



SPCA Monterey County Volunteer Handbook



The heart of animal care and rescue since 1905

Contact Information

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SPCA Main Line (831) 373-2631

Website: www.spcamc.org

Departments

Adoption Center Monday – Sunday 11:00am– 5:00pm	X201
Shelter Intake (Surrender, Owner Euthanasia and more) Monday-Sunday 8:30am-5pm	x271
Barn	(831) 373-2631
Benefit Shop (26364 Carmel Rancho Ln, Carmel-By-The-Sea) Monday-Saturday: 10am - 4pm Sunday: 12pm to 4pm	(831) 624-4211
Humane Investigation Tip Line	x213
Veterinary Clinic - Monday-Friday	(831) 264-5400
Wildlife Rehabilitation Center	(831) 264-5427

Social Media



SPCA Blog



[Click here](#) to access our full contact list.

SPCA Main Campus (Physical Address):

[1002 Monterey Salinas Highway](#)

Off highway 68 across from WeatherTech Raceway Laguna Seca
Monterey, CA 93908

Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 3058, Monterey, CA 93942

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Welcome

We're so grateful you have chosen to share your time and talents with us. With your help, we can provide comfort, care, and second chances to both domestic animals and injured wildlife. We extend a very special welcome to you as you begin your volunteer service with us. Without volunteers, many aspects of our programs and services would not be possible at all. We hope your time with us is not only meaningful and inspiring, but also filled with joy, learning, and the deep reward that comes from helping animals in need.

Our Mission

Assuring compassionate treatment of all animals through rescue, rehabilitation, protection and education.

Who We Are

The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) for Monterey County is your nonprofit, independent, donor-supported humane society that has been serving the animals and people of Monterey County since 1905. We are not a chapter of any other SPCA or Humane Society and we do not have a parent organization or receive any funding from places like HSUS or the ASPCA. Funding for our programs and services comes through the generous support of our community and our volunteers. The SPCA's doors are open to all animals in need from dogs and cats to barn animals, wildlife, exotics, and more.

The SPCA is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors, which sets our strategic direction, as well as approves and monitors annual budgets. Our President & CEO oversees funding, programs, and 90 staff members, who work diligently to administer programs, raise funds, maintain facilities, train and care for animals, and educate the public. We rely on approximately 500 volunteers to help us annually.

[Click here](#) to meet the management team and our board of directors.

A message from SPCA President & CEO, Scott Delucchi



Scott Delucchi
President & CEO since 2016

Thank you for choosing to lend your time and talents to the SPCA! I'm inspired daily when I see our volunteers in action and I know my co-workers feel the same way. We are blessed and truly love being around people who share our commitment to the SPCA's mission. We know you are more than volunteers; you are also advocates, and for that, we are beyond grateful!



As The Heart Of Animal Rescue And Protection We:

- Operate the only open admission shelter in Monterey County. Our doors are open to all animals in need from dogs and cats to horses, wildlife, exotics, and more.
- Rescue, rehabilitate, and rehome homeless, neglected, and abused pets, horses, and barn animals.
- Provide loving shelter, skilled veterinary care, and our TLC (Treatment Learning and Compassion) Program to homeless animals.
- Investigate animal cruelty and neglect.
- Reduce pet overpopulations through affordable spay and neuter services.
- Keep pets in homes with behavior training programs, our free Pet Food Bank, Pet Meals collaboration with Meals on Wheels, and more.
- Operate the only Wildlife Rescue and Rehabilitation Center in our county.
- Provide disaster preparedness and response.
- Educate children and adults about humane treatment of animals.

Everything we do is only made possible by our donors and volunteers.

Core Values

- We accept all animals regardless of species, age, health, and condition.
- We protect animals from abuse, neglect, and suffering.
- We show compassion, kindness, and respect for animals and people.
- We communicate honestly and consider every interaction an opportunity to educate.
- We maintain best practices while pursuing new ideas and inspiring others.
- We value all types and levels of support.

