in our shelter.

## *Responsibility*

- We are punctual and ready to work at our scheduled time.
- We complete our assigned jobs in a timely manner.
- In leading by example, we strive to be experts in our field by educating ourselves through experiences and learning.

## *Integrity*

- We are trustworthy and strive to do the right thing.
- We observe, follow through, and honor our word.
- We make sound decisions and are not easily influenced by others.

# SAHS Programs & Services

## *Hours of Operation*

The SAHS is open to the public from 12 pm - 7 pm every day except for major holidays. If you are scheduled to arrive before we open to the public at noon you will need to enter the shelter through the back gate. The code for the back gate is 3541. If the hours of operation change for any reason, such as staff training, notices will be on all doors and social media outlets. Volunteers will also receive an email with updated hours.

## *Adoptions*

The SAHS focuses on canine and feline adoptions. All pets are vaccinated upon arrival and will be spayed or neutered before going home (with the exception of the rare occasion a pet is approved for a surgery contract to be spayed/neutered at a later date). We screen our adopters well and do our best to ensure that every pet goes to a good home. [SAhumane.org/adoption](https://SAhumane.org/adoption)

## *Receiving*

The SAHS receives pets on a space-available basis. Most of the pets brought to the SAHS are either owner surrenders or strays. We also intake pets from several other shelters and rescue groups both inside and outside of San Antonio. [SAhumane.org/receiving](https://SAhumane.org/receiving)

## *Foster*

The role of a foster parent is to create a nurturing environment to allow a foster animal to grow, heal, socialize and become adoptable. The San Antonio Humane Society provides foster families with all the supplies they need such as food, litter, toys, bedding, and even medical care. All fosters need is a willingness to learn and a lot of love to give! [SAhumane.org/foster](https://SAhumane.org/foster)

## *Spay/Neuter Services*

The SAHS offers low-cost spay/neuter services to the public at both the Leeu Naylor Medical Building and the Brooks Spay/Neuter Clinic. [SAhumane.org/spayneuter](https://SAhumane.org/spayneuter)

## *Wellness Clinics*

Wellness clinics are a great opportunity for members of our community to take advantage of low-cost wellness and preventive services. Wellness clinics are offered at the Leeu Naylor Medical Building. [SAhumane.org/wellnessclinic](https://SAhumane.org/wellnessclinic)



## *Humane Education*

Bringing Humane Education into the community is one of our top priorities. During the school year, we take our educational programs to area schools, libraries, and community centers. We also offer educational tours throughout the year and Camp Humane during the spring and summer. [SAhumane.com/education](http://SAhumane.com/education)

## *Microchipping*

The SAHS microchips all shelter pets and offers microchipping to the public onsite and at certain events, through the 24PetWatch Microchip Identification service.

## *Disaster Relief*

The SAHS is well known for helping with relief efforts for major natural disasters such as Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, and most recently Ian. We provide temporary shelter for displaced pets and deliver food and other supplies to affected areas.

## *Rescue and Rehab*

At the SAHS, we make every effort to find the best home for the pets in our care. Sadly, many of the dogs and cats that come to us have been abused, neglected, injured, or have chronic illnesses. These injured or ill animals are treated based on the funds available at the time of intake or illness. Our rescue and rehab funds allow donors to make a contribution to one of our pets. Donors can pay for an adoption fee through our Guardian Angel Fund, pay for heartworm treatment through our Heartworm Fund, or help injured animals through our Michaels Medical Rescue Fund.



# Euthanasia Policies

As a no-kill organization, every treatable pet in our care stays in our care until they find a home or necessary placement with another no-kill 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. The SAHS has a 99.26% save rate (2021).

Our policy is to keep healthy, adoptable, and treatable pets until they are adopted. Because pets are accepted on a space-available basis, we sometimes have to turn them away. This is regrettable, but it prevents us from having to euthanize healthy, adoptable, and treatable pets to make room for more. Therefore, all of our healthy, behaviorally sound, and treatable pets remain in our care until good homes are found.

We evaluate each pet's health and temperament prior to the pet being placed for adoption. We provide treatment for sick and injured pets based on available space and place them up for adoption after their recovery, which can range from a few days to several months. However, some pets arrive too sick or injured for humane recovery. In these instances, we must make the decision to end the pet's suffering.

We must also take into consideration the safety and well-being of any potential adopter. Any pet that shows signs of aggression that cannot be modified through behavior training programs will not be placed for adoption. These decisions are not made lightly and every effort is made to rehabilitate pets.

The decision to euthanize is never taken lightly and must be approved by the Chief Veterinarian, the Director of Operations, and the CEO unless a medical emergency arises. As a volunteer, you will be exposed to many of the more difficult situations experienced by our staff. While we always welcome questions regarding these difficult decisions, we expect that volunteers respect those decisions and the staff making them.

Please contact the Volunteer Supervisor for official communication regarding any euthanasia. If you are asked by the public about the SAHS' euthanasia policy, please refer them to the front desk.



# Volunteer Capabilities Overview

The SAHS is an independent non-profit organization relying on the generosity and commitment of volunteers. Whether at the shelter or Brooks Spay/Neuter Clinic, the role of volunteers is to assist the staff in completing daily operational tasks to fulfill the mission and vision of the SAHS. To this end, volunteers of any capacity are expected to safely and efficiently perform any and all necessary tasks related to their assignment. The SAHS is all-inclusive and we are dedicated to respecting and accepting the differences of all individuals. With that said, the safety of all individuals and pets within our organization remains our highest priority. The SAHS will consider accommodation requests and will provide reasonable accommodations when possible to enable persons with disabilities to volunteer; however, we reserve the right to restrict or release volunteers according to safety and organizational necessity.

The SAHS does not have the space or resources to provide a therapeutic experience for the sole benefit of a volunteer. Volunteers provide safe operational support to staff by caring for pets until they get adopted. Therefore, we cannot accommodate job coach/client pairs seeking primarily an animal therapy experience. Staff are unable to create projects solely for the benefit of the volunteer.

*Please consider the following minimum volunteer capabilities:*

## **PHYSICAL CAPABILITIES**

- Quick reflexes and ability to use both hands simultaneously (example: open cage door while handling pet).
- Ability to travel unaided on unpaved, uneven, rugged, slippery, and sometimes muddy terrain (both indoors and outdoors), as well as maneuver cramped spaces.
- Ability to bend and squat in order to leash/harness, and/or pick up a pet.
- Ability to stand for significant periods of time while walking dogs, socializing cats, or cleaning cages/kennels.
- Average vision (with or without correction) to move safely throughout the building, distinguish animal body language, as well as read instructions and a pet's paperwork.
- Ability to hear if an animal is giving warnings, such as growling, yelping, or hissing.
- Ability to effectively communicate verbally.
- Ability to react quickly in order to prevent dogs or cats from escaping (example: the ability to quickly pursue and retrieve any cats or dogs who have escaped from a kennel or cage).
- Ability to cope with a very loud environment due to animal noises.
- Ability to deal with strong and unpleasant odors, fleas, ticks, feces, and possible wounds or injuries to pets in our care.



