



Volunteer Handbook

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Section 1.0 - Introduction

1.1 About Paws for Hope Animal Foundation

Paws for Hope Animal Foundation is committed to creating more sustainable animal welfare and purposeful companion animal protection in British Columbia. We are the only BC charity to directly help animals and to also assist animal rescue charities with their different areas of need. By filling the gaps with our own direct animal assistance and educational programs while simultaneously strengthening and empowering the existing animal support network, we're one step closer to realizing our vision of a Province providing the utmost care and protection for its companion animals today and over the long term.

Throughout this policy Paws for Hope Animal Foundation may be referred to as Paws for Hope or the Agency.

1.2 Our Vision

The utmost care and protection for companion animals in BC over the long term.

1.3 Our Mission

Build a sustainable animal welfare system in British Columbia.

1.4 Our Impact

Since our establishment in June 2011, we have successfully:

1. Established much-needed programs such as Guardian Angel, Roxy's Relief and SpayAidBC.
2. Held free animal health clinics for homeless and low income pet guardians three times a year in Vancouver.
3. Provided funding support to homeless and low income earning pet guardians for critical care of their pets.
4. Established quarterly education series hosting keynote addresses from leaders and experts in animal welfare as well as screening award-winning documentaries.
5. Built important partnerships in the animal welfare and business community, and have an open dialogue on how we can work together to increase our impact.

1.5 Programs & Services

Paws for Hope programs and services include:

Guardian Angel - provide financial support for emergency and organizational development to pre-qualified, animal charities in BC

Roxy's Relief - partner with social service agencies in Vancouver, New Westminister, and North Vancouver to provide support to homeless, low-income, and elderly pet guardians through pet food, bedding and jacket donations. Hold free animal health clinics in Vancouver and provide funding assistance to low income earners for emergent veterinary care

SpayAid BC - provincial program to combat pet overpopulation.

Crazy About Cats - provide trap, neuter, return (TNR) funding to animal charities in BC working to eliminate the cat feral and free-roaming overpopulation crisis.

Pets Are Not Products - province-wide educational campaign to inform the public about animal welfare issues related to the retail sale of cats, dogs and rabbits in BC.

Cruelty Free BC - province-wide educational campaign to inform the public on the inhumane and unnecessary practice of animal testing for cosmetic and household products.

Section 2.0 - General Volunteer Guidelines

2.1 Purpose of this Guide

This handbook is designed for individuals interested in and/or currently volunteering with Paws for Hope Animal Foundation. The purpose of this handbook is to provide an overview of the current Paws for Hope volunteer programs, policies, and procedures in general terms.

Paws for Hope reserves the right to modify, add, revoke, suspend, terminate or change any or all policies or procedures of the Agency, in whole or in part, at any time with or without notice.

It is the responsibility of each volunteer to read this handbook and become familiar with the policies and procedures of Paws for Hope.

Questions about these policies or procedures should be directed the Volunteer Coordinator or Executive Director.

2.2 Definition of “Volunteer”

A volunteer is anyone who performs a task on behalf of and/or under the direction of an agency, without compensation or expectation of compensation beyond reimbursement. A volunteer with Paws for Hope must be officially accepted and enrolled by the Agency prior to performance of any task.

2.3 Role of Volunteers

Volunteers are an invaluable resource to an organization, its members, and its mission. As Paws for Hope Animal Foundation is founded by volunteers, we recognize that without the skills, enthusiasm, and commitment of volunteers, it would be impossible to maintain the range and quality of our goals.

Volunteers will work directly with the Volunteer Coordinator to ensure they are aware of all volunteer opportunities available to them, and they are getting the most out of their involvement with Paws for Hope.

2.4 Rights of Volunteers

Volunteers have the right:

- To be given meaningful assignments
- To be treated as equal co-workers
- To receive training and orientation for volunteer tasks
- To full involvement and participation as members of the organization
- To receive effective and ongoing supervision
- To accept or decline any assignment
- To receive ongoing support, recognition, and appreciation for contribution.