We are a no-suffering organization

Our team treats each pet as a unique individual and creates a specialized plan to treat each pet's behavioral and physical needs. In most cases, we are able to lovingly rehabilitate pets and prepare them for new, loving homes. In some cases, we need to relieve a pet's suffering with humane euthanasia. We never euthanize behaviorally or physically healthy animals and we do not euthanize as a means of population control or for time or space. As long as a pet is not suffering or a danger to the community, we will work with him or her for weeks or months with love and compassion.

[Click here](#) for more information.

We Use Positive & Force Free Techniques

Force-free training avoids using force, threats, or intimidation, focusing instead on rewarding desired behaviors and building trust.

- **Positive Reinforcement:** Reward behaviors you want to see repeated. This can include treats, praise, play, or toys. Animals thrive on positive experiences and associate desired actions with rewards.
- **Avoidance of Punishment:** Do not use punishment, force, or fear-based methods. This includes physical corrections, intimidation, or harsh tools like choke chains or prong collars. Punishment can damage the animal's trust and may lead to increased aggression or anxiety.
- **Building Trust and Confidence:** The foundation of force-free training is building a positive relationship with the dog based on trust and respect. This helps reduce stress and anxiety.

An animal may come to us in four ways:

- 1) Surrendered
- 2) Stray
- 3) Seized
- 4) Injured or Orphaned

We shelter homeless, neglected and abused pets and livestock, and provide humane education and countless other services to the community. We are the local agency you call to investigate animal cruelty, rescue and rehabilitate injured wildlife, aid domestic animals in distress, and so much more.

[Click here](#) for frequently asked SPCA questions.

Our facilities include:

SPCA Monterey County is home to a wide range of facilities that help us care for animals and serve our community:

- **Adoption Center** – visitors can meet dogs, cats, rabbits, and other small pets looking for homes;
- **Barn** – horses, goats, pigs, sheep, rabbits, chickens, ducks, and more;
- **Benefit Shop** – our resale store in the Barnyard Shopping Village in Carmel;
- **Intake Shelter** – where animals first arrive for care;
- **Learning Center** – children’s camps and educational programs year-round;
- **Training Center** – group classes and private training sessions for dogs;
- **TLC (Treatment, Learning, Compassion) Building** – dogs receive extra behavior support before moving to the Adoption Center;
- **Veterinary Clinic** – spay/neuter surgeries, vaccines, and flea/tick prevention for the public, while also providing complete medical care for all shelter animals;
- **Volunteer Center** – a central hub for orientations, guidance, and volunteer support;
- **Wildlife Center** – injured/orphaned wild animals and exotic pets like birds, reptiles, and amphibians.

SPCA Programs, Services & Resources:

Adopt

- [Current adoptable pets](#)
- [Foster to Adopt](#) – people can spend extra time with a dog before adopting.
- [Getting Started](#) – choosing the right pet and how much it will cost to adopt.
- [Pet Alert](#) – is designed to help you find your new best friend by automatically emailing you when a pet matching your desired criteria is available.
- [Barn Cats](#) – The SPCA often rescues cats who cannot live as house pets. These feral cats need a new place to call home but are unsuited to life inside a home.
- [Whiskers and Wisdom](#) – Adults ages 60 years and over can adopt a wonderful pet for up to \$50 off the adoption fee.
- [Pets for Vets](#) – The SPCA's Pets for Vets program offers adoptable **adult cats and dogs** and small pets like hamsters, rats, guinea pigs, and rabbits to active military or veterans at no charge.

Services for Pet Owners

- 1) **Veterinary Services:**
 - [Low-cost Spay & Neuter Services](#)
 - Vaccinations, Microchips, and Flea Control Products.
 - [Feral Cats](#) – Free Feral Spay and Neuter for Monterey County.