## COGNITIVE CAPABILITIES

- Ability, once trained, to work independently with minimal supervision, while recognizing limitations in knowledge and abilities, and knowing when to ask for help if needed.
- If lacking the ability to work independently, whether due to age and/or neurological abnormality, must be able to work alongside a job coach/caregiver with focused attention on the task at hand.
- Ability to read and understand instructions and procedures.
- Ability to understand, remember and follow instructions and procedures.
- Basic reading, writing, spelling, and communication skills.
- Ability to problem-solve.
- Ability to handle redirection and constructive criticism without responding with negativity.
- Ability to recognize potentially hazardous situations when working with animals.
- Ability to remain calm with animals who are upset, behave sensitively and confidently, and act appropriately in these situations.
- Ability to communicate professionally and politely.
- Acceptance of the boundaries between the role of the volunteer and the role of the staff.
- Ability to cope with a highly emotionally charged environment with some animals that are homeless, abandoned, and/or abused, as well as the reality that some of the animals in our care may be euthanized.
- Maintain a positive attitude and a solution-oriented approach to challenging situations, rather than resorting to complaining or gossiping.
- Ability to understand the SAHS policies and procedures and the willingness to appropriately and accurately represent those policies when interacting with the public or otherwise representing the SAHS.

*Individuals unable to meet the minimum volunteer capabilities outlined above may still volunteer if accompanied by a caregiver or job coach. Please consider the following policies if volunteering with a caregiver/job coach:*

- Volunteers must provide their own caregiver/job coach at all times—throughout orientation, training, and volunteering.
- The caregiver/job coach must accompany their client through orientation, training, and while volunteering, and be responsible for their client's schedule, including recording of hours served.
- SAHS cannot provide additional supervision in place of a responsible caregiver/job coach. Any substitute or replacement must first complete our orientation and training process before accompanying a client.
- There should never be more than four volunteers per caregiver/job coach at any time.
- The volunteer, with the assistance of their caregiver/job coach, must be able to perform all tasks necessary to their assignment and follow all safety protocols.
- Job coaches are responsible for staying up-to-date on shelter procedural changes as they occur.

# SAHS Volunteer Program Policies

## *Volunteer Hours & Time Commitments*

Volunteer shifts are available daily between 7 am & 7 pm. Volunteers are asked to commit to a minimum of one scheduled volunteer shift per month to remain active.

## *Volunteer Software*

The SAHS uses a program called CERVIS to manage our Volunteer Program. Volunteers can access their full profiles, sign up for events, and update their information anywhere they have an internet connection by going to [sahumane.cervistech.com](http://sahumane.cervistech.com).

## *Recording Volunteer Hours & Service*

The SAHS requires all volunteers to log their volunteer service hours. The SAHS uses volunteer hours to document community involvement, which assists us with receiving grants and funding. Volunteers must add their volunteer hours no more than three days after their shift.

## *Requesting Volunteer Service Verification*

CERVIS allows volunteers to print certificates and summaries of all volunteer hours. However, if a volunteer needs signed verification of hours served for work, school, church, or court, they must submit an "Hour Request Form" at the volunteer station. Volunteers must fill out the form in its entirety. Incomplete forms will not be processed. Please allow up to one full week to process your request.

## *Scheduling & Canceling Shifts*

The SAHS offers a mix of scheduled and drop-in volunteer opportunities. If you cannot make a scheduled shift contact the Lead Staff or Volunteer Coordinator and remove yourself from the online schedule as soon as possible so that we have time to fill your spot.

## *Unexcused Absences*

Because we depend on you, the volunteers, to help us help the pets, we take your service very seriously. We will not tolerate no-shows. You will be contacted after your first and second no-shows. After three unexcused absences, we will assume that you have changed your mind and are no longer interested in volunteering. You will be taken off the active volunteer roster. A no-show is defined as being assigned to a volunteer shift and not removing your name from

the schedule more than 24 hours prior to the shift and/or contacting either the Lead Staff or Volunteer Department.

### *At-Home Volunteer Opportunities*

Volunteers are able to earn volunteer hours by completing volunteer tasks from home. For example, volunteers can donate handcrafted items like pet beds and face masks to the SAHS and record the time spent crafting the items for hours. Volunteers can also watch approved webinars and/or complete online training sessions for hour credits.

Any attempt to cheat the system and receive credit for hours not worked will result in dismissal.