In return, volunteers agree to actively perform their duties to the best of their abilities, be accountable to the Agency, and to remain faithful to the philosophies, policies, and procedures of the Agency.

2.5 Responsibilities of Volunteers

- To be on time and carry out duties promptly and reliably
- To give at least 24-hours notice if he/she is unable to attend the shift as scheduled
- To be willing to learn and participate in an orientation
- To ask questions if uncertain about anything
- To respect confidentiality and be loyal to the organization
- To accept the guidance and decisions of the Volunteer Coordinator or designate

- To not engage in behaviour that is disrespectful, inappropriate, discriminatory or harassing
- To abide by applicable rules, regulations, legislation, policies, and collective agreement provisions, and address any dissatisfaction through appropriate channels

2.6 Volunteer Commitment

Volunteers must be able to commit to a minimum of 2 hours per month for a six-month period for their volunteer service. The term commitment is required to ensure the volunteer receives adequate training and familiarity with the organization.

In cases where the commitment to a six-month term cannot be made, the Volunteer Coordinator and/or Executive Director may approve a short-term placement in accordance with operational needs.

2.7 Benefits to Volunteering

Volunteering is a great way to explore new career options, meet new people that share your passion, and achieve a better understanding of your community.

When it comes to promoting animal welfare, fostering and donating, while essential, are not the only ways you can help! Most of the animal welfare and rescue initiatives across British Columbia are volunteer run and in need of opportunities for promotion and support in order to continue the work they do. Through Paws for Hope you can ensure that these organizations get the help they need while simultaneously promoting awareness and education throughout the community.

Section 3.0 - Recruitment and Selection of Volunteers

3.1 Volunteer Application Form

Potential volunteers must submit a *Volunteer Application* form (Appendix A) in order to be considered for possible volunteer opportunities.

The purpose of the application form is to ensure the qualifications, ability and suitability of the candidate matches that of the available positions.

Volunteers must be 19 years of age.

3.2 Interviewing Volunteers

Upon acceptance of the application the candidate will be interviewed by the Volunteer Coordinator, the Executive Director or a Board Members

The interview may be conducted in person, online via Skype, or by telephone.

3.3 Background Checks

Following the interview the candidate will submit two references which will be followed up on by the Volunteer Coordinator or the Executive Director

3.4 Information Session

Successful applicants will be notified and will be required to attend a two-hour orientation session which will provide in-depth information about Paws for Hope and the expectations of the volunteer. Orientations occur two – three times a year depending on organizational needs and volunteer interest.

3.5 Non-Discrimination

Paws for Hope accepts, supports, and practices the concept of non-discrimination. This means that Paws for Hope will not refuse to allow a person to volunteer or discriminate against a person with respect to any term or condition of his/her volunteer engagement, because of race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, political belief, religion, marital status, family status, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, age, or because of a criminal or summary conviction offence unrelated to the intended volunteer engagement of that person.

3.6 Placement of Volunteers

In determining suitable placement for volunteers attention will be given to the interest, qualifications, and goals of the volunteer, along with the requirements of Paws for Hope and position(s) available.

We have many opportunities for skill set such as planning and organization, ideas about promotion and education campaigns, and reaching out to the community.

Volunteer positions include fundraising, photography, and graphic design.

3.7 Membership

We encourage all our volunteers to become a member of Paws for Hope. Membership is important to the organizational administration and helps to ensure democratic and transparent decision making.

All members receive quarterly updates, copies of Paws for Hope resources and are invited to attend our Annual General Meeting.

To become a member please fill out the *Membership Application* form (Appendix B) and send to the Executive Director.

Section 4.0 - Working as a Volunteer

4.1 First Session

4.2 Induction & Training

During the first day new volunteers will be introduced to the staff and volunteers he/she will be working with. Depending on the task, new volunteers may be asked to work with a senior volunteer, board member or staff. Often volunteers come to us with specific skills and require little direction, but it is still important to ensure all volunteers are conducting themselves in an appropriate manner and are acting in accordance with our philosophies.