- 2) **Training & Behavior:** [Resources](#)
 - **SPCA Dog socials** - are the safe alternative to dog parks.
 - **Reactive Rover** – class for Dogs that bark, lunge, or act frustrated or fearfully towards strangers, dogs, children, animals, or anything that moves can be challenging to walk.
 - **Private Training & Free Behavior Helpline.**
- 3) **Lost Pets:**
 - [Report a Lost Pet](#)
 - [Search for a Lost Pet](#)
- 4) **Prepare for a Disaster:** [Resources](#)
 - [Disaster preparedness kit checklist](#)
- 5) **Help Caring for Your Pet:**
 - [Pet Food Bank](#) – during difficult times, the SPCA provides FREE pet food for those in critical need of help.
 - [Surrendering or Alternatives to Surrendering](#)
 - [Pet Friendly Listings](#)
 - **Seasonal Safety Tips** - Keep your pets safe with these simple tips for hot weather, cold weather, Halloween, Fourth of July, and more.
 - [Guardian Angel Future Care Program](#) - With a little forethought, you can rest assured that your pets will have loving, life-long care in the event of your death or severe illness.
- 6) **End of Life Compassion:**
 - [Humane Euthanasia](#)
 - [Pet Loss Support](#)
- 7) **Cat Training:** [Resources](#)

Life Saving Programs & Resources

- 1) **TLC (Treatment, Learning, Compassion)** - It's the veterinary care or one-on-one behavioral intervention we give stray or surrendered pets to make them happy, healthy, and adoptable.
- 2) **Ruff Start** - Ruff Start provides a second chance for shelter dogs that may need extra training, socialization or care before being placed for adoption. This new training and foster program pairs shelter dogs with good behavior inmates at Salinas Valley State Prison.
- 3) **Pet Meals** - Meals On Wheels volunteers deliver pet food **provided by the SPCA** and our generous supporters. This program ensures that people receiving delivered meals no longer feel the need to share their food with their pets.
- 4) **Stray Pets** - Because there are two main shelters in our community, it can often be confusing to understand which pets must be sheltered at which facility. Hitchcock Road Animal Services is a taxpayer supported facility providing legally mandated animal control and sheltering services for their jurisdictions. Therefore, stray pets found within their jurisdictions must be sheltered with them in order to provide their owner (if any) the opportunity to find them.

SPCA Monterey County takes in all owner-surrendered pets, as well as all injured or orphaned wildlife, horses, exotic pets, and more in Monterey County. [Click here](#) for a list of sheltering agencies.

- 5) **Report Animal Cruelty, Abuse or Neglect:** [Click here](#)

- 6) **Horse & Barn Animals Rescue:** [Click here](#)
- 7) **Exotic Animal Rescue:** [Click here](#)
- 8) **Wildlife Rescue & Rehabilitation:**
[How to Help Wildlife](#)
[Emergency Wildlife Contacts](#)
[Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza](#)
- 9) **Feral Cats:** [Click here](#)
- 10) **Education & Outreach:**
 - [Animal Camp](#)
 - **Animal Club** - Our SPCA Humane Educators can visit your classroom to teach lessons covering topics such as safety around animals, responsible pet ownership, and so much more!
 - **Paws to Read** - The SPCA's Paws to Read program brings shelter pets and our team into schools and public libraries (as availability allows), helping students strengthen reading skills in a kind and welcoming setting.
 - **Tours** - We provide group tours and field trips during the school year, by appointment, between 10am and 4pm (as availability allows).
 - **Presentations, School, and Scout Projects** - Have a group of students interested in learning about the SPCA? Career Fairs?
 - [Hug-a-Pet](#) - Through this program, volunteers and their certified companion dogs provide affectionate visits filled with comfort, connection, and fun to community members.

Adoption Process

- Stray animals are held for at least four days, not including the day of arrival, to allow owners time to reclaim them.
- Before adoption, each animal is evaluated for health and temperament. Dogs, cats, rabbits, and male horses are spayed or neutered; adopters must agree not to breed animals we cannot alter, such as female horses, birds, guinea pigs, or reptiles.
- Adopters meet with an SPCA Customer Care staff member. Adoption fees include a health exam, microchip, vaccinations, and spay/neuter when applicable.
- Adoptions may be denied for reasons such as false information, repeated surrendering of pets, abusive behavior, or prior involvement in humane investigations.
- Our goal is to make it easy for animals to go into good homes with prepared adopters.

The SPCA Volunteer Program

Volunteers play a vital role in supporting the programs and services at the SPCA.

Volunteers can help in more than one area if they can commit to the required schedule for each department.