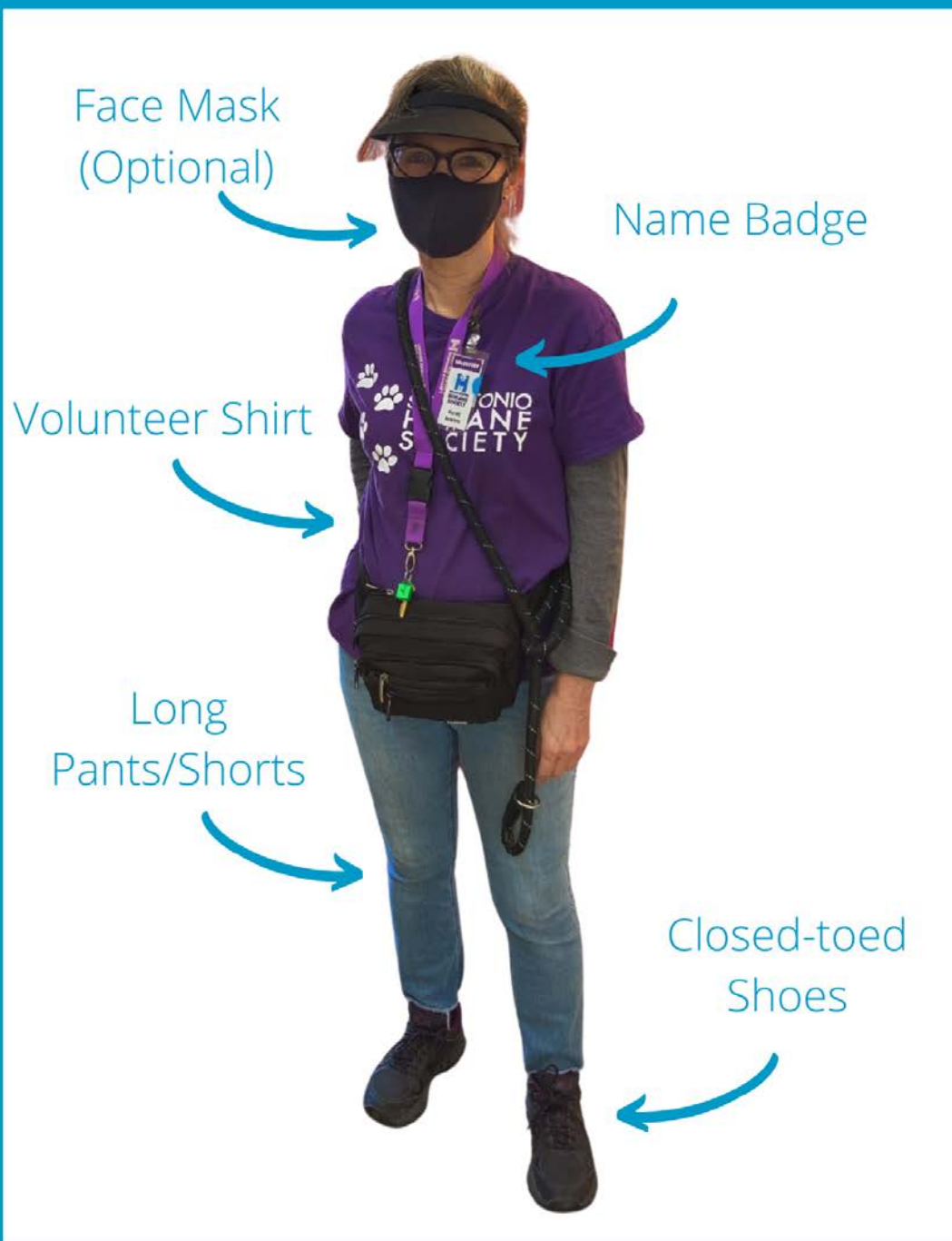
### *Dress Code*

Volunteers are expected to adhere to the volunteer dress code at all times unless informed otherwise by the Volunteer Department.

Volunteers must wear the following:

- Volunteer name badge
- Volunteer t-shirt
  - Each volunteer is provided 1 volunteer shirt. Additional t-shirts can be purchased at the front desk for \$10.
  - SAHS-branded shirts may be worn with approval from the Volunteer Coordinator.
- Closed-toe shoes that encase the foot
  - Slip-resistant shoes are highly recommended
  - No sandals, flip-flops, crocs, or soft-soled shoes (like ballet flats)
- Long pants or shorts
  - No short shorts (shorts should be at or just above the knee)
  - No thin fabric like running or yoga pants
  - No excessively distressed/holey jeans/pants
- No dangling jewelry
  - Simple stud earrings are recommended
  - Necklaces, bracelets, and rings are not recommended
  - Breakaway lanyards are recommended and should be tucked into your shirt at all times
- Offensive tattoos must be covered
  - Speak with the Volunteer Coordinator if you have a concern about the appropriateness of your tattoo

# VOLUNTEER UNIFORM



# DRESS CODE: SHORTS



## ***VOLUNTEER CONFIDENTIALITY***

It is the policy of the San Antonio Humane Society (herein SAHS) that volunteers of the SAHS may not disclose, divulge, or make accessible confidential information belonging to, or obtained through their affiliation with the SAHS to any person, including relatives, friends, and business and professional associates, other than to persons who have a legitimate need for such information and to whom SAHS has authorized disclosure. \*Volunteers shall use confidential information solely for the purpose of performing services as a volunteer for the SAHS. This policy is not intended to prevent disclosure where disclosure is required by law.

Volunteers must exercise good judgment and care at all times to avoid unauthorized or improper disclosures of confidential information. Conversations in public places, such as at outreach events or while on the SAHS campus, should be limited to matters that do not pertain to information of a sensitive or confidential nature. In addition, volunteers should be sensitive to the risk of inadvertent disclosure and should, for example, refrain from leaving confidential information on desks or otherwise in plain view.

Additionally, the SAHS has a zero-tolerance policy for any actions that defame the SAHS, its staff, volunteers, SAHS animals, or any other organizations while representing the SAHS at outreach events, on social media sites, or any other public venue. Violation of this policy will be cause for dismissal as a volunteer. Comments on personal/social media pages that defame SAHS, staff, volunteers, SAHS animals, and/or other organizations, will also be a cause for dismissal as a volunteer.

No documents, papers, and other materials, regardless of medium, containing confidential information should be in the possession of a volunteer. Violation of the above confidentiality agreement will be cause for dismissal as a volunteer. No refund will be made.

### ***Social Media***

Volunteers are invited to join our [SAHS Volunteer Facebook Group](#). This is a closed group for active SAHS volunteers and staff only. Volunteers use this group to post pictures and videos of SAHS pets, see upcoming events and volunteer opportunities, and communicate with other volunteers and SAHS staff. Please keep all posts SAHS-related and age-appropriate (there are volunteers as young as 16). Posts that are related to the rehoming of personal pets or strays, asking for medical or training advice of any sort, fundraisers, and/or posts that include vulgar or offensive content/language are NOT allowed.

### ***Off-Site Conduct***

Volunteers may be asked to represent the agency at events and projects off-site. While representing the agency at these events, volunteers will not be permitted to drink alcoholic beverages or smoke. All volunteers are expected to conduct themselves in a professional and courteous manner and to adhere to the SAHS Core Values. Any violations of this policy can be cause for immediate dismissal from the Volunteer Program.



## *Representing the SAHS*

As a volunteer, you are representing the SAHS at all times, both on and off the clock. You have the power to educate and inspire others in our community about what we do and the wonderful pets we work for. We encourage you to talk to your friends, family, and coworkers about our organization in a respectful, positive manner. If you have any issues or concerns with the shelter, please take them directly to the Volunteer Coordinator or a member of the management team. Any disrespectful representation or intentional misrepresentation of the SAHS can be cause for immediate dismissal from the Volunteer Program.

## *Drug and Alcohol Policy*

Under no circumstances is a volunteer to come to work under the influence of drugs or alcohol. If you are suspected of being under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol, you will be asked to leave and you may be dismissed from the Volunteer Program.

## *Weapons/Firearms Policy*

Volunteers are not allowed to bring any weapons/firearms, concealed or otherwise, onto our property at any time.

## *Friends, Family, and Personal Pets*

Volunteers are not allowed to bring friends, family, or personal pets to the shelter while volunteering.

## *Personal Belongings*

Volunteers should never leave personal belongings in any area of the shelter. You may use the lockers in the break room to store your personal belongings during your shift; however, please remember to bring your own personal lock and take it home with you at the end of each day. The SAHS is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged personal belongings.

