

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

1549 East Cameron Bridge Road
Bozeman, MT 59718
(406) 388-9399

www.heartofthevalleyshelter.org

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Heart of the Valley Animal Shelter (HOV)! We are excited to have you join our team. This handbook contains information about the shelter's history, policies, and programs. It will serve as your guide to volunteering at HOV.

Mission Statement

The mission of Heart of the Valley Animal Shelter is to compassionately shelter the lost and surrendered pets of Gallatin and Madison Valleys and to enhance the lives of people and companion animals through pet adoption and education.

Volunteers are a vital component of HOV's mission. As such, volunteers are expected to be familiar with and adhere to our policies and procedures.

About Us

HOV is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that has been serving the Gallatin and Madison Valleys since 2004 – when the Humane Society of Gallatin Valley and Animal Services Center, Inc. merged. After much community support and planning, the Anderson Animal Center was constructed in 2007. HOV has contracts to serve as the stray care facility for Gallatin County, Bozeman, Belgrade, and Manhattan. HOV is an independent entity and is not affiliated with any other national agency. As an “open door shelter,” HOV accepts any homeless or surrendered cats and dogs. Animals arrive at HOV for many reasons and in every imaginable condition. No matter the circumstances, HOV accepts them.

HOV does not euthanize for space or length of stay.

Contact Us

Please contact us if you have questions or concerns. We want volunteering at HOV to be a rewarding experience.

Phone: (406) 388-9399

Fax: (406) 388-2877

Website: www.heartofthevalleyshelter.org

Volunteer and Outreach Manager

Phone: (406) 404-3068

Email: volunteer@heartofthevalleyshelter.org

Our Hours

Daily from 11:30A.M. to 5:30P.M.

Volunteer opportunities between 8:00A.M. and 6:00P.M.

Services and Programs

HOV provides Gallatin and Madison Counties with a full range of services to enhance the lives of people and pets. HOV strives to improve the quality of life for community animals while helping control overpopulation and prevent animal cruelty. HOV offers:

- Adoptions & adoption counseling
- Animal foster care program
- Dog and cat licensing
- Maxi Park, an off-leash dog park
- Microchipping services
- Behavioral consultation and training
- Lost and found reports
- Shelter for stray cats and dogs
- SNAP Clinics (Spay/Neuter Assistance Program) and TNR (Trap-Neuter-Return)
- Live trap rental
- Crate rental
- Pet food assistance for those in need
- Cremation services
- Humane education and birthday parties for community youth

Euthanasia Policy

Euthanasia is something to consider before making a commitment to volunteer at Heart of the Valley. Please **do not** consult with the staff team about euthanasia. It can be difficult for staff to discuss the circumstances behind this difficult decision. The Volunteer and Outreach Manager will be happy to answer any questions you have or to direct you to the person best suited to answer your questions.

All incoming animals are given a medical and behavioral evaluation. Every animal must pass both evaluations before being made available for adoption. HOV has a responsibility to the community to adopt out animals that are safe and in a manageable state of health. During their stay, animals are reevaluated regularly to ensure they remain adoptable and are maintaining a reasonable quality of life. **Animals are never euthanized at HOV for length of stay or space.**

Euthanasia may be considered based on an animal's temperament, health assessments, and quality of life. This is a difficult decision and one that is thoroughly discussed by staff. Reasons for animal selection vary based on individual circumstance.



BECOMING A VOLUNTEER

Who can be a Volunteer?

Adult Volunteers: 16+ **Junior Volunteers:** 6-15

Junior volunteers must always be accompanied by an adult volunteer.

Short-term participants: contact the Volunteer and Outreach Manager.

Commitment

Junior Volunteers commit to **2 visits per month for 6 months.**

Adult Volunteers (PAW Program) commit to **4 hours per month.**

Why do we ask for this commitment?

- Training volunteers takes a considerable amount of time. It is challenging to accommodate short term commitments due to limited staff resources.
- By upholding your commitment each month you become eligible for further training.
- It enables you to be aware of changing policies or procedures at the shelter.
- It allows you to get to know the staff, animals, and organization better which leads to a more meaningful volunteer experience.

