



Volunteer Handbook

Welcome!

We are so glad you are interested in volunteering with our organization. Our volunteers are integral to our mission of preventing animal cruelty, suffering, and overpopulation. Every department, program, or service we provide is a tool to help fulfill that mission. Staff, volunteers, and community support are essential to making that happen. You are a **VITAL** part of our organization.

Essential HSMC Facts

HSMC is a nonprofit 501 (c)(3) organization (the government or national organizations do not fund it), and we do not receive tax dollars. The HSMC relies on supporting our communities through private donations and fundraising activities to fulfill our mission independently from other humane societies and agencies. We do not euthanize any adoptable animals due to a lack of space or length of stay.

Humble Beginnings...

The Humane Society of Marion County, Inc was founded in 1964 by a few concerned individuals who wanted to care for unwanted and abandoned companion animals in Marion County. First, working with a network of foster homes, the organization outgrew its original facility and moved into a new facility located at 701 N.W. 14th Road in Ocala in 2004. We now can house three hundred dogs and cats. We also have the HSMC Thrift Store located at 110 N.W. 10th Street.

Who Can Volunteer?

- **JUNIOR –13 and under**

While Junior Volunteers are not eligible to work at the shelter or thrift store, there are plenty of opportunities for our young animal lovers to help the organization. From collecting toys, pet food, and monetary donations; to leading club projects, our Juniors contribute to the cause.

- **Marion County Students – Ages 14 to 17**

Most high school students must complete community service hours before graduation, and we gladly work with those students. Our student volunteers require parent or guardian consent and can work only in our shelter. **Volunteers aged 14 and 15 must accompany their parent/guardian while volunteering and through orientation.**

- **Adult Volunteers – Ages 18+**

People who love animals and want to help are always welcome!

- **Court Ordered Community Service & Career Source - Ages: 18+**

You do not need to attend this orientation if you fit into this category. Please see our front desk for further details. The HSMC works with many local agencies to provide opportunities for those who are **court-ordered & required to complete Career Source hours.** Community Service (CS) Volunteers must be 18 and may work in our shelter or thrift store.

EXPECTATIONS

What should a volunteer expect from the HSMC?

- Support in choosing the best position in which to serve.
- No schedule (unless you want to help with events)
- Cooperation, gratitude, and respect for you, your service, and commitment
- Recognition of your contributions through service awards, inclusion in our newsletter, birthday/holiday remembrances, and lunch/dinner celebrations
- Volunteer Bank – Use your hours for rewards.
- Evaluations and advancement.

What should the HSMC expect from a volunteer?

- We love that you are coming to help; however, we need volunteers to do things around the shelter. Please always check in with the front desk or kennel staff for something to do.
- A severe commitment of time and talent
- Support for the organization, its departments, mission, and leadership
- Cooperation with and respect for staff, our rules, and other volunteers
- The humane treatment of our animals **always**

SAFETY

All volunteers are expected to exercise caution and perform their duties in the safest possible manner. Volunteers are **not** covered under our workers' compensation insurance for accidents or injuries and accept all responsibility for their safety.

Volunteers should never put themselves in an uncomfortable or potentially hazardous situation. Our staff members are trained to handle those types of problems and should always be called upon if there is ever any question of safety.

If an alarm sounds, volunteers should report to a staff member in a safe place for instructions.

ALL BLACK-COLLARED DOGS ARE TO BE WALKED BY STAFF ONLY!

Dress Code

HSMC expects all volunteers and employees to dress appropriately for their tasks. Inappropriate apparel can send an unprofessional message to the public; some can even become a hazard.

Examples of inappropriate apparel include, but are not limited to:

- Clothing with holes, ragged appearance, dirty, or poor condition.
- Tattoos with inappropriate slogans, pictures, degrading words, phrases, or images that do not represent a public service organization.
- **Open-toed shoes OR short shorts**

Volunteers are encouraged to wear loose, comfortable clothing that they will not mind getting a little hairy or dirty. Long pants are suggested as protection from scratches or bites.

VOLUNTEERS ARE REQUIRED TO WEAR A HSMC T-SHIRT, WHICH CAN BE OBTAINED WITH A \$10 DONATION AFTER YOUR FIRST 10 HOURS.

Humane Society Volunteer Bank

You can use your volunteer hours for many different things! Hours may be combined, but both volunteers must be present to redeem.