## *Cell phones*

The SAHS encourages responsible cell phone usage. While we do not want to see volunteers texting or talking on their phones while on the clock, we do encourage our volunteers to use their phones to take pictures and videos of our adoptable pets because cute photos and videos help our pets get adopted! These photos and videos can be shared with staff via email ([volunteer@sahumane.org](mailto:volunteer@sahumane.org) or [PR@sahumane.org](mailto:PR@sahumane.org)) or by posting them in the [Volunteer Facebook Group](#).

## *Volunteer Communication*

The vast majority of volunteer communication is done electronically via email and social media. Volunteers can also opt to receive text updates through the volunteer software. Volunteers are expected to have access to and regularly check these communication services to ensure they are receiving important volunteer communications in a timely manner.

## *Receiving/Intake*

Employees and volunteers are required to adhere to the same receiving policies as the general public. As a reminder, the SAHS is a limited-intake, no-kill facility and we never euthanize for space. We regularly operate at full or near full capacity. While we'd love nothing more than to take every single pet that comes through our doors, we simply are not capable of that at this time. The health, comfort, and safety of the pets currently in our care is always our priority. For more details about our receiving policy please visit [SAhumane.org/Receiving](http://SAhumane.org/Receiving).

## *In-kind Donation Items*

Our community donates items with the intent of supporting our mission, shelter, and the needs of the community. This is not to say that our staff or volunteers are exempt from this service should they be in need of similar items, but that the same procedures must be followed as if they were community members accessing SAHS donations. This includes purchasing the items at low cost once on the retail floor, accessing our pet food storage area or donation bin, and ensuring that all items leaving the building are accounted for (including discarded items).

## *Property of the SAHS*

From time to time the SAHS takes pictures and/or videos for publicity and advertisement purposes on the SAHS premises and at events. Once used for their intended purposes, they become the sole property of the SAHS, and neither employees nor volunteers have any rights to possess them without written permission from the President/CEO. The SAHS and any person it may authorize shall be entitled, without further consent, to copyright, sell, or use in any manner, any photograph and/or video of a SAHS volunteer, employee, facilities, or grounds at the SAHS.

Other properties of the SAHS, including, but not limited to, cameras, computers, typewriters, cage dryers, water hoses, etc. will not be removed without the express written approval of the President/CEO or designated representative.

## *Discipline*

The SAHS believes that volunteers are motivated to do what is best and are accountable for their actions. However, the SAHS requires volunteers to adhere to certain “rules of conduct” to maintain a peaceful, efficient, and effective work environment. All volunteers are at will, meaning that their volunteer status can be revoked at any time, for any non-discriminatory reason, without cause by either the volunteer or the SAHS. Volunteers who commit minor violations of the Volunteer Policies and Procedures will first be verbally counseled in an effort to correct the issue immediately. Continued violations can result in additional counseling or dismissal. Serious violations can result in immediate dismissal without counseling or notice.

At the resignation or removal of a volunteer, he or she shall return, at the request of the SAHS, the volunteer badge. No refund will be made.

## Health and Safety

SAHS staff and volunteers should be aware of certain health risks. Updating your tetanus vaccination is strongly recommended. Washing your hands regularly, adhering to the dress code, wearing gloves when cleaning pet waste, and reporting any injury that occurs while volunteering immediately are the best defenses against possible health hazards.

### *Incident and Bite Reports*

It is the policy of the SAHS to provide and maintain a safe working environment for all staff and volunteers. We encourage staff and volunteers to be aware of safety procedures and report any unsafe conditions to a supervisor immediately. The SAHS volunteer fee covers insurance for all volunteers in the case of work-related accidents or injuries. *It is imperative that any incidents be reported immediately, regardless of how minor they may seem at the time.* You will be asked to complete an incident report and if medical attention is necessary you will be instructed as to your options and/or taken by a staff member to receive treatment.

*If an incident occurs and a volunteer leaves their shift without reporting the incident or completing an incident report, they will be subject to disciplinary action.*

*\*\*\*The SAHS is not responsible for and will not be held liable for occurrences that take place once the volunteer leaves the premises (at the SAHS or off-site SAHS events).\*\*\**

### *Zoonoses*

Zoonoses are diseases and infections that are naturally transmitted between animals and humans. Many are transmitted through physical contact, but others are passed through mosquitoes, ticks, and fleas. If you become ill, notify your physician of the extent of your exposure to animals to aid in your treatment. Some examples of Zoonotic diseases are Lyme disease, anthrax, rabies, E. coli, West Nile virus, and Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever.

## *Disease and Your Pets*

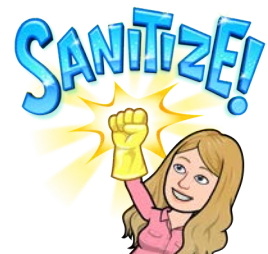
The SAHS vaccinates each animal at intake. We do our best to ensure all of the pets in our care are healthy; however, there are times that animals can be harboring a disease without showing any signs or symptoms. One way to keep your personal pets safe is by keeping them up to date on their vaccines. We also recommend that volunteers change their clothes after volunteering and before handling personal pets. This is especially important if you have recently adopted a puppy or kitten because they are more susceptible to disease and infection.

## *SAHS Mask Policy*

The SAHS no longer requires masks for volunteers regardless of vaccination status until further notice, but it is strongly suggested. Proof of vaccination is optional. Social distancing and temperature screenings for employees and volunteers also continue to be strongly suggested. Volunteers should recognize the risks associated with participating in activities and understand that the San Antonio Humane Society in no way warrants that COVID-19 infection or other illness will not occur through participation in our programs or accessing our facilities.

Important Ways to Slow the Spread of COVID-19: (from the CDC)

- Get a COVID-19 vaccine as soon as you can.
- Wear a mask that covers your nose and mouth to help protect yourself and others.
- Stay 6 feet apart from others who don't live with you.
- Avoid crowds and poorly ventilated indoor spaces.
- Test to prevent spread to others.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water. Use hand sanitizer if soap and water aren't available.



# Harassment

Harassment in any form, verbal, physical, or visual, is strictly against agency policy and will result in corrective action or volunteer termination. If you believe you have been the victim of harassment, report it immediately to the Volunteer Supervisor or any other department supervisor.

## *Sexual Harassment*

The SAHS is committed to providing a work environment free of sexual harassment. No supervisor, manager, employee, or volunteer shall threaten or suggest, either explicitly or implicitly, that submission to or refusal to submit to sexual conduct will in any way affect an individual's volunteer status with the SAHS. Unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature includes but is not limited to:

1. Sexual advances or propositions
2. Uninvited touching
3. Sexually related comments and jokes
4. Graphic comments about a person's body
5. Sexually degrading words used to describe an individual
6. Display of sexually suggestive, explicit, or offensive objects or pictures is strictly prohibited and will be grounds for disciplinary action.

