



Volunteer Handbook

Revised 2026

Animal Protection Society-Friday Harbor (APS-FH)
938 Cattle Point Road
Friday Harbor, WA 98250
360-378-2158
www.apsfh.com

Table of Contents

WELCOME, NEW VOLUNTEER!	4
APS-FH MISSION STATEMENT	5
GENERAL INFORMATION	5
History	5
APS-FH Today	5
Days Open	6
Holiday Closures	6
Treasure Hounds	6
Pet Food Pantry	6
About Volunteering	6
Age Requirement	6
Volunteer T-Shirts	6
Application Process	6
Training	7
Communication	7
Court-Ordered Community Service	7
Commitment	7
Responsibilities	7
GENERAL POLICIES AND VOLUNTEER RESPONSIBILITIES	7
Absences & Tardiness	7
Adoptions	7
Animal Safety & Endangerment	7
Dress Code	8
Hygiene & Cleanliness	8
Confidentiality	8
Continuing Education	8
Disabled/Special Needs Volunteers	8
Emergency Incidents	8

Professionalism & Conduct	8
Communication & Social Media	8
Attendance & Logging Hours	8
Health & Safety	9
Restricted Areas	9
Personal Belongings & Cell Phones	9
Smoking, Vaping, & Substances	9
Fundraising & Expense Reimbursements	9
Guest Policy	9
Zoonotic Diseases	9
Miscellaneous Guidelines	9
Respect & Collaboration	10
VOLUNTEER JOB DESCRIPTIONS	10
Cat Socializer	10
Clinical Aide	10
Dog Walker	10
Foster Parent (Short & Long-Term)	10
Animal Ambassador	10
Greeter/Administrative	10
General Volunteer	11
Special Events Volunteer	11
Transport Volunteer	11
Treasure Hounds Volunteer	11
ESSENTIAL CAPABILITIES	11
APS-FH VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	14
VOLUNTEER WAIVER AND RELEASE OF LIABILITY	15
CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY – EMPLOYEE/INTERN/VOLUNTEER	16
VOLUNTEER PHOTO/NAME RELEASE	17
EMERGENCY CONTACTS FORM	18

WELCOME, NEW VOLUNTEER!

Thank you for choosing to volunteer with the Animal Protection Society - Friday Harbor.

Volunteers are vital to our mission. With your support we can rescue, adopt, foster, spay/neuter, and most importantly, provide love and exceptional care for the animals that come through our doors. The work we do for the animals and the community wouldn't be possible without your dedication and compassion.

This handbook is designed to familiarize you with APS-FH's policies and procedures, ensuring a safe, enjoyable, and successful volunteer experience. Please take a moment to review it, sign the acknowledgment form on the last page, and return the form to us.

While the handbook provides important information, it does not cover **all** APS-FH policies or every possible situation that may arise. If you have any questions or need further clarification about the content, please don't hesitate to reach out to us.

We value your ideas and feedback throughout your time with us. Feel free to reach out via email at volunteer@apsfh.com or call us at 360-378-2158 any time.

Thank you once again for becoming an APS-FH volunteer. Together, we can make a meaningful difference!

OUR MISSION AND VISION STATEMENT

The Animal Protection Society – Friday Harbor’s mission is to provide shelter and care to cats and dogs, help them find loving homes and offer programs and services that support our island community.

Our vision is a compassionate and supported island community where every pet has a loving home, and all animals receive the care and support they deserve.

In Addition, we commit to the following:

- Provide a safe haven for homeless and lost animals
- Reunite lost pets with their owners
- Place animals in our care in qualified, loving homes
- Reduce pet overpopulation with spay/neuter education and assistance
- Advise and advocate for the protection of animals
- Network with other shelters and pet rescue groups impacted by overcrowding or natural disasters to decrease euthanasia rates and ultimately save lives
- Advance animal welfare through education, outreach and assistance
- Promote a stronger sense of the animal/human bond
- Always adhere to our no-kill philosophy for adoptable animals

GENERAL INFORMATION

History

APS-FH began in 1981, when a group of concerned islanders wanted to help abandoned and stray dogs and cats. In March 1982, they formed the Animal Protection Society – Friday Harbor. With proceeds from sales of dog licenses and donations from local businesses and individuals, they raised enough to rent a small space on Wold Road.

On July 14, 1991, APS-FH signed an agreement with the Port of Friday Harbor to lease a larger building on a half-acre lot off Cattle Point Road. The doors opened in November 1992.

APS-FH has been a no-kill shelter since 2001.

The Cattle Point property was purchased, and a capital campaign began in 2015 to build a new, state-of-the-art shelter. After several years of campaigning, the dream became a reality in September 2018 and 938 Cattle Point Road became the new shelter address.

