G-01 GENERAL INFO

**Purpose**

To describe the overall mission and organization of the Humane Society of West Michigan

**Staff /Areas Affected**

* All Staff & Volunteers

**Our Organization Values**

**COMMITMENT**

We have a passion for providing animal welfare and public education to make our community a safe place where all animals have loving, responsible homes. We believe that every life has value and worth.

**INTEGRITY**

We insist upon high moral and humane standards in treating all those we serve.

**COMMUNITY**

The common thread of animal welfare draws us together in a cooperative manner to serve our mission. We are dedicated to enhancing our programs and services for the animals and people in our community through positive relationship among adopters, donors, volunteers and other organizations.

**FIVE FREEDOMS**

We strongly support that all animals be afforded the Five Freedoms, the gold standard of animal welfare, that allow them to maintain mental and physical wellbeing:

* Freedom from hunger
* Freedom from discomfort
* Freedom from pain injury and disease
* Freedom to express normal and natural behavior
* Freedom from fear and distress

**MANAGED ADMISSION POLICY**

Humane Society of West Michigan manages animal admissions coming into our shelter. This means that we mindfully balance the number of animals we intake in order to continue providing the best care and shelter for our current animals. This admission policy requires the public to occasionally schedule an appointment in order for surrendering their owned animals to make sure that we have proper space available. This policy is based solely on space capacity and our goal to provide quality care without overcrowding. Our staff is dedicated to finding homes for all of our adoptable animals and this is only possible by limiting the number of animals admitted to the shelter. We will NEVER euthanize an animal for time or space.

**USE OF THE TRAINING ROOM**

During the day, the training room can be used for canine enrichment, play groups or other animal related activities, if it is not previously booked for another use.

If the room is to be used for canine activities, a mop and clean mop bucket should be put into the room prior to bringing any dog(s) into the room. Urine or feces must be removed and the area mopped immediately. If the room is used by any dogs that have had any direct exposure to or are diagnosed with any transmittable disease (Giardia, Coccidia, kennel cough, etc.), the entire room should be mopped (using a minimum of 2 clean mop buckets) immediately after use.

A sign on the hallway side of the door should indicate when the room is in use at all times. A barricade should be put in front of all doors. This would prohibit an untethered dog to escape should the door be opened unexpectedly.

Only staff and approved volunteers should be taking dogs into the training room for enrichment or play. Whenever multiple dogs are in the room at one time, a minimum of one staff member must be present.

Dogs should never be left unattended in the room.

If swimming pools of toys are used as enrichment, the toys should be taken out and replaced if there is any indication of a transmittable disease in a dog who used them.

Any toys or treats brought into the room should be removed when done in the room. Any other items used in the room should be put away when done. This includes agility equipment, chairs, tables, etc.

**USE OF DOG PARKS**

The small dog park is not intended to be used by staff with our shelter dogs. This park is reserved for clients who have paid for and are attending our training classes.

Only staff and approved volunteers should take dogs into the large dog park for enrichment.

**OUTSIDE WALKING OF DOGS**

Be sure you are using the proper equipment for the specific dog. Dogs should not be walked with a leash and collar. (Backing out of a collar is highly likely by a frightened dog). At a minimum a slip lead should be used. Other specific equipment is noted on the ‘dog board’ if required. All equipment should be of proper size for the specific animal, and be fitted properly.

Walking dogs on HSWM lawn or sidewalks in the area is encouraged. If a dog appears frightened by the traffic, or is timid of the loud noises should be walked on the trails. Do not interact with people who may stop to ask specific questions or want to pet the dog. Refer all questions to HSWM staff.

Keep a few high reward treats in your pocket in the event the dog gets away from you. (See below)

**USE OF THE WALKING TRAILS**

Dogs can be walked on the trails through the woods and around the trails. The trails are all designated as ‘One Way’ trails for dog and human safety. This prevents unintended / unexpected close contact between dogs. Anyone walking a dog should use bags to pick up after a dog. Bags can be deposited in the ‘dog houses’/poop stations on the posts. Anyone who wants to take a trash bag and gloves out and empty the ‘dog houses’ and put it in the dumpster – the help would be greatly appreciated.

**IF A DOG GETS LOOSE WHILE OUTSIDE**

If quick recovery is not possible, note the location of the last sighting, and the direction the dog was heading. GET HELP. Call HSWM on your cell phone, yell to others in the area to get help, or run back to the shelter to alert ANYONE that help is needed immediately. Whenever possible, try to maintain visual contact until help arrives. Never run after a dog that is running away. This will likely push them farther away. If possible, try to circle around and get ahead of them. This might encourage them to return in the direction they came. High reward treats may help them to return to you if they are a short distance from you.

**APPROVED VOLUNTEERS**

Dog Volunteers who have received additional training from the behavior staff, may do more advanced interaction with some of our more difficult, high stress, long term or otherwise noted dogs. Use of the Training room and Dog Parks may be part of those activities. Due to the fact that many activities are conducted ‘off leash’, not all volunteers have the knowledge on dealing with recovery, etc. that may be involved. A list of these volunteers is maintained by the behavior staff.

**GENERAL CLEANING & AVOIDANCE OF CROSS CONTAMINATATION**

Mop buckets must be assembled and used properly to avoid cross contamination between animals.

MicroChem is the cleaning solution used for general cleaning. Bleach is used whenever there is suspect of contagious disease present. In a shelter environment, contagious disease is almost always present.

Mop buckets should ALWAYS have a minimum of THREE - FOUR gallons of solution in the bucket before starting, based on the area you are cleaning. One bucket will clean

MicroChem is dispensed using the hose on the dispenser located on the wall above the barrel. The mixture will be appropriately dispensed through the hose.

Bleach solution must be mixed at a 1:32 ratio with water – ½ cup per gallon of water. (Based on ASPCA guidelines)

Hands must be THOROUGHLY washed or use of new gloves between touching any animals should always be practiced.

Whenever interacting with cats AND dogs on the same day, try to always interact with cats before dogs whenever practical. (Predator before prey, as cats can sense the presence of dog smells)

**Reference Documents**

* Organizational Chart

**Revision History**

* Created 2-2-20