Each SAHS volunteer has a right to expect an environment free of such conduct, and no person's duties, hours, or other conditions of volunteer service will be affected because he or she refuses to submit to or tolerate such conduct.

Any volunteer who feels that he or she is being sexually harassed in any manner by a supervisor, manager, volunteer, customer, employee, or another person should immediately bring the matter to the attention of the Volunteer Supervisor or any supervisor on duty.

Complaints of sexual harassment will receive prompt attention and will be handled in a confidential manner to every extent possible. Violations of this policy will immediately be halted and prompt disciplinary action may be taken, up to and including dismissal as a volunteer.



# Volunteer Teams & Opportunities

We do our best to provide our volunteers with as much flexibility as possible while still keeping the needs of the shelter and the pets in our care in mind. We understand that your time is valuable and we appreciate that you are spending some of it with us!

We encourage volunteers to participate in all opportunities that interest them. However, please understand that it takes our staff time and energy to train volunteers. This is why we ask volunteers to pick one area to start their volunteer service. Once trained in that area, volunteers can move to other areas.

## *Adoption Team*

Adoption Team Volunteers provide direct support to our Adoption Staff by helping with general administrative tasks like answering and returning phone calls, responding to emails, greeting guests, and scanning or filing paperwork. Volunteers can also assist the Adoption Staff at adoption events on and off campus and can even train to become Volunteer Adoption Counselors.

## *Animal Behavior & Enrichment Team*

Animal Behavior & Enrichment Team volunteers work directly with our Animal Behavior Program Coordinator/Trainer to provide training and enrichment to our shelter pets. Volunteers can prep and distribute enrichment items helping to ensure daily enrichment is provided to all pets residing in the shelter. Volunteers can also join the Volunteer Dog Training Team to help our resident pets learn basic obedience skills.

## *Animal Care Team*

Animal Care Team Volunteers assist the Animal Care staff with the daily care, cleaning, and feeding, of our shelter pets. Don't worry, volunteers also get to spend some quality time with the pets once the cleaning is done!

## *Animal Health Team*

Volunteers in the Animal Health Team help our Medical Staff with the daily care, cleaning, and feeding of pets that are not yet ready for adoption. These could be pets that have just come into the shelter or pets that are receiving medical care for illnesses or injuries. Volunteers can also assist the staff with general administrative duties like scanning and filing paperwork or data entry. If you are interested in earning hours and gaining experience to use on an application to a veterinary technology program, like the Palo Alto Vet Tech Program, this is the team to join!



### *Community Outreach Team*

Community Outreach Volunteers work directly with the Volunteer Department to engage the community. Volunteers can learn how to set up and manage information booths, lead and/or assist in group volunteer opportunities, lead campus tours, and assist with general administrative tasks.

### *Development & Donor Relations Team*

Development & Donor Relations volunteers work directly with our Development & Donor Relations staff to ensure all of our donors receive the personalized thanks they deserve. Volunteers help our staff make thank you calls and help us fold, stamp, and mail thank you letters to our donors. Volunteers also help the staff at special events like our annual Friends for Life Luncheon!

### *Dog Walking Team*

The purpose of the Dog Walking Team is to ensure that all of our resident pets get at least one long walk each day. All of our dogs are given a colored sticker that indicates their ease of walking. Volunteers are given a colored sticker to indicate what level of dog they are comfortable walking. Volunteers can walk any dog that matches their sticker level or lower.

### *Humane Education Team*

Education is an essential part of our mission at the SAHS. Education Team volunteers will work side by side with our Certified Humane Education Specialists by assisting with Camp Humane, the Tales for Tails reading program, and helping lead campus tours.

### *Public Relations Team*

Our Public Relations Team Volunteers support our Public Relations Staff with media appearances, paparazzi (photography/videography), and graphic design.

### *Webinars & Virtual Learning*

There are several opportunities that allow volunteers to earn hours at home by completing webinars or other forms of virtual learning. We highly recommend all volunteers complete the Fear Free Shelter Series.

# DOG WALKING GUIDE



1

## LEVEL ONE: PINK

Pink dogs can pull slightly but are calm and easy to walk/handle. Great for nice and calm walks and socialization out in the kennel yards.

Hint: These dogs can be so sweet and loving and can make you blush Pink.

2

## LEVEL TWO: YELLOW

Yellow dogs are scared, fearful, and/or nervous.

Hint: Yellow means warning, be intentional and aware of body language at all times during socialization.

3

## LEVEL THREE: ORANGE

Orange dogs are mild but can get excited at times. These dogs tend to pull a bit harder during a walk.

Hint: Orange can be defined as energy, vitality, cheer, excitement, adventure and warmth.

4

## LEVEL FOUR: BLUE

Blue dogs are high energy. They can be jumpy, like to grab the leash, may be mouthy, and are our hardest pullers.

Hint: When walking Blue remember that they have a lot of built up energy from being inside the kennels and they are ready to explore, so have your brakes ready!

5

## LEVEL FIVE: PURPLE

Purple dogs are dealing with specific behavior issues such as on-leash reactivity, resource guarding, and possible selective human sociability.

Hint: Remember to always be aware of your surroundings when walking or socializing with a Purple leveled dog especially when going around corners of buildings. A fearful reactive dog may want to go for another dog first to defend itself.

6

## LEVEL 6: RED

Red dogs may have severe behavior issues, a disease that is contagious to other animals, or may be on quarantine.

Hint: Red means STOP. Never interact with a red level dog without approval from a supervisor.

## *Dog Walking Rules*

1. Check the whiteboard, kennel card, and kennel windows for any inserts, signs, or notes before walking each dog.
2. Keep two hands on the leash at all times.
3. Keep 20 feet away and between other dogs at ALL times.
4. No more than one dog per volunteer, no exceptions.
5. Only one dog per play/socialization yard at a time.
  - a. Kennel mates can be in the same play/socialization yard but you must have one volunteer for each dog in the yard at all times.
  - b. No toys are allowed when there are two dogs in the same yard.
6. Only walk dogs that match your level or lower levels. For example, if you are an orange-level walker you may walk orange, yellow, and pink-level dogs. You may not walk blue, purple, or red-level dogs.
7. Fence fighting is not allowed.
8. Dogs must remain on leash at all times in any area other than the socialization yards.
9. If a dog is wearing an e-collar it must remain on the dog at all times, even for photos.
10. Do not walk dogs through the Cat Pavillion or the Leeu Naylor Medical Building.
11. If walking dogs through the Adoption Lobby, Admin Offices, or Education Building please be mindful of staff working in those areas.
12. The Education Yard can be used as an additional play/socialization yard only if all other play/socialization yards are occupied and only if the area is not needed by staff. Check with the Volunteer Coordinator or Humane Educators prior to utilizing the yard.
13. Do not use the Education Room to socialize dogs unless approved by the Humane Education Team, Volunteer Team, or Dog Trainer/Behaviorist.
14. Heartworm-positive & post-op surgery dogs MUST remain on leash until they are cleared from the clinic.
15. Dogs on medical hold can be walked with approval from the medical staff. Keep in mind these pets are not adoptable yet so customers can not interact with them.
16. Dogs on stray searches can be walked however, they are not adoptable yet so customers can not interact with them.
17. Dogs under quarantine observation can not be walked or interacted with by volunteers.
18. Always "clean up" after the dog you are walking. There are plenty of "business bags" around the shelter that are attached to the trash cans.
19. Kennel staff must assist you when taking dogs in or out of kennels. They will assist customers first, so please have patience.
20. Be aware of your surroundings when going around corners. We have feral cats that live on site.

