



HATS Scholarship Qualification Policy

2026-09-01

Purpose

The purpose of the Volunteer Scholarship Program is to recognize and support the educational goals of dedicated volunteers who contribute significantly to the mission of HATS. This policy establishes the eligibility requirements, application procedures, and selection process for awarding scholarships.

Eligibility Requirements

To qualify for consideration, applicants must meet all of the following requirements:

Eligibility

Open to current high school seniors, trade or vocational school students, current college students, or adults enrolled in or planning to enroll in college, trade or vocational schools within **twelve (12)** months of the award date.

Active Volunteer Status

Must be a current volunteer in good standing with no record of serious policy violations, including those related to safety, animal welfare, or organizational conduct.

Minimum Service Commitment

Must complete a minimum of **forty (40)** hours of documented volunteer service during the qualifying period.

Volunteer hours must be logged accurately and verified by a designated coordinator, team lead, or board member. Hours not logged by a designated coordinator, team lead, or board member will not be accepted.

The qualifying period to secure volunteer hours begins on **September 1, 2026** and ends at **11:59 p.m. on July 1, 2027**.

Eligible HATS Events Include:

- Dog Adoption Events.
- Cat Adoption Events.
- No Cold Pet Project.
- Spay / Neuter / Vaccination Clinics.
- TNR - Trap Neuter Return.

Consistent attendance and reliability in fulfilling scheduled shifts is required.

Conduct and Engagement

Must demonstrate professionalism, teamwork, and adherence to organizational policies.

Must actively support the mission of HATS by handling animals responsibly, engaging positively with the community, and contributing to a safe, respectful environment.

Educational Status

Must be currently enrolled high school senior, currently enrolled college student or adult returning to college, trade school or vocational school within **twelve (12) months** of the award date, in an accredited educational program (college, trade school, or vocational training).

Application Process

A completed scholarship application must be submitted and received by HATS no later than **11:59 p.m. on July 8, 2027**.

Completed applications must include:

A verified volunteer service record, provided by a designated coordinator, team lead, or board member.

A personal statement of no fewer than **three (3)** and no more than **seven (7)** paragraphs describing how volunteer service with HATS has impacted the applicant's personal and educational goals.

* Incomplete or late applications will not be considered.

* Applications generated using ChatGPT or any other artificial intelligence tools will be automatically disqualified

Limit: Only one scholarship per individual will be awarded.

Selection Process

The Scholarship Review Committee consisting of HATS Board of Directors and selected Team Leads will evaluate all applications for accuracy, completeness, and merit.

Selection will be based on:

1. Number of hours served.
2. Reliability and consistency of participation.
3. Positive impact on the organization and community.
4. Strength of the personal statement and recommendation letter.

Scholarships will be awarded at the discretion of the committee.

All decisions of the committee are final.

Award and Use of Funds

Scholarship winners will be notified the **week of July 15, 2027**.

1. Scholarships are non-transferable and must be applied toward tuition, educational fees, or related academic expenses.
2. Scholarship funds will be paid directly to the educational institution whenever possible.
3. Scholarship funds must be used within **twelve (12)** months of the award date. Funds not used after **twelve (12)** months from the award date will be forfeited.

Ongoing Expectations

While scholarship recipients are encouraged to continue volunteering with HATS, there is no requirement to maintain volunteer service after receiving an award.

HATS reserves the right to publish names and use photographs of scholarship recipients.

Amendments

This policy may be amended or revoked at any time by the Board of Directors.

HATS Board of Directors

scholarships@hatsalive.org

hatsalive.org