



Shelter Helpers Service Club

Parent Handbook

Fall 2024-Spring 2025

Table of Contents

Introduction	2
About the San Antonio Humane Society	2
About the Shelter Helpers Service Club	2
Participant Drop-Off and Pick-Up	3
Check-In Location	3
Check-In Process	3
Pick-Up Location	3
Pick-Up Process	3
Late Drop-Off, Early Pick-Up, and Absences	3
Fees, Rescheduling, and Cancellations	4
Late Pick-Up Fee	4
Rescheduling and Cancellations	4
Program Policies	5
Attire/Dress Code	5
Behavior Concerns	5
Program Regulations	5
Code of Conduct	6
Attending with Siblings or Friends	6
Hydration	6
Medication	6
Parent/Guardian Notification	7
Lunch/Snack	7
Staff to Participant Ratio & Etiquette	7
Weather Protocol	7
Camper Health and Safety	8
Disease Prevention Reminders Prior To Arrival	10
Camp Activities	11
Frequently Asked Questions	12
Contact	14

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 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 arts and crafts, reading to shelter pets, creating pet enrichment, cleaning kennels and crates, and more! Available select dates over the school year, 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 member of the SAHS education team to greet you. The education team member 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 1:45 PM-2:00 PM. Upon arrival, please ring the doorbell and wait for a member of the SAHS education team to greet you. Once you've been greeted, the education team 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 government-issued photo ID. This person must also be listed on the authorized pick-up list provided during registration. Upon verification, a member of the SAHS education team 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. 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 a member of the SAHS education team 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. 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. 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 camp session will receive a full refund. Cancellations made within two (2) weeks of your scheduled camp session are not eligible for a refund. Camp sessions may be rebooked whenever possible; however, rebooking is subject to availability. Each rescheduled reservation will be subject to a \$15 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

Campers should wear their Camp Humane t-shirt, closed-toe shoes with rubber, non-slip soles, and pants or shorts of at least knee-length. Campers will receive their Camp Humane t-shirt on the first day of camp 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. For the health and safety of your camper, be advised that campers who are not within the dress code may not be able to participate in certain activities, including animal interactions.

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 member of the SAHS education team 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 member of the SAHS education team 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 and/or by a member of the SAHS education team. 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 member of the SAHS education team 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 camper be diagnosed with or exposed to any illness that may be contagious and their scheduled session falls within their designated quarantine or recovery period, please contact the SAHS Education Team immediately to discuss your options. You can email education@SAhumane.org or call (210) 226-7461 ext. 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 a member of the SAHS education team.

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. Any items containing nuts, including but not limited to granola bars, peanut butter or Nutella, candies, cereals, etc. will be promptly confiscated and disposed of. An alternative snack or meal will be provided in the event that an item is mistakenly sent with your camper. Though some items may not contain nuts, 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 the SAHS Outreach Manager.

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 member of the SAHS education team 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 member of the SAHS education team 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 member of the SAHS education team will notify all parents/guardians.

Camper Health and Safety

- Parents should monitor their camper for any symptoms of illness each day prior to camp.
 - Campers 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)
 - Campers who are experiencing any symptoms of illness, as listed above, will not be permitted to attend camp until these symptoms are no longer present. Rescheduling your camper's session will be subject to availability.
 - Campers who may begin experiencing symptoms of illness while at camp will be sent home. Refunds will not be issued for missed time; however, every effort will be made to reschedule your child's session.
- 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.
- Campers 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. Most activities outside of the education room and adjacent play yard will only be accessed prior to public opening. Any guest presenter visiting Shelter Helpers Service Club may require a larger outdoor space on shelter grounds, which may sometimes be accessed after opening. These activities will be guided and supervised by the SAHS education team throughout the duration of the activity. Other staff and volunteers may be utilized as needed. The majority of camp will take place inside of the education room and adjacent play yard.
- 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 camp participant and will only be refilled by a designated staff member at the Education Building water dispenser.
- When materials must be shared, they will be sanitized between groups. Everyone will have access to a handwashing station or hand sanitizer immediately after use.
- Campers will be placed into a small group or "pack" for group activities throughout the week. They will be with their same pack for the week.
- Game equipment will be sanitized after each day's use.
- We will remind campers 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.

