

# BAHS Volunteer Manual



Until they all have a home...

Dear Volunteers,

Greetings! Thank you for your interest in volunteering with the Belleville Area Humane Society (BAHS). We are so grateful that you chose our organization as a place to spend your precious time.

Volunteering is an extremely rewarding, educational, and fun experience. The impact you can have on our community's animals is huge! Walking a dog or socializing with a cat can be the first positive interaction these animals may have had. However, there are many different ways in which you can volunteer your time with BAHS. This handbook will provide a comprehensive guide to those options.

Whether you are a long time Belleville resident or new to the area, here is a bit of history about how our organization began:

In 1959 two woman, Marilyn Heidelberger and Georgeana Frick, spotted a stray dog that was desperately in need of attention. They realized they had nowhere to take the animal. They wanted a place where residents could bring unwanted pets. Ads were placed in the paper asking others for help. Dozens responded to the call for help and they became a charter. At that time there were not funds to buy property, so animals were kept at the homes of good Samaritans. They would have as many as twelve animals at a time, but space was limited so they had to turn many away. This predicament only made them strive harder to find a solution.

Five years later, the charter took possession of a barn on a small tract of land at 1301 South 11<sup>th</sup> Street. Fast forward another five years and a lot of fund raising, the group built a small cinder block building with kennels and pens on the land. The building was eventually enlarged to include small runs, more kennels, an office and a kitchen. In 1989, an addition valued at \$100,000 became the current shelter people visit today, with a few more renovations that would happen over the next few years.

As BAHS enters a new chapter, we want to provide the community with those key purposes in our mission. We saw a need to provide BAHS with many new ways to volunteer and spend time. We strive to share our knowledge with not only our adopters, but volunteers alike. Our volunteer program was set up to best serve the animals in our care, and our community. We would like to thank you for choosing to participate in our program. BAHS relies on our volunteers, their dedication and hard work to keep up the standards of the shelter. Our goal is to ensure the animals are comfortable and happy during their stay with us. With the help of many, we are able to do just that. Thank you for sharing your time, talent, expertise, and compassion to benefit animals in need.

I look forward to seeing you at the shelter with our residents or at a community event!

Sincerely,  
Katie Nelson & Shoshana Mostoller  
Co-Executive Directors

## **Mission Statement:**

The Belleville Area Humane Society strives to improve the lives of homeless animals in our community through adoption, humane education, and community outreach.

## **Hours of Operation for Customers:**

Tuesday-Saturday 12-6 PM

## **Hours of Operation for Volunteers:**

Sunday & Monday, 9 AM-4 PM, Tuesday- Saturday 9 AM-6 PM.

## **Contact Information:**

For volunteer questions contact [volunteers@bahspets.org](mailto:volunteers@bahspets.org) or call 618-235-3712.

## **BAHS Facts:**

- BAHS houses approximately 30 dogs and 30 cats at any given time.
- Kittens and puppies are often kept in foster homes because they are more susceptible to illnesses.
- BAHS was chartered in 1959 by Marilyn Heidleberger and Georgeana Frick.
- BAHS never puts down an animal due to lack of space.
- Approximately between 500- 600 animals are adopted from BAHS annually.
- BAHS is 100% donor and business funded. We do not receive any government funding.

## **For More Information About BAHS Go To:**

- **Website:** Bahspets.com
- **Facebook:** Facebook.com/bellevilleareahumanesociety
- **Twitter:** @bahspets
- **Instagram:** bahspets

## **Volunteer Requirements:**

- Complete volunteer application online or in resource cabinet
- Complete interview and training by BAHS staff
- Sign Waiver of Liability
- All volunteers must be 13 years of age or older
- Volunteers 13-16 must have a parent or guardian present at all times

BAHS asks that volunteers show a genuine concern for the welfare of animals. Volunteers should be self-motivated, mature, dependable, and team-oriented. Volunteers who work directly with the animals should exhibit a willingness to learn about the animals and how to properly interact with them.

