

Ark-Valley Humane  
Society  
Volunteer Orientation

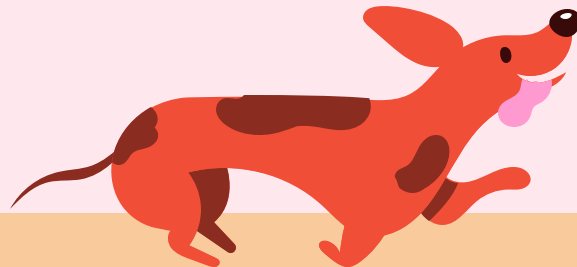


# Welcome!

Thank you for your interest in volunteering with AVHS!

We're excited to have you join our program. We rely **heavily** on our volunteers and truly couldn't do what we do without you!

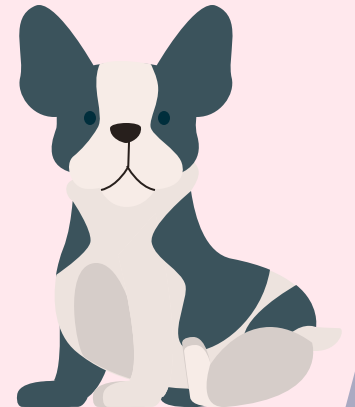
---



# Volunteer Onboarding Process



1. Complete our online Volunteer Application.
1. Read through the 2024 Volunteer Orientation PowerPoint and Volunteer Handbook.
1. Sign our online Confidentiality Agreement/Volunteer Liability Waiver.
1. Sign up for and attend a Volunteer Cat/Dog Training Session at the shelter.
1. Begin volunteering for AVHS!



# Meet Your Volunteer/Foster Coordinator!



## **Desiree Bator**

Desiree joined AVHS in April 2024 as an Animal Care Technician and is now stepping into the role of Volunteer and Foster Coordinator. With a deep appreciation for community engagement, she is committed to strengthening and expanding programs that connect animals in need with compassionate fosters and volunteers. Desiree is excited to support the individuals who make such a big difference every day here at AVHS!



# Our Team



## AVHS Staff



- 12 Employees
- Staff members work 4 days a week
- Staff rotate working through 3 areas:
  - Office (includes caring for adoptable cats and working our in-house crematorium)
  - Adoptable Dog Room
  - Isolation "ISO" Unit (medical)





## Dr. Annie Cordova

Although we do not have a veterinarian on staff, Dr. Annie comes to the shelter once a week to perform in-house surgeries including spay/neuter procedures, and works with AVHS to oversee and address the medical needs of our animals.

Dr. Annie also assists with our community spay/neuter and TNR programs.

---

# What We Do

## Adoptions

Assess behavior and complete medical requirements to make animals available to the public for adoption.

## Support

Provide community support through various programs and resources, like our pet food/supply pantry and emergency pet boarding.

## Strays

Partner with the public and Law Enforcement to intake strays and work toward reuniting them with their owners.

## Cremations

Provide on-site cremation services for public walk-ins and veterinary clients alike.

## Surrenders

Intake pets whose owners are no longer able to provide care, with the goal of making them available for adoption.

## Transfers

Work with other shelters to lighten their animal population by transferring in dogs and cats.

# Community Programs



## Community Spay/Neuter Program

Provides low-cost spay/neuter vouchers for owned cats, owned pitbull mix dogs, and qualifying low-income pets.



## Community Pet Emergency Fund

Provides assistance towards the cost of life-saving veterinary care for owned pets in Chaffee County, along with veterinary care for pets belonging to displaced owners.

## Trap/Neuter/Return (TNR)

Assists in limiting feral cat populations through humane trapping, spaying/neutering, and either returning or rehoming.

## Behavior Intervention Training

Provides free dog training vouchers for four private sessions with a positive reinforcement trainer. Teaches owners how to modify behaviors of concern such as reactivity, guarding, etc. in owned dogs.

## Pet Microchipping/ID Tag Sales

Provides a service that helps reunite stray animals with owners and can keep them from entering the shelter.



## Emergency Pet Boarding

Provides free/low-cost boarding to pets whose owners are in dire need of time to create a safe situation for both themselves and their pets.








## Pet Food/Supply Pantry

Assists community members in need by providing free pet food on an as-needed basis. Limited pet care supplies also available at no cost.





## Our PAWS Culture (a snapshot)

- **Professionalism** - We provide compassionate customer service, free of snap judgment and bias.
  - **Accountability** – We recognize and celebrate our individual strengths.
  - **Well-Being** – We, as individuals, have a voice.
  - **Sustainability** – We extend our culture to our volunteers as they are part of our team!
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 

# Our GOLDEN RULES

---

1. Every situation and animal is unique.
2. We give each other the benefit of the doubt.
3. We communicate respectfully.
4. We are responsible for our own stress management.
5. We voice our concerns to our supervisor in writing.
6. We practice kindness towards ourselves, each other, the public, and the animals.
7. We celebrate our successes!