10 hours - small bag of pet food 20 pounds or less, dog clicker

20 hours - medium bag of pet food 40 pounds or less, previous event shirt

30 hours - large bag of pet food 40 pounds or more, Dog lead

35 hours - Cat Spay/Neuter Certificate

40 hours - Volunteer shirt, apron, hat, or visor

55 hours - Dog Spay/Neuter Certificate (3-40 lbs)

75 hours - Dog Spay/Neuter Certificate (41-75 lbs)

Different items are always added; ask your Volunteer Coordinator for details!

PUBLICITY

The Executive Director, the President of the Board of Directors, and people that are admin or are on social media are those charged with the responsibility of addressing or responding to the media (including social). **No volunteer** shall make statements that may be seen as representative of the opinions and policies of HSMC.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Personal information about volunteers, employees, customers, adopters, or the outcome of individual animal situations is to remain in the strictest of confidence. During their duties, volunteers may obtain information about members of the public surrendering animals, adopting animals, or making donations. All such information should be kept from being repeated or shared.

VOLUNTEER FEEDBACK

Volunteers provide a valuable service; if they have information to share with us, we want to hear it. We encourage volunteers to make suggestions, voice concerns, and give ideas. Volunteers are expected to respect the same chain of command that staff members abide by and not participate in gossip or meaningless discussion of other people or situations. **When in doubt, see your Volunteer Coordinator.**

Volunteer Levels

Level One: A level one volunteer has just been accepted to our volunteer program. This individual has had a basic orientation and has a small list of activities that do not involve animal interaction.

Level Two: A level two volunteer has volunteered at least 10 hours and must pass Dog or Cat 101 to advance. They have a moderate list of activities and may interact with certain animals.

Level Three: 18+, The level three volunteer has volunteered at least 300 service hours and must pass Dog or Cat 101 to advance. The Volunteer Coordinator must recommend a volunteer for advancement to this level. Eligible to take Dog or Cat 2.0. Given an extended list of activities.

Level Four: 18+, The level four volunteer has volunteered at least 1,000 hours. Must pass Dog or Cat 2.0 to advance. The Shelter Operations Manager must recommend a volunteer for advancement to this level, given more activities.

Level Five: 18+, The level five volunteer has volunteered 2,000+ hours. Must pass Dog or Cat 2.0 to advance. The Executive Director must recommend a volunteer for advancement to this level, given more activities.

NAME BADGES

Blank name tags are kept next to the sign-in tablet. The name badge must be worn on the premises. This lets the staff know you are a volunteer and gives you the credentials to be in off-public areas. It also allows staff and volunteers to learn each other's names. If you are a level, two volunteers, or higher, your name tag with paw prints is ESPECIALLY important.

Your PIN: Your PIN assigned by the Volunteer Coordinator is given to you at orientation. If you forget your PIN, please use the clipboard at the sign-in station.