APS-FH Today

APS-FH is a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization supported by fundraising events, tax-deductible donations, and proceeds from our resale furniture and home decor store, Treasure Hounds. We receive no government funding except for a small sum from San Juan County for dog licenses sold at the shelter.

Days Open

APS-FH is open Tuesday through Sunday, 11 am to 4 pm.

Holiday Closures

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Day
- Presidents' Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Veterans' Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Day

Although we are closed to the public on certain holidays, the animals still need to be fed, walked, and suites and kennels cleaned. If you are scheduled for a holiday and cannot work, please advise the shelter staff. If you are not scheduled but are interested in volunteering during this time, please contact the team at 360-378-2158 - we will gratefully accept your help.

Treasure Hounds

Treasure Hounds is our resale furniture and home decor store located in town. It is run by volunteers. Sales from the shop account for approximately 24% of the shelter's annual operating funding. Treasure Hounds is open Thursday through Sunday, 10 am to 4 pm.

Pet Food Pantry

APS-FH's Pet Food Pantry program provides pet food for low-income pet owners during times of hardship. We provide pet owners with food that has been donated by the community and supplemented by food purchased by APS-FH as needed. Low-income pet owners can access the Pet Food Pantry every other Wednesday between 11 am and 3 pm at the Treasure Hounds store.

About Volunteering

Age Requirement

Those under 18 require parental or legal guardian consent. Volunteers under 16 must always be accompanied by a parent or guardian.

Volunteer T-Shirts

New volunteers may purchase a Volunteer T-shirt for \$15. Additional T-shirts are available for \$10.

Application Process

After submitting a volunteer application, the Volunteer Program Team will schedule a Volunteer Orientation. During orientation, volunteers will receive a handbook, complete required

paperwork (including a Handbook Acknowledgment, Confidentiality Agreement, and Waiver of Liability), and begin training.

Training

All volunteers must complete training with staff, to ensure that tasks are carried out safely and consistently.

Communication

Email is our primary method of communication for updates, event requests, and shelter needs.

Court-Ordered Community Service

APS-FH does not typically accept court-ordered community service. Due to liability, we cannot accept individuals charged with felonies involving violence, animal abuse, theft, weapons, or drugs.

Commitment

We encourage volunteers to commit to a two-hour shift on a regularly scheduled day each week. Accommodation can be made for those unable to meet this commitment.

Responsibilities

Volunteers must treat all animals with kindness, handle them humanely, adhere to APS-FH policies, and represent the organization professionally both at the shelter and in the community.

GENERAL POLICIES AND VOLUNTEER RESPONSIBILITIES

Absences & Tardiness

Volunteers play an important role, and consistency is vital. If you anticipate being absent, please inform us by calling the Shelter at 360-378-2158 or by emailing the Volunteer Program Coordinator at volunteer@apsfh.com. Because the volunteer@apsfh.com email inbox is not always monitored daily, please opt for a telephone call instead of email if your absence will be in the next 72 hours, to ensure that staff can take a timely message.

Adoptions

To prevent impulsive and emotionally led adoption decisions, new volunteers are asked to wait three months before adopting a pet from APS-FH.

Animal Safety & Endangerment

Animals must always be treated humanely. Any action that endangers a pet's health - whether

through neglect, carelessness, or abuse may result in termination of volunteer services. Report any concerns about animal welfare to the Volunteer Program Team or APS-FH staff.

Dress Code

Volunteers must wear closed-toed shoes. Long pants are advised for dog walking, though shorts may be worn at your own risk. Avoid wearing dangling jewelry for safety reasons.

Hygiene & Cleanliness

Sanitize or wash your hands frequently, especially between handling different animals. Read all signage on enclosures to be aware of special conditions. To protect your pets at home, follow proper sanitation protocols, including changing clothes after volunteering.

Confidentiality

Volunteers may encounter sensitive information and are expected to maintain confidentiality. Adhere to the confidentiality policy signed during orientation.

Continuing Education

Volunteers are encouraged to participate in additional training, including the “Fear Free” module completed by all shelter staff. Stay current on safety and APS-FH policies, and ask questions when needed. Computers are available at APS-FH for continued education if you do not have access to a computer or the internet.

Disabled/Special Needs Volunteers

Volunteers with disabilities or special needs are welcome. Accompaniment by a caregiver or support person is allowed, provided they complete an application, orientation, and required training.

Emergency Incidents

Report all dog or cat bites or other injuries immediately to a staff member, who will assist with treatment and an incident report.