If you decide you can no longer volunteer or would like to change your role, please inform the Volunteer and Outreach Manager as soon as possible.

How to Become a Volunteer

Heart of the Valley offers flexible opportunities. Often, you can determine the hours you work and in what capacity. No matter your skill set- whether you desire hands-on activities with our animals, prefer to provide clerical support, or wish to assist with our events and education programs in the community- there is a place for you.

Step 1: Submit an Online Volunteer Application

Each potential volunteer must submit their own application, including Jr. volunteers and the adults volunteering with them. If you are 16 or older, include a valid email.

Step 2: Attend a New Volunteer Orientation

Soon after submitting an application you will receive an email with orientation dates. Orientations take place twice per month. You must RSVP: space is limited to 30 participants. Orientation takes place in the Community Room at HOV at 1549 East Cameron Bridge Road. At orientation you will learn about the organization and available opportunities.

Step 3: Attend Volunteer Training

Training lengths vary

During training you will learn more about animal behavior and working with animals in the shelter environment. You will also review shelter policies and procedures which will ensure your safety at the shelter. **Attending training is required to become a volunteer.**

The PAW Program

This program was created to provide volunteers 16 and up with skills and knowledge pertaining to basic shelter operations, animal care, training, and enrichment. All volunteers start at PAW I. Volunteer opportunities at the PAW I level are available daily and are key to maintaining efficient shelter operations and high standards of animal care.



PAW I: First 8 Hours of Service

During your first 8 hours you will take basic animal handling training and learn about shelter operations. After PAW I, additional training and opportunities are available at each level as you advance.



PAW II: After 8 hours



PAW III: After 24 hours



PAW IV: After 48 hours

Volunteers PAW II and up who exhibit leadership and participate in multiple volunteer duties and trainings will be considered to help with outreach events.



PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Program Goals

Volunteers are an integral part of the shelter and contribute greatly to our success. All volunteers should work towards these goals in their time at Heart of the Valley:

1. Increasing the quality of life for animals at HOV.
2. Maintaining the adoptability of HOV animals.
3. Serving as HOV ambassadors in the community.
4. Assisting with operational support.

Service Hours

For all volunteer activities, hours are recorded in Better Impact by signing in and out at the shelter's Volunteer Computer. An accurate log of volunteer hours allows us to promote volunteers accordingly. An individual log is kept for each volunteer, and all volunteers are required to sign in and out for each shift. This is used to recognize consistent volunteer service.

Advance Sign-up

All volunteers **must sign up in advance** for animal handling and care activities. This can be done by accessing their volunteer accounts via Better Impact. It is not necessary to sign up in advance for operational support tasks (i.e. dishes or laundry). An accurate count of volunteers allows staff to prepare for the day. Signing up in advance ensures shelter animals and volunteers have a positive experience. You may not bring friends or family along on shifts without prior authorization from the Volunteer and Outreach Manager.

Grievances and Injuries

If you have any issues with a staff member, customer, or another volunteer, please speak to the Volunteer and Outreach Manager. Direct questions about HOV rules and regulations to the Volunteer and Outreach Manager.

All injuries, including any animal bites or scratches (regardless of severity) must be reported to a staff member immediately.

What should I wear when volunteering?

- Clothing that can get dirty
- Non-slip, closed-toe shoes

Termination Policy

Volunteers may choose or be asked to discontinue their service. We take reasonable steps to work with volunteers on issues that may arise. However, you may be dismissed for unsatisfactory performance or misconduct such as insubordination, being under the influence of alcohol or drugs, theft of property, misuse of equipment or materials, abuse or mistreatment of others, and failure to abide by our policies and procedures. Dismissals may be implemented with or without notice.

Hygiene and Safety

If your immune system is compromised, you are pregnant or may become pregnant, or you live with an individual that is at greater risk of becoming ill, consult with a physician before you begin volunteering.