21. Update the whiteboard after each walk.

## Leashes

### Leash Walk Only


Some dogs will be marked as "on leash" or "leash walk only" dogs.


*"On leash" or "Leash walk only" means that the dog must be connected to a leash that a person is holding/controlling throughout the duration of time outside a kennel.*



Generally, these are dogs that are currently heartworm positive or recently had surgery and are still recovering.

- Heartworm Positive
  - These dogs are at risk of embolism, stroke, and death if allowed to run and exercise freely during the duration of treatment.
- Post-op Surgery
  - These animals should be exercise restricted for 10-14 days after spay/neuter surgery and longer for more complicated procedures. All animals who have had surgery will have a laminated post-op card in their sleeve that has an area to be checked off if they are to be leash walked only as well as the end date of this restriction. Failure to comply can result in surgical complications.

SURGERY DATE: _____			
		END DATE	
<input type="checkbox"/>	E-collar - Must wear at all times for 10 DAYS. Send home with adopter if pet leaves before this date.	_____	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Carprofen Send home with adopter if pet leaves before this date.	_____	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Trazodone Send home with adopter if pet leaves before this date	_____	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Leash walk only until this date. No play groups.	_____	

 IT'S ALL FUN and GAMES UNTIL SOMEONE ENDS UP in a CONE

# PROPER LEASH HOLD

**FOCUS YOUR  
ATTENTION ON THE DOG  
& YOUR SURROUNDINGS**

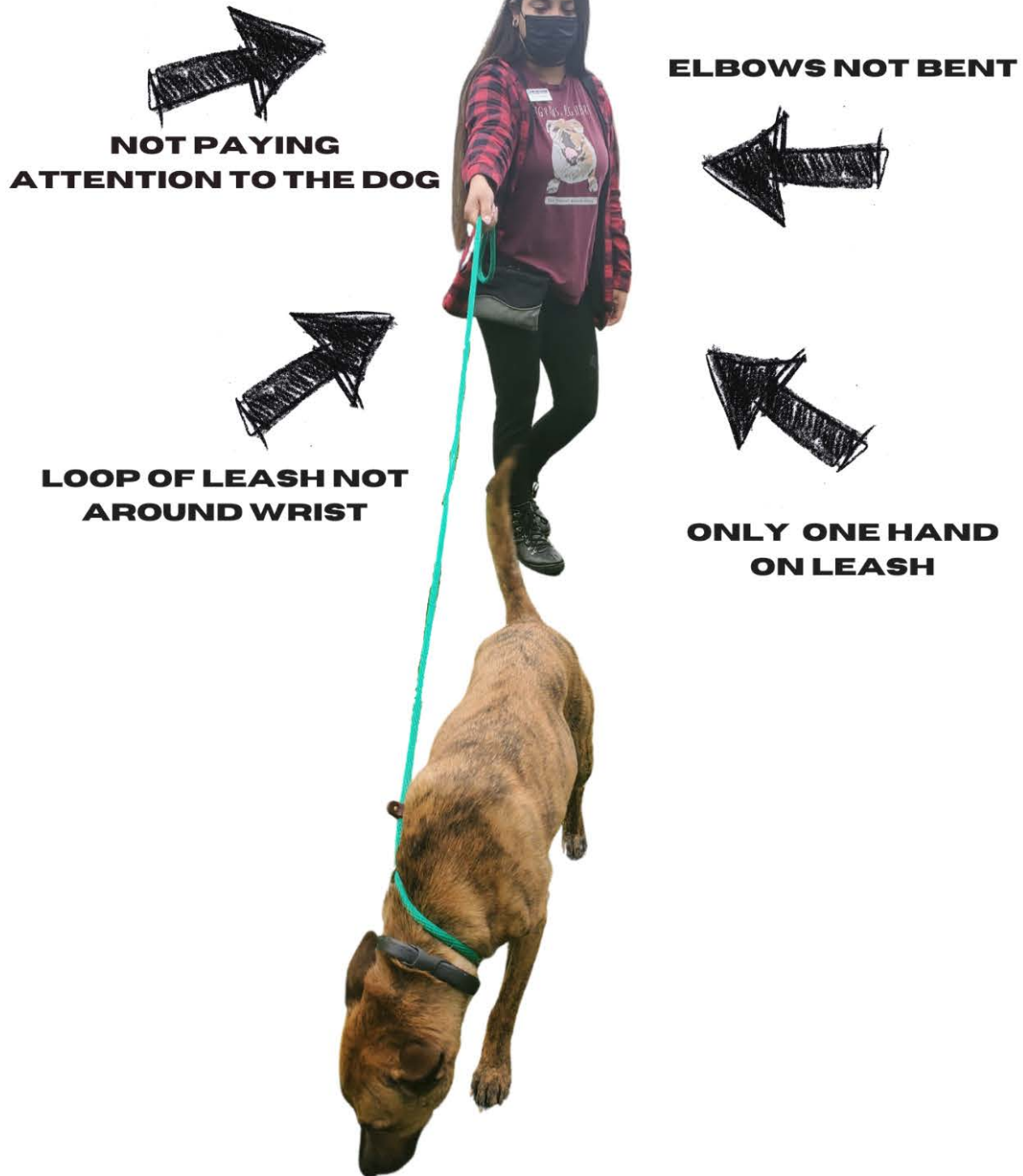
**KEEP YOUR  
ELBOWS BENT TO  
HELP CONTROL  
LEASH PULLING**

**KEEP TWO HANDS  
ON THE LEASH AT  
ALL TIMES.**

**PLACE YOUR  
HAND THROUGH  
THE LEASH LOOP  
AND LET IT REST  
LOOSELY ON YOUR  
WRIST**



# IMPROPER LEASH HOLD






## Harnesses

We use multiple harnesses to walk dogs. Below are fitting guides for our most frequently used harnesses. Staff should be able to fit dogs with harnesses for dog walkers. However, volunteers must learn how to properly harness dogs if they wish to gain access to kennel keys.