4.3 Shift Responsibility (Absenteeism)

Volunteers are expected to perform their duties on a regular schedule and in a timely manner. If a volunteer will be absent for a scheduled shift or needs to take an extended leave of absence, the Volunteer Coordinator or other appropriate PAws for Hope member must be notified in a reasonable time frame.

4.4 Volunteer Probationary Period

4.5 Resignation

Please notify PAws for Hope prior to your resignation as soon as reasonably possible.

4.6 Recognition

Volunteer recognition events are held once year.

Section 5.0 - Health and Safety for Volunteers

5.1 Emergency Procedures

Emergencies will be reported to 911 first then the Volunteer Coordinator or the appropriate PAws for Hope staff member. An *Incident Report* (Appendix C) form will be completed and submitted to the Executive Director within 24-hours of the incident.

5.2 Violence in the Workplace

Workplace violence can include abuse, threats, intimidation or assault and can occur between staff, volunteers, or service users. Work-related violence can occur at business-related functions such as conferences or trade shows, or social events related to work.

Any act of violence committed by or against a volunteer will not be tolerated. In responding to a potential or actual threat of violence in the workplace, the volunteer should immediately contact the Volunteer Coordinator or the appropriate Paws for Hope staff member for assistance. If the Volunteer Coordinator or appropriate staff member is immediately unavailable, the volunteer should contact 911 for emergency assistance. An *Incident Report* form must be completed and submitted to the Executive Director within 24-hours of the incident.

5.3 Alcohol & Substance Abuse

The use, sale, transfer or possession of controlled substances or alcohol by volunteers will not be tolerated and will subject the volunteer to discipline up to and including termination.

Section 6.0 - Paws for Hope Policies and Procedures

6.1 Dress Code

Volunteers are responsible for maintaining a professional and appropriate presentation.

6.2 Use of Organizational Affiliation/Paws for Hope Logo

Volunteers may not use their organizational affiliation in connection with partisan politics, religious matters, or community issues contrary to positions taken by Paws for Hope. Volunteers are permitted to be involved in political activities as individuals but must not use Paws for Hope resources to support an individual's personal political activities.

The official Paws for Hope logo and names of publications and/or programs are all **registered trademarks** of Paws for Hope. Approval must be sought by the Executive Director to reproduce or use of these **registered trademarks**.

6.5 Position Statements

No Kill

Paws for Hope Animal Foundation aims to create a no kill sanctuary. A no-kill sanctuary is an environment where no healthy or treatable animal is killed, reserving euthanasia for terminally animals or those considered dangerous to public safety.

Consumption of Meat

Paws for Hope Animal Foundation advocates for the humane treatment of all animals and encourages people to be conscious of where their food comes from.

All of Paws for Hope's events are vegetarian and vegan.

Import

Position statement in progress

6.4 Media Communications

Volunteers for Paws for Hope are representatives for the foundation. On occasion volunteers may be asked questions from the public or media regarding Paws for Hope policies, philosophies or services that they do not feel comfortable with or qualified to answer. In these instances, volunteers should refer the inquiry to the Volunteer Coordinator or appropriate Paws for Hope staff member.

Only designated spokespersons may publicly comment on Paws for Hope policies and procedures. Any inquiries from the media must be referred to the Executive Director.

6.5 Privacy and Confidentiality

Paws for Hope is committed to adhering to the principles of the *Personal Information and Privacy Act* (PIPA) and to the protection of the privacy and confidentiality of the personal information of its donors, members, staff, directors, volunteers, clients and other stakeholders. Paws for Hope values the trust of those we deal with and of the public, and recognize that maintaining this trust requires that we be transparent and accountable in how we treat the information individuals choose to entrust with us.

All staff, contractors, volunteers, and directors have a legal obligation to protect personal information obtained in the course of duties with Paws for Hope. All reasonable measures must be taken to ensure that personal information collected, used, and disclosed only in circumstances necessary to conduct the business of the Agency or when law requires. Any confidential material and personal information will be kept in a secure place and appropriately discarded. Service users may access this information upon request **and approval from the Volunteer Coordinator or Executive Director.**

Breaches of confidentiality include intentional and unauthorized access to, use and/or disclosure of confidential information.