Many diseases are spread from animal to animal or human to human. Some diseases are spread from animals to humans. It is important that you keep your vaccinations, as well as your pet's vaccinations, up-to-date while volunteering at HOV. Further safety tips:

- Wash hands between animals, prior to eating or smoking, after using the bathroom and before going home.
- Avoid handling any animal that appears ill.
- Wear gloves, especially before contact with vomit or excrement.
- Do not engage with new animals brought in by the public or staff.
- If walking on wet, slippery floors, slow down and take shorter steps to avoid falling.
- Toys, bedding, and clothing can transfer disease - do not share these items among animals.
- Do not enter "staff only" areas.
- Always read an animal's kennel signs before handling it.
- If a member of the public is opening kennels, inform staff.
- If you cannot safely handle an object alone, get help.

Most importantly, know your limits: do not feel as if you have to work with every animal at HOV. If you feel unsafe do not work with an animal. Due to changing conditions at the shelter, animals may react differently from day to day. Inform staff of any concerning animal behavior you witness in order to protect potential adopters and other volunteers from injury.



IN CLOSING

Opinion and Emotion

Working with animals is often charged with emotion. Sometimes, volunteers develop a bond to a particular shelter animal and hold strong opinions about how it should be handled, cared for, or trained. Volunteers who offer opinions instead of facts do so with good intentions. Unfortunately, these opinions are frequently not to the actual benefit of the animals. Staff at HOV are experienced professionals, and are knowledgeable in best practices in animal care. It is important to defer to staff judgement, keeping in mind that our policies maximize safety for people and animals alike.

Social Media

HOV depends on strong community support and good will. Our reputation is a valuable asset. Please consider whether you could damage our reputation before you post on any site, especially if/when you identify yourself as a volunteer. Volunteers who engage in blogging or posting should be mindful that their comments, even if done off premises and while off-duty, could have an adverse effect on the shelter's mission. It is essential that privacy surrounding former, current, potential, and future owners of animals be maintained. This is outlined in the confidentiality agreement signed by volunteers during the time of application. If you are uncertain about a potential post, please consult the Volunteer and Outreach Manager before posting online. Please DO NOT post about animals who are currently unavailable for adoption.

Thank You

Heart of the Valley values the commitment you have made to helping animals in your community. Your energy, talent, and compassion are vital to the success of our organization. Thank you for choosing to help the homeless animals of our community!

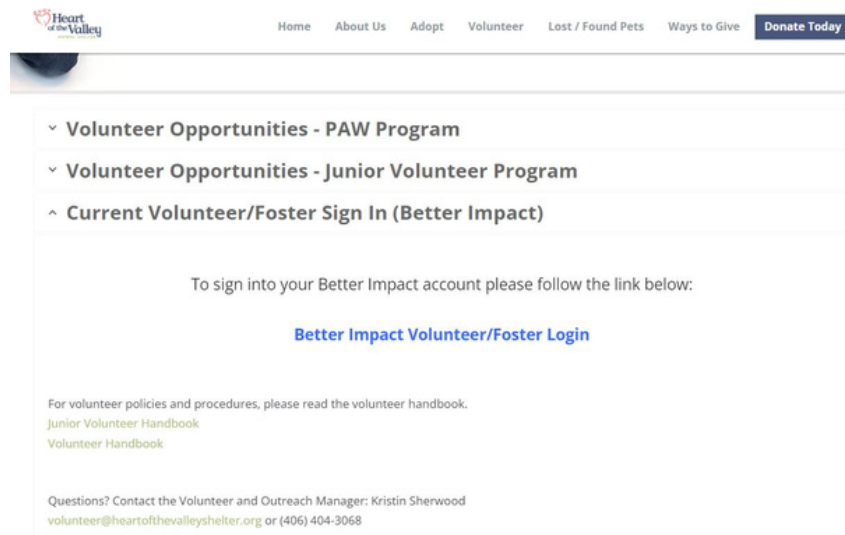
Welcome to Better Impact

Heart of the Valley's Volunteer Tracking Software

There is also an app!
MyImpactPage.com



Login to Better Impact from heartofthevalleyshelter.org



Heart of the Valley Animal Shelter

Home About Us Adopt Volunteer Lost / Found Pets Ways to Give **Donate Today**

▼ Volunteer Opportunities - PAW Program

▼ Volunteer Opportunities - Junior Volunteer Program

▲ Current Volunteer/Foster Sign In (Better Impact)