**FREEDOM NO-PULL  
HARNESS  
AND LEASH**



**PARTS OF A HARNESS**

- Martingale loop
- Side straps
- Buckles
- Sternum Strap
- Velvet Strap
- Front O-ring

**EASY AS**

1


•

2

•


3

**1**




Unclip both buckles and slip the Freedom Harness over your dog's head.

**2**



Bring the sternum strap between the 2 front legs. Clip the buckles on each side of the dog's chest.


**THE RESULT**



**ADDITIONAL NOTES**  
The most time you will spend with the Freedom Harness is during the initial fitting. Adjust the front straps so that the front O-ring sits snugly. It will be right at the breastbone and then adjust the sternum strap (the strap between the 2 front legs) so that the harness is snug but you can get 2 fingers under the straps.

**3 DOUBLE CONNECTION TRAINING LEASH**


**a.**



Connect one side of the leash to the front of the harness and other side to the martingale loop.

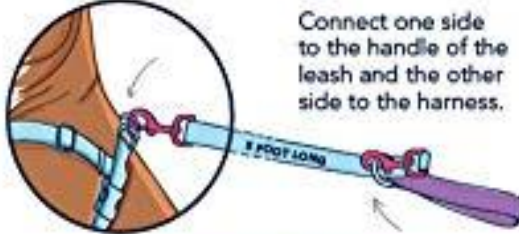
This is the recommended method and gives you the best communication and control with your dog. ★

**b.**



Connect both connections to the martingale loop for a shorter single connection leash.

**c.**



Connect one side to the handle of the leash and the other side to the harness.

**ENJOY YOUR WALK!**

# Easy Walk® Harness fitting step by step

**Important:** Please be sure to read and understand all instructions before using the harness on your dog. Throughout the fitting process and during initial use of Easy Walk Harness, motivate and encourage your dog with praise and special tasty treats. If your dog is especially active, have someone help you by feeding treats while you fit and adjust. It might be easiest to remove the harness to make fitting adjustments.

Please fit your dog in a quiet indoor space to ensure a stress free and safe environment. Start with all straps fully extended. To achieve a proper fit, your dog should be standing. Dogs may "tense up" during fitting, so check the fit again after the dog has walked in the harness for a few minutes. Readjust as needed. Visit [www.PetSafe.net/Easy-Walk-Harness](http://www.PetSafe.net/Easy-Walk-Harness) for an instructional video.



## 1 Fit the Shoulder Strap

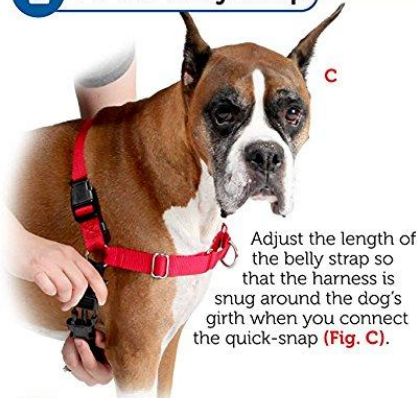


**A** Unsnap the belly strap quick-snap. Place the shoulder strap over the dog's head with the chest strap resting on the dog's chest. You can encourage your dog to put his head through the harness by offering a treat (**Fig. A**).

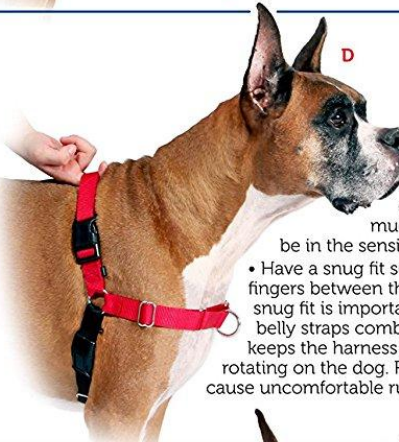


**B** Adjust the shoulder strap so the "O" rings sit above and behind the dog's shoulder (**Fig. B**).

## 2 Fit the Belly Strap



**C** Adjust the length of the belly strap so that the harness is snug around the dog's girth when you connect the quick-snap (**Fig. C**).

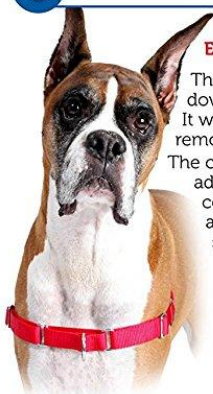


**(Fig. D)** Once the shoulder and belly straps are connected and adjusted, they should:

- Resemble a vertical line as much as possible and should not be in the sensitive armpit area.

- Have a snug fit so that you can only fit 1-2 fingers between the strap and the dog's body. A snug fit is important because the shoulder and belly straps combined create the foundation that keeps the harness in place and keeps it from rotating on the dog. Rotation around the dog can cause uncomfortable rubbing and chafing.

## 3 Fit the Chest Strap



**E** The chest strap should fit horizontally and not droop down or too easily ride up close to the dog's neck (**Fig. E**). It will be much easier to make this adjustment if you remove the harness from your dog.

The chest strap has two adjustment points. You will want to adjust the sides evenly so the martingale remains in the center. For example if you estimated you needed to adjust the chest strap by one inch, you will adjust each slide on the strap by a half an inch (**Fig. F**).



**G** When you're ready to take a walk, you will attach the leash to the D-ring on the chest strap. Please refer to the Training and Usage Tips for proper leash techniques to use with this harness (**Fig. G**).

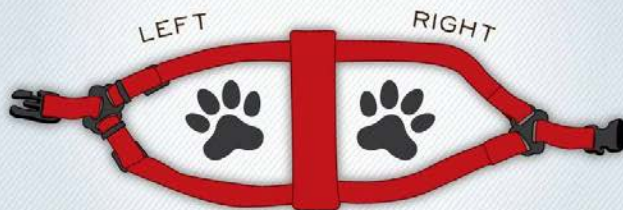


# HOW TO PUT A STEP-IN DOG HARNESS ON YOUR PUP

DRIVING OR WALKING, A PROPERLY SIZED AND SECURED DOG HARNESS IS THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF KEEPING YOUR DOG SAFE ON THE ROAD

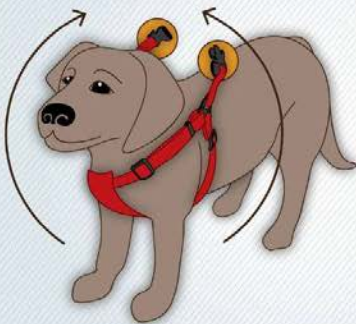
## 1 POSITION

Unbuckle the harness and lay it open and flat on the ground. With your dog standing over the harness, place his left leg in the LEFT loop, and the right leg in the RIGHT loop.



