

Want to Join the **Mod Squad**™?



**Who we are . . .**

A dedicated group of specially selected volunteers, trained in behavior modification and enrichment techniques, that works with special needs dogs within the shelter environment.

**What we do . . .**

Work with dogs who need help to become adoptable because they have behavior issues. This is determined by a behavior evaluation for new arrivals. We also work with adoptable dogs whose length of time at the shelter may cause deterioration in their emotional, mental and behavioral states, and with special needs and elderly animals. In addition, **Mod Squad** members may be asked to participate in activities such as:

- Mentoring interns in the Behavior Department.
- Handling animals for functions in and outside of the shelter.
- Recordkeeping and information systems.
- Promotional activities.
- Assisting with training for other volunteers, especially Dog Walker Orientations.
- Fostering animals with special needs.

**Responsibilities of your role . . .**

**Mod Squad** volunteers have privileged access to areas that other volunteers do not. These include the Isolation ward/Infirmary, and the Stray ward. When you are working in these areas, as well as in other areas of the shelter:

- Always wear your **Mod Squad** uniform so that you are easily identifiable from a distance.
- Always wear your volunteer identification badge.
- Be willing and able to work with a variety of dog breeds, ages, sizes, and with challenging behaviors.
- Show respect for staff and respond courteously to their requests, regardless of what the request is. If you have any issue with the staff person's request, report it to Manager, Behavior Department.
- Use the appropriate equipment and techniques when taking animals out of and through kennels.
- Report incidents immediately to a staff member.
- In the Stray ward, work only with dogs that are in the program and have orange kennel cards hanging on their doors designating their status.
- Refrain from interacting with **any and all** dogs in the Stray ward who are not in the program, including making eye contact with them, talking to them, or throwing them treats. If you notice something amiss with one of these dogs, advise a staff person.
- You may work with all dogs in the Isolation/Infirmary ward provided they are not designated with signs saying "Bite Case" or "Dangerous Dog." Refrain from **any and all**

interactions, specifically eye contact, with dogs so designated. See Kennel Manager or Behavior Department Manager if questions.

- Report any issues (staff and volunteer interactions, administrative issues, concerns with particular animals, equipment, etc.) immediately to Manager, Behavior Department. You will be asked to put the issue in writing if it requires follow up.
  - Hang equipment (leash, harness) properly:
    - On the side of the kennel door opposite to the side which opens.
    - Not in a position where the dog can grab it and pull it into the kennel.
- If you notice equipment hanging incorrectly on a kennel door, hang it appropriately. If you see volunteer hanging equipment inappropriately, help them understand the correct method with a polite explanation and demonstration.
- If you have volunteered to participate in a Boot Camp program, be on time for your shift, follow the techniques precisely, and record information accurately.
  - All dogs in the program need to be worked with every day. Work with non-program dogs only when program dogs have been tended.
  - Record information in Dog Logs and other documents accurately and completely. Your colleagues, the dogs, and shelter staff, depend upon you for completion of this vital record keeping role.
  - Participate in adoptions by completing and explaining Guide for Adoptive Families (GAF) to adopters of **Mod Squad** dogs.
  - If you see the need to purchase items for the program, please advise Manager, Behavior Department, prior to making any purchases.
  - Attend scheduled training meetings.
  - Work a minimum of 8 hours each month (2 hours per week) with dogs, not including training meetings (six 3-hour meetings per year, about every other month).
  - Maintain and submit an Activity Log at the end of each month.

Additionally, you may be asked to sign a non-disclosure/proprietary information.

### **Provisional Membership**

The prerequisites for applying for Mod Squad membership at the Provisional level include (1) completion of Dog Walker Orientation, and (2) a minimum of 3 months spent walking dogs for 6 hours every month (shelter volunteer hour requirement).

You may apply for Mod Squad membership at the Provisional level at any time after this 3-month period, but you will not become a full member, or be able to work independently with dogs, until you complete the orientation. To attend an orientation session, you must be a Provisional member for at least 3 months. Orientations are held in October and April. Provisional members are expected to meet the 8 hour per month Mod Squad volunteer time commitment, and may work with dogs under the supervision and guidance of a coach who is a full member with a minimum of Novice standing. It is the responsibility of the Provisional member to arrange mentoring sessions, and you will receive a list of eligible coaches.