PLEASE refer to the clipboard to obtain your PIN on your next visit.

~~~~~When using the clipboard, please: ~~~~~

**Provide all the information as requested. You must print clearly and entirely to receive credit for hours completed.**

## **SIGN IN/OUT**

Each volunteer signs in and out with their pin #. You need to sign in and out to credit your hours. Plus, it keeps you showing as a current volunteer. The system can only log your hours if you remember to clock in or out. This also helps the volunteer program show the strength of the program. Your account will be deactivated if it has no active hours within the last six months. Your account can be removed if no active hours are shown on your statement within the previous 12 months.



## **Volunteer Information Center**

Welcome. The Volunteer Information Center is where volunteers check-in and out. If you are ready to check-in or out and you have a volunteer PIN number, enter it here to get started.  
If you are interested in becoming a volunteer please ask us about our volunteer opportunities!



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**HSMC SHELTER LAYOUT**



**Office Information**

701 NW 14<sup>th</sup> Road

Ocala FL 34475

Phone: 352-873-7387

Main email: [web@humanesocietyofmarioncounty.com](mailto:web@humanesocietyofmarioncounty.com)

Website: [www.thehsmc.org](http://www.thehsmc.org)

The website has excellent information. Please explore it! Browse and review HSMC’s website for a wealth of information regarding our programs, services, adoptable animals, and current volunteer information! The volunteer page of HSMC’s website has a volunteer portal where you can log in to track hours, sign up for events, and change your information. Plan for success by planning your volunteer hours ahead of time (around your personal/work schedule).

**Volunteer Hours**

Monday-Saturday – 7:00 AM – 6:00 PM

Sundays & Holidays – 7:00 AM – 5:00 PM

**Dog Walking Hours**

Monday-Saturday – 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM last walk

Sundays & Holidays – 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM last walk

### **Incident/Accident Reports Forms**

Every volunteer must immediately tell an HSMC staff member if they are injured in any way (including, but not limited to, scratch, bite, twisted ankle, etc.) while volunteering at the shelter. Incident report forms are available at the front desk and with the Volunteer Coordinator.

### **Programs and Services:**

In addition to our adoptions and sheltering thousands of homeless animals each year, HSMC offers:

- Low-Cost Spay/Neuter Certificates for dogs and cats.
- Happy Paws Pet Food Bank for people in the community who are struggling to feed their pets.
- Follow-up counseling to help pet owners prevent them from having to give up their adopted pets.
- Humane Education programs to ensure a humane community “Teach today, Practice tomorrow.”
  - o Doggone Good Reading Program that allows children to read to approved dogs on selected days
- Safe-Haven program for victims of domestic violence
- Lost and Found services to reunite owners with pets.
- Foster Care Program for animals that are not yet ready to be adopted for reasons such as age, medical condition, or behavioral condition.
- Corporate/Teambuilding volunteer days
- Seniors for Seniors offers citizens at least 65 years old and living in an assisted living facility the opportunity to adopt a companion animal at no cost. This program also helps if an owner can no longer provide care for the animal adopted on that program.

### **Enrichment**

Dog toys, stuffed dog toys, balls, frisbees, and squeaky chew toys are in the laundry room in totes to the left against the wall. Only non-destructible toys can be put in the kennels, cages, or crates, such as, but not limited to, kongs and nylabones. Peanut butter and our HSMC frisbees are in the staff tool room. Please always ask permission before putting peanut butter on kennels (we usually only do this once a week). Enrichment toys are in the Meet & Greet Room on the white shelf.

### **Grooming Supplies**

Many brushes and grooming tools are available at the front desk or in the laundry room.

### **Cleaning & Restroom Supplies**

The following items are located inside the staff/volunteer restroom by the lockers: cleaning supplies, toilet paper, and paper towels.



### **To put our work in perspective**

HSMC takes in almost 2,000 animals yearly. Our outreach services and programs assist hundreds of pets and their owners. At any given time, there are approximately 250 animals in our care. We serve an area of more than 350,000 people. All employees work directly with the animals to an extent. Our operating expenses include all utilities, insurance, building upkeep, and staff to care for and advocate for the animals that come to us. Marion County has been a no-kill county since 2018.

We have an on-site veterinary team to provide medical care for the animals at our shelter. We work hard to find loving new homes for our resident animals. Medical and behavioral care is provided during each animal's stay at HSMC. Each dog at HSMC receives a temperament – or personality - test. Cats are assessed for FIV and FeLV. Adoption includes spay/neuter surgery, microchip, vaccinations, deworming, and flea treatment. Adoption folders that contain pet information and a FREE vet visual appointment are given to all adopters. All our adoptions are dogs and cats.

Pit bulls: Much of our canine population consists of Pit Bulls/Pit Mixes because our service area produces an overabundance of these dogs. Many shelters turn away or euthanize Pit bulls, but HSMC does not. This is a loving, loyal, and highly adaptable breed.

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### **Volunteer Daily Log & Vet Tech Notes**

These notes must be completed for any dog that is limping, bleeding, has diarrhea, has blood in its stool, or has any other health or medical condition. Please always grab a sample of stool if their stool looks different. It must be given to a staff member right away. These notes are located inside the Meet and Greet room. Behavioral evaluation forms need to be completed for any dogs demonstrating signs of possible behavior issues, including, but not limited to, growling, resource guarding, repeated spinning in a kennel, tenseness, or aggression. The sooner any potential behavior issue is reported to HSMC staff, the sooner HSMC staff/trainers can begin working with the dog and treating the problem. Behavioral evaluation forms are in the Meet & Greet room next to the whiteboard and should be placed in the designated folder when completed.