[Click here](#) to see a complete list of volunteer opportunities, age, and commitment requirements.

- 1) **Onboarding**
 - Complete the on-line [volunteer application](#)
 - Sign up for your [volunteer orientation](#)
 - **After the orientation:**
 - Select your preferred department and shift.
 - Complete online and in-person training sessions designed to support you in your volunteer role.

- Pay the **Volunteer Administration Fee** which helps to offset program-related expenses like the background check, uniform, training, volunteer badges and more. Volunteers who have a break in service of more than one year will be asked to pay the fee again upon reactivation.

Adults: \$40

Military/Police/Firefighter: \$25

Juniors (12-17): \$25

Family (1 adult, 1 junior): \$50

2) **Hours of Operation**

For everyone's safety, volunteers may only work on site during regular business hours (8am–5pm), unless supervised by staff or given special approval. Wildlife volunteers may have different schedules during the spring and summer months.

3) **Tracking Volunteer Hours**

All volunteers are responsible for **logging in and out** at the beginning and end of every shift on a computer (or sometimes a clipboard) located at each volunteer site. In special circumstances when working off-site, you may need to email your hours. When a computer is available, we ask that you log your hours electronically as this saves us a great deal of time. Should you need a copy of your volunteer hours, we are happy to provide you with a detailed report. Please provide **at least five days' notice** to your department supervisor.

4) **Dress Code**

Whether you are working behind the scenes or in the public eye, you are representing the SPCA and, therefore, we ask that you dress neatly and appropriately. In addition, since safety is of utmost concern, please wear clothing that is sturdy and protective. There are many "dirty jobs", both at the shelter and off-site, so dress with your specific duties in mind. **If you forget your volunteer t-shirt, aprons (located in the Adoption Center) are available for you to wear during your shift.**

Unless you have special authorization to do otherwise, please wear the following at all times when volunteering:

- Closed-toed, slip-resistant shoes (no sandals);
- Long pants without holes (no capris or shorts);
- SPCA Volunteer T-shirt or other SPCA logowear. Periodically we open our SPCA logowear online store and volunteers can purchase polo shirts, sweatshirts, vests, jackets, and more. You can always purchase an extra volunteer t-shirt in the Volunteer Center for \$15;
- No revealing attire, low cut or midriff baring shirts;
- Please avoid wearing dangling earrings or other jewelry that might interfere with volunteer duties;
- Some of our departments require volunteers to wear a nametag. Please wear your nametag at all times while volunteering and notify the Volunteer Department or your supervisor if you need a replacement.

5) **Main Campus Parking**

We ask that the Shelter and Adoption Center lot be reserved for customer parking only. Exceptions are for volunteers with limited mobility. Thank you for not parking in the Spay & Neuter Clinic or Barn parking lot.

The following parking lots are available to volunteers:

- The lot below the Spay & Neuter Clinic is designated for staff and volunteers.
- Learning Center parking lot.
- Barn Volunteers Only – spots are available next to the Barn.
- Wildlife Volunteers – Wildlife parking lot.

6) **Guests and Pet Policy**

We welcome visitors to the SPCA during our public hours 11am-5pm Monday-Sunday. To ensure a safe workplace, relatives and friends are required to stay in public areas unless the department supervisor has approved access.

Children may not accompany volunteers (unless they are a Junior Volunteer), nor may volunteers bring personal pets while performing volunteer service at the SPCA unless given prior approval. These guidelines are for the safety of your child or pet, as well as to ensure that volunteers are able to concentrate on their duties without distractions. **At no time is a volunteer to leave their pet in their car during their volunteer shift.**

7) **Volunteer Breaks and Smoking**

Please drink plenty of fluids and take breaks as needed. We encourage you to bring your own refillable water bottle. **We provide water at the following locations:**

- Adoption Center Volunteer Sign-In Room
- Wildlife Center Break Room
- Learning Center
- Clinic Break Room
- Benefit Shop back room
- Barn (just outside the office)

SPCA Monterey County is a smoke-free environment, both indoors and outdoors. We appreciate your cooperation.