Professionalism & Conduct

Volunteers represent APS-FH and should always maintain professionalism. This includes treating animals, staff, and other volunteers with respect, following policies, and avoiding activities that could present conflicts of interest.

Communication & Social Media

All public inquiries should be directed to the Executive Director or staff. Volunteers should not speak on behalf of APS-FH or engage in social media responses. Instead, alert staff about posts or situations requiring attention.

Attendance & Logging Hours

Volunteers must sign in and out using the provided QR code system. Hours are tracked for grant

purposes. Notify the Volunteer Program Team if you forget to log your time or need a record of your hours.

Health & Safety

Follow all safety guidelines to ensure the well-being of volunteers, animals, and staff. Report hazards or unsafe conditions promptly. Always read and follow signage in the shelter, particularly in restricted areas.

Restricted Areas

Isolation rooms for cats and dogs are staff-only unless prior approval is given. Stray animals, under a seven-day hold, are also handled by staff exclusively.

Personal Belongings & Cell Phones

APS-FH is not responsible for lost items. Use cell phones only for emergencies, and refrain from texting or using phones while handling animals including in off-leash areas, or on trails.

Smoking, Vaping, & Substances

APS-FH is a smoke-free property. Smoking, vaping, or being under the influence of alcohol or controlled substances while volunteering is strictly prohibited.

Fundraising & Expense Reimbursements

All fundraising must be approved and coordinated by the Executive Director or Board. Expenses for APS-FH require pre-approval for reimbursement.

Guest Policy

For safety reasons, only registered volunteers are allowed during shifts. Friends, family, or other guests are not permitted unless they are also volunteers.

Zoonotic Diseases

Shelter work may expose volunteers to zoonotic diseases (illnesses transferable between animals and humans). Practice good hygiene, avoid touching your face while handling animals, and wash hands regularly. Follow additional precautions if your own pets are immunocompromised.

Miscellaneous Guidelines

- Perfumes: Avoid wearing fragrances, as they can overwhelm animals.
- Headphones: acceptable to wear ONLY IF a person is still able to hear the sound of talking at a normal level. You must be able to hear your radio, animal sounds, and voices,
- Shelter Visitors: Refer visitors or potential adopters to staff.
- Signage: Always read and follow instructions posted on animal enclosures.

Respect & Collaboration

APS-FH values a culture of respect and teamwork. Follow staff guidance, be trustworthy, and maintain professionalism with staff, other volunteers, and visitors.

VOLUNTEER JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Volunteer Positions at APS-FH

Volunteers will be assigned to one or more roles based on their interests, experience, and abilities after completing the necessary training.

Cat Socializer

Support shelter staff by socializing cats and providing enrichment activities under their direction.

Cat Room Cleaner

Provide our cats with a clean, comfortable environment by scooping litter boxes, replacing bedding, refreshing food and water bowls, etc. This role takes place in the morning, before the shelter opens its doors to the public.

Clinical Aide

Assist the Medical Supervisor with physical exams, surgical preparations, cleaning, and daily operations of the Low-Cost Clinic. Additional training is required, and prior clinical experience is preferred but not mandatory.

Dog Walker

Work with APS-FH staff to socialize and exercise dogs on shelter property and trails, assist with cleaning, and perform other tasks as needed. Volunteers must be physically capable of handling strong, active dogs and ideally have prior dog-handling experience.

Foster Parent (Short & Long-Term)

Provide in-home care for animals requiring special attention, such as orphaned kittens/puppies, nursing mothers, or pets with behavioral or medical needs.

Animal Ambassador

Partner with shelter staff to provide individualized attention to a specific shelter animal. Activities may include field trips, training sessions, or enrichment time tailored to the animal's needs.

Greeter/Administrative Assistant

Assist the Executive Director, Administrative Assistant, and Volunteer Program Team with answering phones, greeting visitors, giving shelter tours, and performing general office

tasks.

General Volunteer

Support shelter staff with daily operations, including cleaning animal areas, sweeping, mopping, dishwashing, laundry, maintenance, and animal socialization. Tasks vary based on shelter priorities, and volunteers should be adaptable and self-directed.

Special Events Volunteer

Assist with community and fundraising events by staffing information booths, setting up and tearing down events, walking in parades, and completing other assignments to ensure event success.

Transport Volunteer

Provide safe transport for animals to and from partner shelters. A valid driver's license is required.

Treasure Hounds Volunteer

Work under the Treasure Hounds Manager to support operations at the store.

Responsibilities include receiving donations, cleaning, pricing, preparing items for sale, marketing, merchandising, and serving as a sales clerk or cashier.