## 2 SECURE

Snap strap buckles together.



### COMFORT IS KEY

Make sure you choose a harness that is comfortable for your dog. Look for wider side straps or a cushy chest pad.

### CHEST PAD SHAPE



Minimalistic, good for dogs who don't like added bulk.



Extended coverage for added comfort. Shape also helps stabilize whole harness.

## 3 ADJUST

Use the adjustment points on the straps to fit the harness snug on your dog. It should be snug but loose enough for you to fit two fingers comfortably between your dog and the harness at any point.



### AND THERE YOU GO!

After the important first-time fitting, the harness can be easily removed and used time and time again on your pup without additional adjustments.

© Kurgo

For other great tips on how to use harnesses, visit [Kurgo.com](http://Kurgo.com)

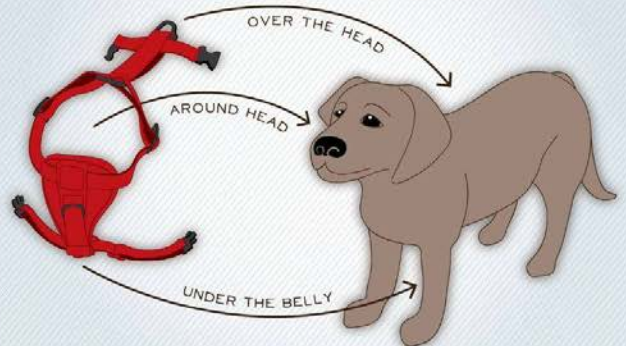


# HOW TO PUT AN OVERHEAD DOG HARNESS ON YOUR PUP

DRIVING OR WALKING, A PROPERLY SIZED AND SECURED DOG HARNESS IS THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF KEEPING YOUR DOG SAFE ON THE ROAD

## 1 POSITION

Start with the harness loose. Slide your dog's head through the neck piece, and arrange the bottom straps between the two front legs, under the belly.



## 2 SECURE

Snap strap buckles together.



### ALTERNATE "NESTING" BUCKLE\*



PUSH THROUGH "KURGO" SIDE UP



SECURE BUCKLE

© Kurgo

## 3 ADJUST

Use the four adjustment points on the straps to fit the harness snug on your dog. It should be snug but loose enough for you to fit two fingers comfortably between your dog and the harness at any point.



EVENLY ADJUST EACH OF THE FOUR STRAPS FOR A SNUG FIT

### AND THERE YOU GO!

After the important first-time fitting, the harness can be easily removed and used time and time again on your pup without additional adjustments.

For other great tips on how to use harnesses, visit [Kurgo.com](http://Kurgo.com)

\*Nesting buckle specific for Kurgo's Tru-Fit Smart Harness



# FITTING INSTRUCTIONS

## Step One

Unbuckle harness.  
Drop over dog's head  
with contrasting loop  
on top.



## Step Two

Bring velvet strap between  
front legs. Snap buckles  
closed on both sides.



## Step Three

Adjust and tighten  
harness around  
the chest until it  
fits snugly. Then  
adjust and tighten  
across the front and  
between the front  
legs. You should  
be able to get no  
more than two fingers  
under the harness.





## *The President's Volunteer Service Award Program*

The San Antonio Humane Society (SAHS) is proud to announce the availability of the President's Volunteer Service Award, a prestigious national honor offered in recognition of volunteer commitment. Established in 2003, this award is given by the President of the United States and honors individuals who have demonstrated a sustained commitment to volunteer service over the course of 12 months. As a Certifying Organization of the President's Volunteer Service Award, the SAHS can nominate potential recipients and distribute the Award to those who meet or exceed the Award criteria.

### Eligibility

Hours are measured over a 12-month period (Oct. 1 - Sept. 30) and awards are designated based on cumulative hours. The awards are offered in multiple levels and are designed to recognize each milestone of your service achievement. Levels include bronze, silver, gold, and the highest honor, the President's Lifetime Achievement Award for those who contribute more than 4,000 hours of service in their lifetime.

Along with the ultimate honor of presidential recognition, recipients may receive a personalized certificate, an official pin, medallion, or coin, and a congratulatory letter from the President of the United States.

Active volunteers do not need to submit any special paperwork or forms to receive an award. Eligibility is determined and nominations are submitted for all active volunteers that qualify by the Volunteer Department.

### **Hours Required to Earn Awards in Each Age Group**

Age Group	Bronze	Silver	Gold	Lifetime Achievement Award
Young Adults (16-25)	100-174 hours	175-249 hours	250+ hours	4,000+ hours
Adults (26+)	100-249 hours	250-499 hours	500+ hours	4,000+ hours



## *SAHS Lead Volunteer Program*

### Minimum Requirements for Lead Volunteers

- Must be at least 18 years of age
- Must have at least 500 hours of volunteer service at SAHS
- Must average at least 120 hours of volunteer service at SAHS annually
- Must be in good standing...no write-ups

### Nominations & Selection

Once a year, supervisors in all departments will be provided with a list of volunteers that meet the minimum requirements to become lead volunteers. Supervisors will nominate those they feel would be good candidates to become lead volunteers in their departments. Supervisors should keep the following in mind when making nominations:

- Lead volunteers should be well-versed in both departmental and general shelter knowledge and be comfortable answering questions for both customers and other volunteers.
- They should also be comfortable mentoring new volunteers in their departments.
- Lead volunteers will be the first contacted when special assistance is needed at the shelter (hurricane relief, hoarding cases, large transports, extreme weather events, etc) and may be asked to assist with organizing/leading volunteers within their areas of expertise.

Nominations will then be reviewed and approved or denied by a committee consisting of the Volunteer Supervisor, Outreach Assistant, and other lead volunteers. Volunteers whose nominations are approved will be contacted by the Volunteer Supervisor and asked if they would like to become Lead Volunteers.

### Becoming a Lead Volunteer

Once a volunteer has accepted their nomination they will receive an invitation to attend a lead volunteer information session. This session will go over all the information Lead Volunteers are expected to know about the SAHS. This will include basic shelter information like:

- Types of intake and how intake works
- The journey of a pet from intake to adoption
- What heartworms are and how we treat them
- What ambassador pets are and how to explain them to the public
- How the foster program works
- What services are offered to the public
- Shelter layout
- Annual statistics
- Dog walking guide/rules
- Volunteer program general overview

After attending the information session, volunteers will be contacted by the Volunteer Supervisor, Outreach Assistant, or Lead Volunteer to discuss the information provided, answer any questions, and ensure the volunteer understands their responsibilities and still wants to become a Lead Volunteer. New Lead Volunteers will be announced and officially promoted at the annual volunteer appreciation event.