8) **Personal Belongings**

Should be kept on your person or in your car. We do not have secure areas available for volunteers, and the SPCA is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

9) **Work Environment**

Volunteers may be exposed to pet allergens, cleaning products, and noise as part of their work. While not every role involves direct interaction with animals, even positions in the Benefit Shop and administrative offices may include some proximity to pets, as they are often present in these areas.

How To Be An Awesome Volunteer! Help Animals:

- **H**ave a positive attitude and a CAN-DO spirit.
- **E**xemplify respect for our animals, staff, and visitors.
- **L**earn new skills by attending ongoing training and/or read important updates.
- **P**rovide constructive feedback to improve our programs and services.
- **A**sk questions.
- **N**ever do anything with which you are uncomfortable.
- **I**ncorporate fun into your work.
- **M**anifest the SPCA mission and goals.
- **A**llow your talents to shine.
- **L**isten to the animals.
- **S**hare your knowledge -- be an SPCA ambassador in your community!



Policies & Safety Protocols

Thank you for following important SPCA policies and procedures.

1) Drive Safely

As valued members of our volunteer team, we ask that you please drive safely and respectfully while on our campus, traveling to and from the shelter, at events, or transporting animals. When you're wearing the SPCA uniform, you're not just a volunteer—you're a representative of our mission, our values, and our commitment to animal welfare. Whether you're driving, interacting with the public, or walking into a store, your actions reflect on the entire organization.

Please remember to:

- Use your horn just to alert others to danger—not out of frustration.
- Avoid distractions like texting or calling while driving.
- Be safe and courteous to other drivers and pedestrians.
- Park only in designated areas to ensure access and safety.
- Treat others with kindness and professionalism.
- Be mindful of how we're seen by the community.

Thank you for helping us make a positive impression everywhere you go. Your compassion and conduct make a difference—on and off the road.

2) Drugs and Alcohol

We are committed to a safe, healthy, and productive volunteer environment free from the effects of substance abuse. Abuse of alcohol, drugs, and controlled substances impairs judgement, resulting in increased safety risks, injuries, and faulty decision making. The SPCA prohibits the use, sale, manufacture, distribution, or possession of alcohol, drugs or controlled substances on county premises or worksites. Any violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action or removal from the volunteer program.

3) Safety and Accident Reports

Your safety—and the safety of our animals, visitors, and staff—is very important to us. We rely on your help to maintain a safe environment. Please report any unsafe conditions immediately to your supervisor or the Volunteer Department. Examples include slipping or tripping hazards, poor lighting, or damaged electrical cords.

Safety Guidelines:

- **Hazardous Materials (MSDS):** Scan the QR codes posted in each department to view details about all chemicals used at SPCA Monterey County.
- **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):** Gloves, masks, goggles, and other protective items are available in each department. Always use them when handling soiled dishes, laundry, disinfectants, flea/tick products, or medical samples.
- **Product & Equipment Use:** Follow all safety instructions on labels, equipment, or given by staff.
- **Heavy Lifting:** Ask for help rather than lifting anything that feels too heavy.
- **First Aid:** Familiarize yourself with the location of first aid kits in your work area.

4) Animal Bites

- If an animal's bite breaks the skin, please notify a staff member immediately. County law requires us to report these incidents.
- A staff member will gather information to complete a report, and may ask questions about what was happening before and during the bite.

- The animal will be moved from the adoption area and placed in a 10-day observation period, as required by law.
- **Please remember:** animals are **not** punished for biting. This process is about ensuring safety and following legal requirements, not about placing blame.
- **We can help prevent bites** by watching animals' body language, keeping excitable dogs calm by avoiding jumping or mouthing games, and offering toys or treats to redirect mouthy behavior.

5) Animal Shelter Illnesses

Many pets come to the SPCA from difficult circumstances, and even with excellent veterinary care, stress and prior exposure can make them more vulnerable to common diseases. The most frequent illness we see is kennel cough in dogs or upper respiratory infections in cats. It's usually mild and treatable, but can spread easily in a shelter environment. **On rare occasions, more serious illnesses may occur like:**

- **Parvo:** A life-threatening virus in dogs, especially puppies or unvaccinated dogs.
- **Panleukopenia (Panluke):** A severe virus in cats, especially kittens.
- **Giardia:** A parasite causing diarrhea, spread through feces or water.
- **Zoonotic Diseases:** Illnesses that can pass from animals to people (e.g., rabies, salmonella, ringworm).