ESSENTIAL CAPABILITIES - ALL VOLUNTEERS

To safely and effectively volunteer in any role at APS-FH, individuals must possess the following physical, mental, and emotional capabilities or be accompanied by someone who can assist with these tasks:

Essential Mental Capabilities

- Ability to understand, remember, and follow instructions and procedures.
- Proficiency in reading, writing, and communicating in English.
- Problem-solving skills.
- Awareness of potentially dangerous situations and ability to remain calm, confident, and sensitive when handling upset animals, exercising sound judgment and appropriate actions.

Essential Emotional Capabilities

- Ability to manage unexpected animal behavior without assistance.
- Emotional resilience to handle a charged environment with homeless, abandoned, or abused animals.

- Understanding and willingness to represent APS-FH's policies on animal welfare accurately and appropriately.

Level of Supervision

- After training, ability to work independently while recognizing limitations and seeking help when needed.
- Ability to work independently for extended periods or collaboratively in a team with other volunteers or staff.
- If unable to work independently due to age, cognitive, or physical ability, volunteers must work alongside a parent, guardian, or partner with focused attention on tasks.

ESSENTIAL CAPABILITIES - DOG WALKER

To safely and effectively volunteer as a Dog Walker at APS-FH, individuals must possess the following physical, mental, and emotional capabilities or be accompanied by someone who can assist with these tasks:

- Good reflexes and dexterity (e.g., opening cage doors while handling animals, leashing and harnessing dogs).
- Ability to navigate uneven, rugged, muddy, or slippery outdoor areas while walking dogs.
- Capability to bend, squat, and lift animals as needed.
- Ability to stand for extended periods while walking dogs or cleaning cages/kennels.
- Sufficient vision to move safely, observe animal body language, and read notes or signage.
- Adequate hearing to detect growling or other stress, fear, or pain indicators from animals.
- Quick reaction time to prevent or retrieve escaped animals.
- Ability to handle and restrain animals safely, requiring vision, hearing, strength, reflexes, and alertness.
- Manageable allergies to animals or cleaning chemicals, with the help of medication if necessary.
- Tolerance for strong odors and loud animal noises.
- Judgement to assess animal reactions and adjust interactions to maintain safety.

ESSENTIAL CAPABILITIES - GENERAL VOLUNTEER

- Ability to push laundry carts, load/unload washers and dryers, fold laundry, and store items on shelves up to six feet high using a step stool if needed.
- Capability to wash and store dishes in cabinets or drawers up to eight feet high with a step stool if required.

- Immune system resilience to tolerate exposure to zoonotic diseases such as ringworm and mange.

THANK YOU FOR REVIEWING THE VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK.

Please sign the documents on the following pages and return signed pages to the Volunteer Program Coordinator

APS-FH VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I, _____, have received and read a copy of the Animal Protection Society-Friday Harbor (APS-FH) Handbook, which outlines some of the policies and expectations of APS-FH, as well as my responsibilities as a volunteer.

I have familiarized myself with the contents of this handbook. By my signature below, I acknowledge that I understand and agree to comply with the information contained in the Volunteer Handbook provided to me by APS-FH. I understand that this handbook is not intended to cover every situation that might arise during my volunteer service, but that it is a general guide to the goals, policies, practices and expectations of APS-FH.

By signing, I further understand that APS-FH may, in its sole discretion, change, delete, suspend, discontinue or deviate from any part or parts of the policies in this handbook at any time. All such changes will be communicated through official notices. I understand that any such changes made by APS-FH will immediately supersede, modify or eliminate the existing policies and expectations in this handbook.

Signature

Date

VOLUNTEER WAIVER AND RELEASE OF LIABILITY

Release of Liability

I recognize that working with animals places me at physical risk, and I agree to assume that risk. I realize that although the Animal Protection Society-Friday Harbor (APS-FH) has taken all reasonable measures to protect me, accidents and injuries may still occur. Therefore, I hereby completely release and entirely discharge APS-FH from any and all claims and causes of action of negligence or gross negligence that I or another might have or bring relating to or arising from any injury or damage that I should sustain while assisting APS-FH or in connection with my volunteer work for APS-FH.

Acceptance of General Policies and Volunteer's Responsibilities & Procedures

I have read, understand and agree with the General Policies and Volunteer's Responsibilities & Procedures set forth in the APS-FH Volunteer Handbook. I am voluntarily participating in this activity with full knowledge of the tasks involved. I agree to accept all risks associated with my participation, including but not limited to injury and illness.

I fully understand and agree that I am providing my services in a volunteer capacity without any expressed or implied promise of compensation.

