



Volunteer Guidelines & Policies

Volunteer | Youth | Group | Court-Appointed Volunteer Policies

PALM VALLEY ANIMAL SOCIETY

English Edition

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Volunteer Guidelines & Policies

Foundational rules for PVAS volunteers



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How to use this document: These guidelines apply to individual volunteers and group participants unless a program-specific policy states a different rule. Court-Appointed Volunteers and Group Volunteers must also follow their program documents.

1. Eligibility and volunteer categories

1. Adult Volunteers are age 18 or older.
2. Minor Volunteers are ages 16-17. They may volunteer independently after a parent/guardian signs the required consent and release.
3. Junior Volunteers are ages 13-15. The Junior Volunteer and supervising parent/guardian must both be enrolled as PVAS volunteers. The parent/legal guardian must remain with the Junior Volunteer throughout service.
4. Children under age 13 do not qualify for the regular individual program; they may participate only through another specifically approved youth activity.
5. Organized group participants must be age 10 or older to participate in normal activities. Supervised activities are available if required and serve under the Group Point of Contact structure.

2. Enrollment, orientation, and scheduling

6. Complete enrollment and all agreements or consent forms required for your category.
7. Complete required orientation, training, workshops, or online modules before an assignment.
8. Schedule service as directed and arrive ready at the approved time.
9. Sign in and out using the PVAS volunteer management system and program-specific records. PVAS currently uses MyImpact.
10. Notify CEED as soon as possible if you cannot attend.
11. Follow staff direction and perform only approved assignments.

3. Conduct and respect

12. Act professionally, courteously, and ethically toward animals and people.
13. Harassment, discrimination, threats, violence, disruptive conduct, theft, falsification, and conduct creating an unsafe or hostile environment are prohibited.
14. Refer media inquiries to authorized staff and do not speak for PVAS unless authorized.
15. Raise concerns, questions, or suggestions with CEED or the supervisor on duty; a written statement may be requested.
16. Tell CEED if you discontinue volunteering.
17. PVAS does not retaliate against a volunteer who raises a concern in good faith. No volunteer will be removed, reassigned, have hours withheld, or be treated differently for making a good-faith report. Retaliating against someone who reports is itself a violation of this policy.
18. If your concern involves CEED staff, or you are not comfortable raising it with CEED, report it directly to HR or to a Director. You may report in writing or in person.
19. Reporting in good faith means you honestly believe what you are reporting is true. A report that turns out to be mistaken is still protected. Knowingly making a false report is not.

4. Safety and injury reporting

20. Follow posted safety rules, staff instructions, and assignment procedures.
21. Wear required PPE and do not enter restricted areas without authorization.
22. Immediately report every accident, injury, bite, or scratch and cooperate with documentation.
23. PVAS does not provide health insurance; volunteers obtain medical care.
24. Discuss tetanus vaccination with a medical professional; PVAS does not pay for it.
25. Discuss appropriate vaccines and preventatives for personal pets with a veterinarian; PVAS does not care for animals outside PVAS custody.
26. Drink water throughout your shift. Bring a refillable bottle; PVAS provides drinking water on site.
27. On outdoor assignments, take a shaded rest break of at least 15 minutes each hour when the heat index reaches 90°F.
28. PVAS suspends or moves outdoor assignments indoors when the heat index reaches 103°F. PVAS may also shorten, reassign, or cancel any outdoor assignment for heat at any time. Staff direction on heat is not optional.
29. Stop work and tell staff immediately if you or another volunteer feels dizzy, nauseated, confused, unusually weak, or stops sweating. Do not drive yourself anywhere if you feel unwell — tell staff first.

5. Animal handling and welfare

- 30. Complete training and obtain staff authorization before handling an animal. Personal confidence is not authorization.
- 31. Follow instructions about restricted animals, animal contact, feeding, toys, equipment, and housing.
- 32. Do not allow dog-to-dog contact unless specifically authorized and supervised.
- 33. Do not feed an animal or provide a toy unless authorized.
- 34. Never strike, mistreat, intimidate, or handle an animal roughly; report suspected mistreatment or urgent welfare concerns.