Several membership levels allow volunteers to work toward high levels of skill and participation.

### **Being in Touch . . .**

Upon becoming a **Mod Squad** volunteer, your email address will be added to the email list, and your name, phone number and email address will be added to the membership roster. You will be emailed a copy of the roster. If your contact information changes, please inform Manager, Behavior Department.

### **Dress for the Job . . .**

**Mod Squad** volunteers set an example for other volunteers to follow in terms of how they dress and act. It is also important for members to be easily identifiable from a distance, particularly when they are working in restricted areas of our shelter. For these reasons, all members are required to purchase orange t-shirts bearing the **Mod Squad** logo. The cost of these shirts is \$12.00 including tax. Two shirts are recommended.

Members are also required to wear appropriate footwear when on HAWS property. Closed-toed shoes with good support are essential for safety. Flip-flops and clog-style shoes are not appropriate. Long pants and leather gloves are recommended. Dangling jewelry is hazardous and should not be worn. Ear plugs are strongly encouraged when working in the kennels.

### **Recognition . . .**

**Mod Squad** volunteers earn recognition for special accomplishments through HAWS Volunteer of the Month program. Anyone may nominate a volunteer for this award by contacting the Volunteer Coordinator at [volunteer@hawspets.org](mailto:volunteer@hawspets.org).

**Mod Squad** volunteers also earn recognition for the number of hours worked. Upon completion of 50 hours spent in approved activities (based on Activity Log), or receiving a *Volunteer of the Month* award, members are eligible to receive a vest which can be layered over clothing in cooler weather. The vests are the property of the Behavior Department, and should be kept clean and in good repair. They are to be returned to the Behavior Department if the member leaves the group. Please see the Activity Log section for information about which activities may be used for credit toward the vest.

Members receive award patches to display on their vests when milestones are reached in the program. Thus far, award patches have been earned for 250 and 500 dogs adopted through the **Mod Squad** program.

### **Accountability . . .**

Training of volunteers in the **Mod Squad** is ongoing and rigorous. Because you are working with potentially dangerous animals, it is essential that you follow scripts and protocols precisely. HAWS supports only positive training methods. Use of methods other than those in which you are trained may result in immediate dismissal from the program.

Six 3-hour training sessions are scheduled annually for members to learn new skills, refresh skills already learned, and have needed discussion about program issues, concerns, accomplishments and goals. Missing two of these meetings will result in dismissal from the group. Hours spent in training sessions should be recorded on the Activity Log. Portions of the meetings may count toward the monthly minimum of 8 hours spent working directly with dogs.

Members are expected to spend a minimum of 2 hours per week in hands-on activities with dogs, because this is our primary program activity. Members are welcome to work beyond the 2-hour weekly minimum, within reason, and many additional program opportunities are available.

### **Levels of membership . . .**

**Provisional** members are those who have been accepted into the program but have not yet completed the orientation. **Provisionals** must always work under the guidance and supervision of a Mod Squad member who has (1) completed sign-offs on Core and Level 1 skills (**Novice** level), and (2) has been in the program for at least six months. **Provisionals** are eligible to attend orientation when they have completed a minimum of 3 months at the **Provisional** level. For example, if the orientation is in October, you will work at the **Provisional** level for July, August, and September.

**Probationary** members must work during their first month with **Novice, Regular or Mentor** members to complete the needed sign-offs on Core skills. During months two and three of the **Probationary** period, members continue to work alongside **Novice, Regular or Mentor** members to obtain sign-offs on Level 1 skills. During this time, they may work alone using Core skills only. After 3 months, provided signoffs have been obtained for Level 1 skills, **Probationary** members may work unsupervised on both Core and Level 1 skills. If sign-offs on all Level 1 skills are not completed within 6 months of orientation, the **Probationary** membership will become **Provisional**.

**Novice** members (full member for at least six months, all Core and Level 1 sign-offs completed) should undertake sign-off of Level 2 skills by working with **Regular** and **Mentor** members.

**Regular** members (full member for at least 12 months, all Level 2 sign-offs completed) may undertake sign-off of Level 3 skills by working with **Mentor** members.

**Mentors** are members who have achieved sign-offs on skills through Level 3, and who have been in the program for at least 15 months.