Our veterinary team and other staff work hard to prevent and treat illnesses through vaccination, quarantine, and medical care. **Volunteers are vital in keeping our various departments safe by:**

- Sanitizing hands between animals and rooms
- Wearing gloves or protective gear when directed
- Reporting any signs of illness to staff immediately

By following these simple steps, you protect both the animals and yourself.

6) Restricted Areas

Please observe all signs posted around the SPCA. While volunteers are welcome in most areas of the SPCA, a few areas are off-limits for legal or safety reasons. Most of the time signage clarifies whether volunteers are admitted, or whether the area is Staff Only. Each department has different restrictions and will be covered in your training. On rare occasions, areas that are ordinarily off limits to non-employees may have a volunteer present if they receive approval to serve in that area from the department supervisor.

Confidentiality

As a volunteer, you may learn information about animals, adopters, or cases that are private. This information is strictly confidential and should not be shared outside the SPCA. For the same reason, volunteers may not speak to the media on behalf of the SPCA. If you are ever approached by the media or asked questions by the public, please kindly refer them to the Volunteer Manager or another staff member. This ensures information is accurate, respectful, and consistent.

Photographs & Social Media

We must have legal permission before taking or sharing photos of any person. Even when your focus is on an animal, please be mindful of people who may appear in the background. **For the safety and comfort of animals, photos may not be taken in restricted areas.** You're welcome to photograph adoptable pets, and

we encourage you to share those moments with friends and family. If in doubt, please ask the staff before posting.

Stay connected online – You can support the SPCA by engaging with us on social media—follow, like, and share our posts to help spread the word about animals in need. We currently maintain accounts on Facebook, Twitter (now 'X'), YouTube, Instagram and TikTok. Please also follow and share our podcast and blogs!

When posting on your own social media, please use good judgment and keep interactions positive. Volunteers should not use the SPCA logo, speak on behalf of the SPCA, or post commentary about the organization or related issues.

Inclusivity

One of the SPCA's Core Values states, "We show compassion, kindness and respect for animals and people." We join others in speaking out against prejudices and injustices and we will work to ensure that our actions match our words. We continue to listen, learn, and improve how we attract, recruit and train our team, how we maintain a culture of acceptance and inclusion, and how we make vital services accessible to our diverse community. Our goal is to meet the needs of every volunteer in ways that support both you and our mission.

Harassment

The SPCA is committed to a safe, respectful environment free from all forms of harassment or discrimination. Harassment based on gender, sexual orientation, race, age, religion, national origin, disability, or any other protected status is not tolerated.

Harassment can include inappropriate comments, offensive images, unwanted physical contact, threats, or retaliation. If you experience or witness harassment, report it immediately to staff. All reports are taken seriously, handled promptly, and kept confidential.

Dismissal

While we deeply value every volunteer, the SPCA reserves the right to end a volunteer's service at any time. In most cases, dismissal occurs only after other corrective steps have not resolved an issue. However, certain serious actions may result in immediate removal from the program. Examples of behaviors that can lead to dismissal include animal abuse, theft, harassment, possession of drugs or alcohol, sharing confidential information, or insubordination. Our goal is always to support volunteers in having a positive and successful experience, but maintaining the safety and integrity of our animals, staff, and community must come first.

Communicating Your Questions or Concerns

If you have any questions or concerns regarding any aspect of your volunteer work, please talk to the department supervisor and/or Volunteer Manager or Coordinator. It is our goal to provide a wonderful experience for our volunteers and to continually make improvements that support the SPCA's mission, goals and objectives.

Acknowledgments

Special thanks to the staff and volunteers who shared their time and insight in shaping this handbook.

Thank you for joining our SPCA Volunteer Team. [Click here](#) to see a message from our staff. Our animals and staff look forward to seeing you soon!