# AVHS

## History

- AVHS is a 501c3 non-profit founded in 1991.
- Our funding depends on generous donations from individuals and businesses, grants, and, since 2006, the support of the community through Mill Levy (tax) revenues.
- We are not affiliated with any other 'Humane Society'.
- The BV shelter was built on donated land by prison laborers.

## 2023 Statistics

- 1546 animals were helped through our community programs and services.
- 388 animals were adopted into loving homes.
- 185 lost animals were reunited with their families.
- 48 foster homes cared for 153 animals.
- 125 animals were transferred to AVHS and adopted from 17 partner shelters. 
- 1169 pets were cremated for veterinary clinics and the public.
- Over 2163 hours were logged by volunteers!! 

# Volunteer Roles



## Cats

Cleaning and feeding cats in our adoptable cat room, or simply just cuddling, enriching, and spending time with our cats.

## Dogs

Providing enrichment through food or scent games, socialization, walks, and behavior training.



## Transport

Picking up animals from other shelters and delivering them to AVHS for adoption.



## TNR

Assisting with Trap, Neuter, and Return of feral cat populations

## Photography

Photographing our animals to provide quality adoption photos for animal profiles and AVHS social media posts (which helps animals get adopted!).



## Landscaping

Maintaining the Memorial Garden, weed whacking, and general grounds maintenance.

We LOVE  
our  
Volunteers!



# Nuts and Bolts

## Dress Code

The first time you volunteer with AVHS, you will receive a Volunteer T-shirt. Please wear this shirt, along with closed toed shoes, when you are at the shelter. The less exposed skin, the less chance of being scratched, etc.

## Safety

Wash your hands before leaving the shelter. Listen to staff instructions when interacting with animals. Keep your pets' vaccines up-to-date. Trust your instincts and speak up if you feel uncomfortable handling an animal!

## Communication

The main point of contact for volunteers is the office phone (719-395-2737), which also receives texts. For less time sensitive matters, you can contact Kiersten directly at 719-239-4762 or [volunteer@ark-valley.org](mailto:volunteer@ark-valley.org).

## Sign In

The volunteer iPad is located in the front vestibule. Please sign in when you arrive and then sign out before you leave so we can keep track of your hours!

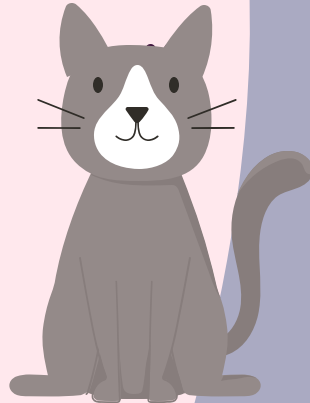
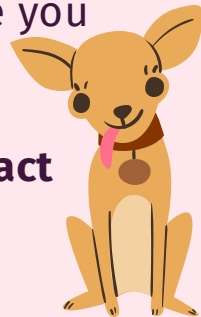
# What's Next?

Sign up for a dog or cat volunteer training...or both!

Trainings are conducted at the Buena Vista shelter by an AVHS staff member. Depending on your area(s) of interest, these trainings typically last 30 minutes to an hour. They are held on alternating Thursday and Sunday afternoons and require scheduling in advance.

You will receive your AVHS volunteer T-shirt the first time you volunteer at the shelter following your training!

**To schedule your volunteer training session, please contact Desiree at [volunteer@ark-valley.org](mailto:volunteer@ark-valley.org).**



# AVHS Volunteer FAQ

- **How flexible is the schedule?**

- Very! Volunteers can come anytime staff is in the building, Monday-Sunday 8-11am and 12-5pm. All staff take lunch from 11am-12pm. Volunteers can establish a regular weekly schedule or simply come when they have time.

- **Can I bring my own pet or friends to the shelter to volunteer?**

- No. Unless discussed with staff, owned pets need to stay home and new volunteers must go through the onboarding process.

- **How long do most volunteers spend at the shelter?**

- It's up to you! Cat cleaning takes 1-3 hours, depending on the number of cats. Dog and cat enrichment can be as long or as short as you'd like!

# Looking to further help AVHS? Consider Fostering!

- AVHS Fosters:
  - Have a flexible time commitment
  - Help us learn more about animals in a home setting
  - Give animals suffering from kennel stress/anxiety a break from the shelter environment
  - Provide extra in-home support for young or injured animals
  - Help free up room at the shelter so we can continue doing life-saving work!

If you're interested in fostering cats or dogs, please contact Desiree at [volunteer@ark-valley.org](mailto:volunteer@ark-valley.org).



# Thank You!

Do you have any questions?

Email us at: [volunteer@ark-valley.org](mailto:volunteer@ark-valley.org)

Call us at: 719-395-2737 (Office Phone)

Visit our website: [www.ark-valley.org](http://www.ark-valley.org)

---

CREDITS: This presentation template was created by **Slidesgo**, and includes icons by **Flaticon**, and infographics & images by **Freepik**