To sign into your Better Impact account please follow the link below:

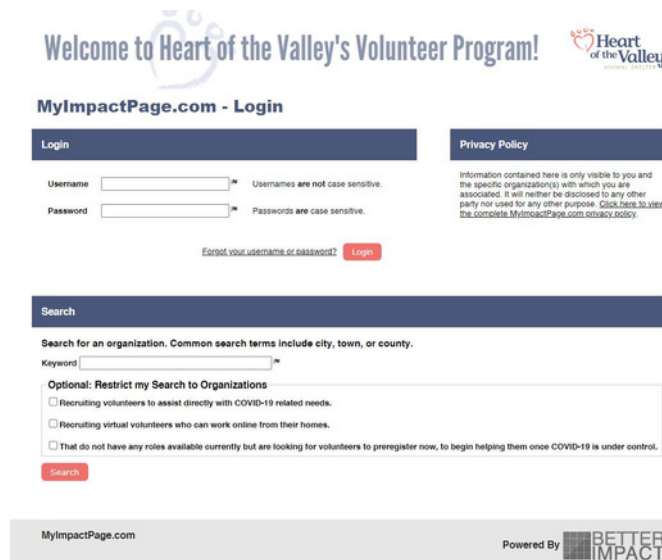
[Better Impact Volunteer/Foster Login](#)


For volunteer policies and procedures, please read the volunteer handbook.
[Junior Volunteer Handbook](#)
[Volunteer Handbook](#)

Questions? Contact the Volunteer and Outreach Manager: Kristin Sherwood
volunteer@heartofthevalleyshelter.org or (406) 404-3068



Enter username and password you created



Welcome to Heart of the Valley's Volunteer Program! 

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Login

Username Usernames are not case sensitive.

Password Passwords are case sensitive.

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Search for an organization. Common search terms include city, town, or county.

Keyword

Optional: Restrict my Search to Organizations


☐ Recruiting volunteers to assist directly with COVID-19 related needs.

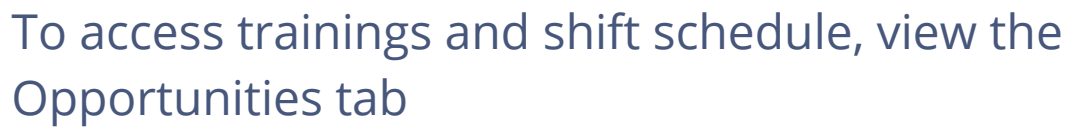
☐ Recruiting virtual volunteers who can work online from their homes.

☐ That do not have any roles available currently but are looking for volunteers to preregister now, to begin helping them once COVID-19 is under control.