6. Dress and identification

- 35. Wear an appropriate shirt; a PVAS Volunteer Shirt is optional for general volunteers.
- 36. If not wearing the volunteer shirt, keep your PVAS name badge visible and follow assignment-specific identification rules.
- 37. Wear pants or jeans without tears; appropriate-length shorts are permitted when suitable.
- 38. Leggings are permitted if not see-through. Tank tops are prohibited.
- 39. Closed-toe shoes are required; open-toed shoes, sandals, Crocs, and similar footwear are prohibited.
- 40. Do not wear dangling earrings, hoop earrings, or hanging jewelry that creates a safety risk.

7. Phones, music, and earbuds

- 41. Do not use a personal phone during active service except for an approved task, emergency, or staff-authorized purpose.
- 42. Music is permitted with one earbud and one ear unobstructed; using a speaker is permitted as long as music is workplace friendly. A specific assignment may require stricter safety controls.

8. Photography, video, social media, and privacy

- 43. You may take appropriate photos or videos of PVAS animals and your volunteer experience for positive, professional, respectful use.
- 44. Do not intentionally publish unnecessarily poor, compromising, or misleading images.
- 45. Obtain authorization before recording in veterinary clinics, medical rooms, treatment areas, or similar sensitive spaces.
- 46. Do not photograph or record staff without permission.
- 47. Do not photograph, access, record, or share confidential client, donor, volunteer, staff, family, financial, medical, animal, operational, private-record, or computer-screen information.
- 48. Use social media responsibly and do not imply personal statements are official PVAS communications.
- 49. Confidentiality obligations continue after volunteer service ends.

9. Alcohol, controlled substances, tobacco, nicotine, and vaping

- 50. The sale, use, possession, or transfer of controlled substances or alcohol during service or on PVAS property is prohibited.
- 51. Smoking, vaping, tobacco, and nicotine are permitted only in designated areas and never inside buildings or outside those areas.
- 52. Violations may result in removal, suspension, termination, notification to an authority, or other action.

10. Hours and documentation

- 53. Record only hours actually completed; never falsify, alter, or request future or uncompleted credit.
- 54. Request letters, recommendations, or signed documentation through CEED; an appointment may be required and same-day service is not guaranteed.
- 55. Hours through another PVAS department may require verification of good standing and completion.
- 56. Court-Appointed Volunteers must follow separate court-hour and timesheet rules.

11. Corrective action, suspension, and termination

PVAS may suspend or terminate participation when it determines that doing so is appropriate or continued service is not in the organization's best interest. This is not a guaranteed progressive-discipline process.

- 57. A minor conduct issue may receive one documented verbal warning. Rude or discourteous behavior is one example when minor.
- 58. Repeated conduct after a warning may result in termination.
- 59. Serious misconduct may result in immediate termination without warning, including animal mistreatment, violence or threats, harassment, discrimination, theft, falsification, serious safety violations, prohibited substances, or other significant misconduct.

Youth Volunteer Policy

Regular individual volunteer program | Ages 13-17



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Scope: This policy covers Junior Volunteers ages 13-15 and Minor Volunteers ages 16-17 in the regular individual program. Organized group volunteering follows separate group rules.

1. Youth volunteer categories

Junior Volunteers | Ages 13-15

- 60. The Junior Volunteer must be enrolled as a PVAS volunteer.
- 61. The supervising parent/guardian must also be enrolled and complete applicable documentation.
- 62. The parent/guardian must remain with the Junior Volunteer throughout service.
- 63. Both must follow staff direction and the same safety, conduct, and animal-handling rules as other volunteers.

Minor Volunteers | Ages 16-17

- 64. The Minor Volunteer must be enrolled.
- 65. A parent/guardian signs the Minor Volunteer Consent & Release before service.
- 66. After consent is complete, a Minor Volunteer may serve independently subject to training, scheduling, staff direction, and assignment requirements.

Children under age 13

Children under age 13 are not part of the regular individual program. They may participate only through Reading Buddies or another specifically approved youth activity with its own procedures.

2. Enrollment and required documents

- 67. Every youth volunteer completes PVAS enrollment and the Volunteer Service Agreement.
- 68. Junior Volunteers also submit the Junior Volunteer Parent/Guardian Consent & Release. The supervising adult completes adult enrollment and agreement.
- 69. Minor Volunteers also submit the Minor Volunteer Parent/Guardian Consent & Release.
- 70. PVAS may require assignment-specific training, forms, or permissions.