- No food sharing will be allowed. Products containing nuts are strictly prohibited from Shelter Helpers Service Club. Any items containing nuts, including but not limited to granola bars, peanut butter or Nutella, candies, cereals, etc. will be promptly confiscated and disposed of. An alternative snack or meal will be provided in the event that an item is mistakenly sent with your camper. Though some items may not contain nuts, 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 the SAHS Outreach Manager.

*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 campers for any symptoms of illness each day prior to camp.
- Staff, volunteers, and campers should not come to camp if they show any symptoms of illness, as referenced in the Camp Policies section.
- Campers, 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 hands should be disinfected by washing hands with soap and water for a minimum of 20 seconds, or with a hand sanitizer.
- Parents will be informed: By coming to camp this summer, you are recognizing the risks associated with participating in group activities. 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.

Camp Activities

Session Themes

“Puparazzi” (October 19, 2024)

Calling all “Puparazzi!” In this session, campers will receive a crash course in photography and put their new skills to work by helping us update our pets’ photos. Campers will earn credit for 5 hours of service work for the session.

“Barks & Crafts” (December 14, 2024)

Unleash your creativity! This session will be full of shelter-themed arts and crafts projects to help our pets have fun and get noticed by potential adopters. Campers will earn credit for 5 hours of service work for the session.

“Enrichment Extravaganza” (February 15, 2025)

Enrichment is for everyone! In this session, campers will spend the day creating exciting toys and activities that will promote our pets’ health and well-being. Campers will earn credit for 5 hours of service work for the session.

“Squeaky Clean” (April 19, 2025)

Sponges, squeegees, and suds - oh my! In this session, campers will take a bite out of grime as they assist our kennel team with morning cleaning, ensuring a fresh and comfortable space for our pets. Campers will earn credit for 5 hours of service work for the session.

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 camp session will receive a full refund. Cancellations made within two (2) weeks of your scheduled camp session are not eligible for a refund. Camp sessions may be rebooked whenever possible; however, rebooking is subject to availability. Each rescheduled reservation will be subject to a \$15 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.

What if my child gets COVID-19 or another illness before the program?

Should your camper be diagnosed with or exposed to COVID-19 or any other contagious illness and their scheduled session falls within their designated quarantine or recovery period, please contact the Humane Education team immediately to discuss your options. You can email education@SAhumane.org or call (210) 226-7461 ext. 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, arts and crafts, reading to shelter pets, creating pet enrichment, cleaning kennels and crates, 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. Products containing nuts are strictly prohibited from Shelter Helpers Service Club. Any items containing nuts, including but not limited to granola bars, peanut butter or Nutella, candies, cereals, etc. will be promptly confiscated and disposed of. An alternative snack or meal will be provided in the event that an item is mistakenly sent with your camper. Though some items may not contain nuts, 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 the SAHS Outreach Manager. Temperatures inside of our classroom can be chilly, so we also recommend that campers bring a light jacket.

What should my child wear to the program?

Participants should wear their Camp Humane t-shirt, closed-toe shoes with rubber, non-slip soles, and pants or shorts of at least knee-length. Participants will receive their t-shirt upon arrival to the program and will be allowed to change into their shirts in the bathrooms. For the health and safety of our campers and pets, any camper that is not wearing closed-toed shoes during the program will not be permitted to interact with any pets outside of their kennel. 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 18, with the exception of students who have applied for and been accepted into the Practicing Animal Welfare through Service (P.A.W.S.) Youth Volunteer Program, which is available to students in 11th and 12th grade. Individuals who are interested in becoming a general volunteer must submit a volunteer application. Pending approval, applicants must attend an orientation, and complete and pass a background check. 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.

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.

Contact

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