6.6 Use of Cameras / Voice Recorders

Authorized staff, volunteers and contractors are permitted to utilize photography equipment to carry out duties associated with their position with Paws for Hope. Permitted usage includes, but is not limited to the following common uses:

- Capturing and distributing photos of Paws for Hope work for social media
- Capturing photos of staff, volunteers or service users who have consented to having their image captured and released

6.7 Insurance and Liability Coverage

At this time Paws for Hope Animal Foundation does not have insurance coverage.

6.8 Expenses

From time to time, it may be necessary for a volunteer to incur expenditures related to their duties for Paws for Hope. Before an expense is incurred, the volunteer should seek direction from the Volunteer Coordinator or the appropriate Paws for Hope staff member regarding whether such expense can be incurred and whether it has been provided for in the budget.

All expense claims must be submitted to the Volunteer Coordinator for payment within 30 days of incurring the expense. A copy of the expense reimbursement form can be obtained from the Volunteer Coordinator.

6.9 Harassment, Bullying & Discrimination

Paws for Hope is committed to providing a respectful working environment in which all individuals are treated with consideration, tolerance, and dignity. Each individual has the right to work in a professional atmosphere that promotes respect, equal opportunities, and prohibits discriminatory practices. Workplace discrimination, harassment, and bullying will not be tolerated. All persons associated with Paws for Hope are accountable for their own actions and must conduct themselves in a civil, respectful, cooperative, and non-discriminatory manner in the workplace.

Paws for Hope encourages reporting of all incidents of workplace discrimination, harassment, or bullying. If evidence of disrespectful conduct, discrimination, harassment, or bullying is found, disciplinary action may result up to, and including, termination of the volunteer relationship. Paws for Hope reserves the right to investigate incidents where there are concerns of alleged discrimination, harassment, or bullying.

6.10 Advocacy Issues

Paws for Hope works to create a more sustainable approach to animal welfare by advocating on behalf of companion animals. Our efforts involve demanding change to local, provincial and national laws, increasing public awareness on various animal welfare issues, and promoting sustainable services. Volunteers can assist Paws for Hope in our advocacy efforts by staying current on our campaigns. Information regarding these campaigns can be found on our public website - www.pawsforhope.org along with our social media platforms.

6.11 Fundraising and Donations

Paws for Hope Animal Foundation is a non-profit organization funded primarily by public donations. All staff and volunteers are encouraged to be involved in fundraising events, become donors and/or assist in the acceptance of donations in accordance with Paws for Hope's *Gift Acceptance Policy*.

Volunteer Acknowledgement Form

After reading the Paws for Hope - Volunteer Handbook please sign and return this page prior to your first scheduled volunteer session.

My signature on this form acknowledges that I have received, read and understand the Paws for Hope Volunteer Handbook and will comply with all policies and procedures set herein. I understand that the policies presented within the handbook are presented in general terms and may change with or without notice.

I agree to conduct my activities in accordance with all Paws for Hope policies and understand that breaching any of these standards may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. I understand that the policies in this handbook are for my safety and protection as a volunteer as well as other volunteers and staff members. I agree to follow these procedures and to notify the Volunteer Coordinator of any conditions that could bring harm to any person or animal.

I understand that Paws for Hope accepts the services of all volunteers with the understanding that such service is at the sole discretion of Paws for Hope. I understand that Paws for Hope may at any time and for whatever reason, decide to terminate my participation as a volunteer for Paws for Hope. I understand that I may at any time and for whatever reason decide to end my relationship with Paws for Hope. I agree to communicate this decision as soon as possible to the Volunteer Coordinator.

I acknowledge that I have been given an opportunity to ask questions about the contents of this handbook..

Volunteer Name

Volunteer Signature

Date

Appendix A - Volunteer Application

Appendix B - Membership Application

Appendix C - Incident Report