3. Duties, training, and animal interaction

Age alone does not create a blanket restriction on duties for Junior or Minor Volunteers. Youth may perform normal duties, including animal-related duties, when training is complete, staff authorizes the work, and safety requirements are followed. Junior Volunteers must have the required parent/guardian present.

- 71. Personal confidence is not a substitute for training or authorization.
- 72. An assignment may have safety, capacity, or training restrictions applying to all volunteers.
- 73. PVAS staff may change or stop an assignment for safety, animal welfare, operations, or capacity.

4. Conduct, safety, and communication

- 74. Youth follow the Volunteer Guidelines & Policies, including dress, identification, phone, earbud, social media, photography, confidentiality, substance, and conduct rules.
- 75. Immediately report injuries, bites, scratches, unsafe conditions, welfare concerns, harassment, or serious concerns.
- 76. A Junior Volunteer's supervising parent/guardian remains present and helps the youth follow rules; staff retain authority over assignments and safety.
- 77. CEED may contact a parent/guardian about safety, conduct, scheduling, documentation, or volunteer status.

5. Suspension or termination

PVAS may suspend or terminate youth participation when appropriate or continued service is not in the organization's best interest. Serious misconduct may result in immediate termination without warning.

Group Volunteer Policies & Guidelines

Organized corporate, school, community, and service groups



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Program structure: Group volunteering is separate from the regular individual youth program. (Group POC).

1. Group eligibility and Point of Contact

- Every group must name at least one Group POC; a second is optional.
- The primary Group POC must establish a PVAS volunteer account before the activity.
- The Group POC is responsible for communication, participant coordination, and group conduct.
- PVAS may limit size, dates, duration, locations, or assignments based on capacity, staffing, safety, and operations.

2. Participant age and paperwork

- Participants must be age 10 or older; participants under age 10 may only participate in designated age-appropriate activities and will require additional signage and direct staff or volunteer oversight.
- The individual-program requirement that a parent/legal guardian remain beside a Junior Volunteer age 13-15 does not automatically apply to an organized group; the group uses the Group POC structure.
- The Group POC completes the Group Volunteer Service Agreement.
- Every participant completes the regular Volunteer Service Agreement before service, in advance or upon arrival.
- A minor group participant must also provide the parent/legal guardian consent or release required by PVAS.

3. Before the activity

- Coordinate a date, time, attendance, ages, accessibility needs, and intended service with CEED.
- Do not treat an activity as final until CEED confirms it.
- Share PVAS instructions and ensure required paperwork will be completed.
- Tell CEED promptly about material changes.

4. Arrival, attendance, and assignments

- Arrive at the confirmed location and time and check in as directed.
- Each participant signs in and out using the provided process.
- Stays with the group unless staff authorizes otherwise.
- Perform only assigned duties and do not enter restricted areas or switch tasks without approval.
- Activities may change due to animal welfare, weather, staffing, emergencies, capacity, or operations.

5. Conduct, dress, devices, and privacy

Group participants follow the Volunteer Guidelines & Policies, including professional conduct, anti-harassment and anti-discrimination rules, confidentiality, media inquiries, dress, footwear, jewelry, phone use, the one-earbud rule, photography, video, social media, substances, and smoking/vaping rules.

6. Safety and animal interaction

- Follow staff instructions, safety procedures, PPE requirements if needed, and assignment limits.
- Do not handle an animal without required training and staff authorization. Personal confidence is not authorization.
- Do not allow dog-to-dog contact or provide food or toys unless staff authorizes it.
- Immediately report every accident, injury, bite, scratch, unsafe condition, or animal-welfare concern.
- PVAS does not provide health insurance to volunteers; participants are expected to obtain medical care as per their discretion.

7. Corrective action and ending a group activity

PVAS may pause, reassign, remove, suspend, or terminate an individual or group when appropriate or continued service is not in PVAS's best interest. Serious misconduct may result in immediate removal without warning.

Court-Appointed Volunteer Policy & Guidelines

Requirements for court-ordered and probation-referred service



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Program-specific policy: Court-Appointed Volunteers must follow this document, the Court-Appointed Volunteer Service Agreement, & Court Volunteer Policy & Guidelines.