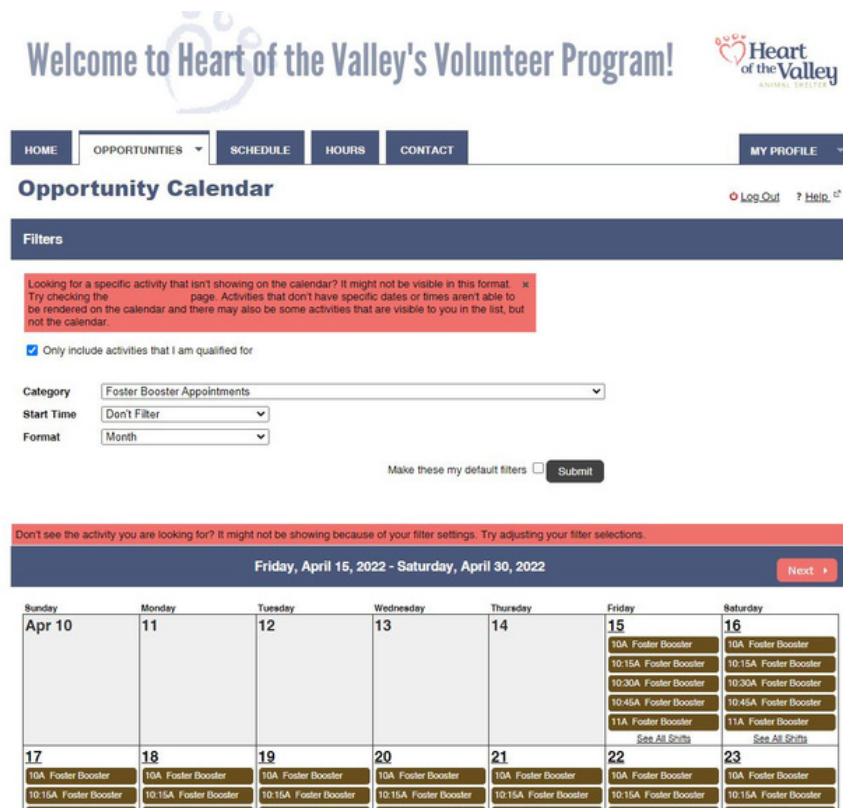
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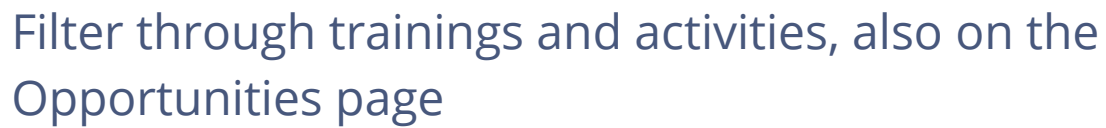
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View and schedule activities/ trainings you are qualified for once on the Opportunities page





Welcome to Heart of the Valley's Volunteer Program!

HOME **OPPORTUNITIES ▾** **SCHEDULE** **HOURS** **REPORTS** **CONTACT**

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Opportunity Calendar

Volunteer Trainings - Canine Enrichment 101 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM [Close]

Filters

- Looking for? Try checking if you can be rendered or not the case.
- ☒ Only in person
- Category:
- Start Time:
- Format:

Volunteer Trainings

Canine Enrichment 101

Saturday, April 16, 2022 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM

Canine Enrichment 101 is the 2nd dog training needed before volunteers can sign up for Canine Enrichment shifts.

Qualifications

- Canine Enrichment Must be at least Dog Talk and Safety Training
- New Volunteer Orientation Must be Completed

There are currently 5 of 5 openings available for this shift

[Go to Activity Page] [More Like This]

[Next ▶]


Sunday Apr 10	Monday Apr 11	Tuesday Apr 12	Wednesday Apr 13	Thursday Apr 14	Friday Apr 15	Saturday Apr 16	Sunday Apr 17
						8:15A Daily Cat Care Training 10A Canine Enrichment	10A O. Canine Enrichment
17 10A Canine Enrichment	18 10A Canine Enrichment	19 10A Canine Enrichment	20 10A Canine Enrichment	21 10A Canine Enrichment	22 10A Canine Enrichment	23 10A Canine Enrichment	24 10A Canine Enrichment

[Close]
 [Who is Scheduled?]
 + Sign Up



View your schedule on the Schedule tab

Welcome to Heart of the Valley's Volunteer Program!



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From 04/15/2022 To 06/15/2022 Filter Shifts

To subscribe to weekly reminder emails or subscribe to a calendar feed visit

ACTIVITY	DATE	START	END	WHO?	ACTIONS
You have no scheduled activity assignments between the dates specified.					

Select All

Monthly Calendar Schedule

Paper Size Letter Landscape (11" x 8.5")

Start Date 04/01/2022

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For any questions, please contact our Volunteer and Outreach Manager.

Kristin Sherwood

Kristin@heartofthevalleyshelter.org

(406) 388-9399