## **Volunteer Policies:**

**Signing In:** A sign-in book is kept at the volunteer station. BAHS relies on volunteers to sign in and out so that we can track volunteer hours. Our volunteer station will have announcements for volunteers and nametags.

**Logging Hours:** If need hours for a class, please ask us to run you a report of your hours at their completion.

**Dress:** Please wear clothes that you don't mind getting dirty. BAHS is not responsible for any ruined clothes or shoes. No sandals or flip flops; we recommend tennis shoes.

**Parking:** Please park your car in the back gravel lot.

**Smoking, Drugs and Alcohol:** Smoking is prohibited in the building and at adoption events. Volunteers who wish to smoke must do so in the designated smoking areas. Volunteers may not volunteer at the shelter or events under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol.

**Sexual Harassment:** BAHS forbids the harassment of volunteers by shelter staff or fellow volunteers. Harassment is deemed to have occurred when the conduct creates a hostile environment for the volunteer.

**\*Any volunteer who breaks the smoking, alcohol, drug and/or sexual harassment policy will be asked to leave the program.**

## Volunteer Opportunities

### **Dog Socialization:**

- Volunteers who log 10 or more hours are eligible to attend a dog handling class with our training and walk shelter dogs.
- Volunteers who log more than 30 hours a year and go through additional training can become a dog playgroup leader.

### **Cat Socialization:**

- This job can be done anytime during volunteer hours.
- Volunteers who log 20 or more hours a year are eligible to become a community educator can handle cats at community events.

**Cleaning/Laundry:** Cleaning begins at 9 AM. If you would like to assist with cleaning please come to the shelter promptly at 9 AM. We are typically completed by 10: 30 AM.

**Site Maintenance/Yard Work:** Mowing the lawn, handy work, volunteer trail clearing and landscaping are a few examples of these duties.

**Events/Fundraising:** Volunteer at our events as needed. Our biggest events are Wine for Whiskers, Cosmic Bingo, Race for Rescue 5K, and Bags for Wags. We need help with soliciting donations and sponsorships, set-up and cleanup, check-in and checkout, etc.

**Community Educator:** This job involves representing BAHS in the community as well as running our Junior Volunteer Program, Reading Program, and Teen Club. \*Requires additional training hours.

**Front Desk:** Answer phones, assemble adoption bags, and help with data entry. \*Requires additional training and a weekly time commitment.

**Bathing and Grooming:** Too many baths can be harmful to the dog so please check with staff to determine if any animals are in need of this service.

**\*If you have another skill that would benefit the shelter but is not listed, please contact Bev at [volunteers@bahspets.org](mailto:volunteers@bahspets.org).**

## **Important Dog Socialization Reminders:**

- Please use the dry erase boards to write the name of the dog you are walking.
- Use designated tool for each shelter dog (easy walk or transitional leash) to walk the dogs.
- Only take the dogs from the inner portion of the kennels.
- Only walk the dogs in the front yard, along 11<sup>th</sup> street or on our designated volunteer trails. Do not walk them toward highway 15.
- Limit your walks to 20 minutes or less
- Walk the dogs 20 feet apart from each other.
- Do not allow the dogs to interact with each other.
- Do not walk adopted dogs. There is a list of dogs that should not be walked on the dry erase board.
- Volunteers are not allowed in the medical room, intake room or the back yards. Only staff and front desk volunteers are allowed behind the front desk.
- You may use the interview room to spend time with an animal
- Do not walk a dog that you can't control.
- Use hand sanitizer or wash your hands between walks.
- **HAVE FUN!!!**

## **Important Cat Socialization Reminders:**

- Be careful taking the cats out of their towers. If there is a sign indicating that they are new or adjusting, please consult with staff about visiting with that cat or letting them settle in further.
- Please wash your hands or use hand sanitizer before and after visiting with each cat.

- Never take a cat outside, unless you are using the catio.
- Please be mindful of signage communicating if someone is not feeling well or settling into a new space.
- **HAVE FUN!!!**

**Thank you for helping to socialize our dogs and cats!**