1. Eligibility and enrollment

PVAS does not accept Court-Appointed Volunteers when the underlying offense involves abuse to animals, abuse to humans, theft, weapons, a violent offense, a sexual offense, or property damage. If the offense description is unclear, CEED staff will review it before approving service.

- Complete the PVAS volunteer enrollment process and all required agreements.
- Provide the court or probation referral, requested-hour documentation, offense information, and required timesheet before service begins. Missing information may delay review.
- PVAS does not routinely perform a background check for this program, but may contact the authorized court or probation officer to verify eligibility, terms, or service information.
- Approval is subject to PVAS capacity, assignment availability, and staff review.

2. Assignments, attendance, and identification

- Will only perform the activities approved by PVAS staff.
- Follow staff instructions and complete assignment-specific training.
- Attend scheduled shifts. Notify CEED staff as soon as possible if you cannot attend.
- Wear the mandatory \$15 PVAS Volunteer Shirt, keep your PVAS name badge visible, and follow the universal dress and safety rules.
- Stay on PVAS property while clocked in.
- Clock out before a meal period. Required if taking a shift longer than 5 hours.
- Volunteers are permitted a 15 minute break without needing to clock out,

3. Conduct, confidentiality, devices, and media

- Act professionally and respectfully toward animals, staff, volunteers, clients, visitors, and the public.
- Protect confidential information and follow the photography, video, social media, and media-inquiry rules in the Volunteer Guidelines & Policies.

- Do not use a personal phone while actively volunteering unless it is needed for an approved task, emergency, or staff-authorized purpose.
- Music is permitted with one earbud in and one ear unobstructed. Using a speaker is permitted as long as music is workplace friendly. A specific assignment may require stricter safety controls.

4. Safety, injuries, and substances

- Follow safety procedures, wear required PPE when needed, and immediately report every injury, bite, scratch, unsafe condition, or animal-welfare concern to PVAS staff.
- PVAS does not provide health insurance for volunteers. Volunteers are responsible for obtaining medical care when needed.
- Controlled substances and alcohol are prohibited during service and on PVAS property.
- Smoking, vaping, tobacco or nicotine use are permitted only in designated areas and never inside PVAS buildings.

5. Discipline and termination

PVAS may suspend or terminate participation when it determines that doing so is appropriate. This is not a guaranteed progressive-discipline process. A minor issue may receive one documented verbal warning, logged under your respective profile; repeated conduct may result in termination. Serious misconduct may result in immediate termination without a prior warning.

- PVAS may notify the court or probation office of termination and the circumstances.
- Falsification of hours may result in immediate termination, denial of unverifiable hours, and notification to the court or probation office.
- Serious misconduct includes animal mistreatment, violence or threats, harassment, discrimination, theft, falsification, serious safety violations, prohibited substance use, or other significant misconduct.

6. Recording and verifying hours

- Bring the required Official PVAS Timesheet to every shift. Only Physical copies are acceptable.
- Sign in and out through MyImpact and ensure the same completed hours have been recorded on the required Official PVAS Timesheet.
- After each completed shift, ask an authorized Volunteer Coordinator, Manager or Team Lead for a signature on your assigned tasks of the day, staff needs to sign the Official PVAS Timesheet.
- Only completed, verified hours are eligible for credit. Future or uncompleted hours will not be signed or awarded.
- PVAS will honor approved 2-for-1 community service hours when an authorized probation or court officer has approved the arrangement and the volunteer completes qualifying service under that arrangement.

7. Final document signing

- Schedule an appointment with CEED when final court or probation documents are ready for review. Same-day service is not guaranteed.
- CEED may verify conduct, quality of work, attendance, and recorded hours before signing.
- Volunteer Coordinators, Managers, & Team Leads may sign the CSR Timesheet for completed shifts. **Only an authorized CEED representative may sign official court, probation, or completion documents.**
- Do not submit the internal Official PVAS Timesheet to the court or probation office unless CEED specifically instructs you to do so.

Contact information

Community Engagement & Education Department (CEED) | volunteer@pvastx.org |

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Sunday-Thursday: 9:30 AM-5:30 PM | Friday-Saturday: 9:30 AM-6:00 PM