I agree to perform my volunteer duties to the best of my ability and to adhere to the guidelines detailed in the Volunteer Handbook. I further understand that my volunteer involvement may be terminated for reasons including, but not limited to, those outlined in the Volunteer Handbook.

Photo/Name Release During My Volunteer Time with APS-FH

I understand that APS-FH may use my name, photographs, video and/or sound recordings of me on television, radio, the internet, in emails, stories, news articles, advertisements, or other written or digital materials. I understand that such use will be for education, advocacy, and fundraising. I consent to, authorize, in advance, such use, and agree that APS-FH does not have to notify me of such use or provide me with other consideration for such use. I waive any rights of privacy and/or publicity I may have in connection with these uses. I will make no monetary or other claim against APS-FH for the use of my name, photographs or videos.

I HAVE CAREFULLY READ THIS WAIVER AND RELEASE AND FULLY UNDERSTAND ITS CONTENTS AND ACCEPT AND SIGN IT ON MY OWN FREE WILL. If I am under 18 years of age at the time of volunteering, my parent or legal guardian has completely reviewed this Waiver and Release of Liability, understands and consents to its terms, and authorizes my participation.

Volunteer's Signature

Date

Volunteer's Name (Printed)

Signature of Parent or Guardian

Date

Parent or Guardian's Name (Printed)

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CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY – EMPLOYEE/INTERN/VOLUNTEER

As a condition of being an Employee, Intern or Volunteer of the Animal Protection Society – Friday Harbor (“APS-FH”), the Employee/Intern/Volunteer must review and agree to abide by this Confidentiality Policy.

Confidentiality. For the purposes of this policy, confidential information is defined as any information made available to the Employee/Intern/Volunteer by APS-FH, to which the public does not have access. This includes financial information about APS-FH, information about donors, employees, contractors, and agents of APS-FH, and information about persons relinquishing or adopting pets. The Employee/Intern/Volunteer is obligated to maintain the confidentiality in perpetuity, including after the Employee/Intern/Volunteer ceases to work for APS-FH.

- Please use discretion in the office. Do not use a client’s name in front of other visitors. Do not leave a client’s files out in the open. Animal issues are emotional. Please be thoughtful about the personal feelings of APS-FH clients.
- A client’s file is private. Do not discuss or show any part of the file to anyone.
- Do not tell anyone, including family or friends, or the family and friends of the parties involved, that a certain person has relinquished an animal to the shelter or where that animal has been placed. The only exceptions are those agreed upon by the parties involved for publicity purposes, such as the APS-FH newsletter.
- Health issues and other personal concerns of other staff or board members are also confidential and should not be discussed with anyone.
- Personal information including phone numbers and addresses of staff and volunteers will not be shared without consent.

Consequences of Violation. The Employee/Intern/Volunteer below acknowledges that any violation of this Confidentiality Policy could cause harm to APS-FH. Therefore, any Employee/Intern/Volunteer who violates this policy shall be subject to termination or dismissal from APS-FH, as well as potential liability under applicable law.

The Employee, Intern or Volunteer has read and understood the above expectations for their position with APS-FH and agrees to abide by this Confidential Policy.

Employee/Intern/Volunteer Signature

Date

VOLUNTEER PHOTO/NAME RELEASE

I understand that APS-FH may use my name, photographs, video and/or sound recordings of me on television, radio, the internet, in emails, stories, news articles, advertisements, or other written or digital materials. I understand that such use will be for education, advocacy, and fundraising. I consent to, authorize, in advance, such use, and agree that APS-FH does not have to notify me of such use or provide me with other consideration for such use. I waive any rights of privacy and/or publicity I may have in connection with these uses. I will make no monetary or other claim against APS-FH for the use of my name, photographs or videos.

☐

I consent for APS-FH to use my name, photographs, video, and/or sound

recording as described above. **Volunteer's signature:** _____

OR

☐

I **DO NOT** consent for APS-FH to use my name, photographs, video, and/or

sound recording as described above. **Volunteer's signature:** _____

EMERGENCY CONTACTS FORM

Your Name: _____

Your Personal Contact Info:

Home Address _____

City, State, ZIP _____

Home Telephone # _____ Cell # _____

Email Address _____

Emergency Contact Info:

(1) Name _____ Relationship _____

Address _____

City, State, ZIP _____

Home Telephone # _____ Cell # _____

Work Telephone # _____ Employer _____

(2) Name _____ Relationship _____

Address _____

City, State, ZIP _____

Home Telephone # _____ Cell # _____

Work Telephone # _____ Employer _____

I have voluntarily provided the above contact information and authorize APS-FH representatives to contact any of the above on my behalf in the event of an emergency.

Signature _____ Date _____