

# **SOUTHERN OREGON HUMANE SOCIETY**

## **CODE OF ETHICS**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Southern Oregon Humane Society (SoHumane) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit animal sheltering organization focused on community responsiveness, professional animal care, education, compatible adoptions and a philosophy of compassion in all we do.

We facilitate animal adoptions for a fee, and ensure compliance with the laws that stipulate all dogs and cats adopted from shelters must be spayed or neutered.

### **STATEMENT OF VALUES**

This code of ethics is based upon a foundation of strongly held values within SoHumane. Our commitment to these values guides us in formulating and adhering to the code of ethics that follows.

Dedicated to the welfare of both animals and people in our community, SoHumane cares for unwanted and homeless animals, and places animals in permanent, loving homes. All efforts undertaken are done so with the basic tenants of good faith to benefit the animals and community-at-large.

### **ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

#### **1. Personal and Professional Integrity**

SoHumane's employees, Board of Directors and volunteers act with honesty, integrity, commitment and openness in their dealings as representatives of the organization. Our organization promotes a working environment that values respect, fairness and integrity.

- We develop and encourage the practice of high standards of personal and professional conduct;
- Our employees exemplify a professional level of courtesy, respect and objectivity when participating in SoHumane's activities;
- The organization designs and maintains work environments that honor and protect the health and safety of its employees, volunteers, and constituents;
- Confidential information acquired in the course of work by SoHumane employees will not be used for anyone's personal advantage;

- The resources and contributions received are used exclusively in pursuit of the organization's mission and will not be used for the personal advantage of vendors, Board of Directors, employees or volunteers.

## **2. Governance**

SoHumane has an active governing body, the Board of Directors, that is responsible for setting our mission and strategic direction, and overseeing the finances, operations and policies of the organization.

The governing body:

- Ensures that all directors understand and fulfill their governance duties acting for the benefit of the organization and its public purpose;
- Ensures that the organization conducts all transactions and dealings with integrity and honesty;
- Ensures that all directors have the requisite skills and experience to carry out their duties;
- Provides credible and effective oversight to the organization's work;
- Complies with applicable federal, state and local laws, regulations, and fiduciary responsibilities;
- Has a Conflict of Interest Policy to ensure that any conflicts of interest or the appearance thereof are avoided or appropriately managed through disclosure, recusal or other means;
- Is responsible for monitoring the performance of the Executive Director;
- Respects the confidentiality of sensitive information about donors, constituents, and employees;
- Ensures that the organization promotes working relationships among directors, employees, volunteers, and program beneficiaries that are based on mutual respect, fairness and openness;
- Ensures that the organization is fair and inclusive in its hiring and promotion policies and practices for all employees and volunteer positions;
- Ensures that the organization's resources are responsibly and prudently managed;
- Ensures that our organization has the capacity to carry out its programs effectively.

## **3. Legal Compliance**

SoHumane is knowledgeable of, and complies with the spirit as well as the letter of, all laws, regulations.

#### **4. Responsible Stewardship**

SoHumane applies its funds appropriately and manages its funds responsibly and prudently. To that end:

- The strongest priority for our funds is to spend them on programs and activities in pursuit of our mission;
- We maintain effective accounting systems, internal controls, competent employees, reporting procedures and other resources and practices that are critical to professional management and accountability;
- We ensure that donations are used as was promised during solicitations and in the manner intended and expected by the donors;
- The organization compensates employees, and any others who may receive compensation, reasonably, appropriately, and within the limits of common practice;
- The organization pursues all identified possibilities to minimize fundraising costs, recognizing the variety of factors that affect fundraising costs;
- We ensure that spending practices and policies are fair, reasonable and appropriate to fulfill the mission of the organization;
- Financial reports are factually accurate and complete in all material respects;
- SoHumane's financial statements are submitted for independent audit, the results of which are available to the public.

#### **5. Openness and Disclosure**

SoHumane provides comprehensive information to the public.

- We respond in a timely manner to reasonable requests for information and generally provide copies of our latest IRS Filings;
- Information about our organization is accurate and honestly reflects our policies and practices;
- Basic informational data about SoHumane is posted on our Web site or is otherwise available to the public;
- Financial and program reports are complete and accurate in all material respects;
- The organization and its employees promptly and fully disclose, review and take appropriate actions with any situation that results in a perceived or actual conflict of interest;

- The organization's employees promptly and fully disclose, and take appropriate actions to resolve, any situations in which we discover perceived or actual violations of this Code of Ethics.
- SoHumane provides avenues by which anyone may provide information pertaining to possibly illegal activities being conducted by or in association with employees or volunteers, and the organization will promptly and thoroughly investigate the report and take appropriate actions in cooperation with law enforcement authorities.

## **6. Program Quality and Evaluation**

SoHumane is committed to organizational effectiveness and the continuous improvement of its programs.

- We design programs and activities to make them responsive to the needs of our constituencies;
- The organization is committed to high standards of excellence and quality for the services and products we provide to constituents.

## **7. Inclusiveness, Diversity, and Respect**

SoHumane has a policy of promoting inclusiveness, diversity, and respect for all people.

- Our employees and volunteers reflect cultural diversity and promote respect, tolerance, justice and peace for all people;
- Our organization respects and tolerates diversity of opinions;
- SoHumane works cooperatively with other charitable organizations and does not disparage or criticize other organizations' missions, employees, or programs.

## **8. Fundraising**

SoHumane is fully accountable for the honest solicitation of charitable funds, the efficient administration of those funds, and the effective use of funds in pursuit of our organization's mission. With regard to fundraising, the organization:

- Provides truthful and current information in our solicitation communications;
- Does not establish unrealistic donor expectations of what donor gifts will actually accomplish within the limits of our mission and programs;
- Respects the privacy concerns of individual donors;
- Allows donors the opportunity for their names to be deleted from our mailing lists. We do not share mailing lists.
- Discloses important and relevant information to potential donors;

- Informs the public of our mission, the way donated resources will be used, and our capacity to use donations effectively for their intended purposes;
- If in receipt of funds intended to be used for programs or activities that are not part of the organization's present or prospective programs, will either return the funds or, if the intent is in accordance with our mission, treat these as restricted funds and channel them in a manner that honors the donor's intent;
- Provides donors with acknowledgement and recognition;
- Ensures that information about donations is handled with respect and confidentiality to the extent provided by the law;
- With limited exceptions, we do not use hired solicitors;
- Does not compensate our employees or fund-raising consultants on the basis of a percentage of charitable contributions raised;
- Does not compensate our employees or fund-raising consultants directly or indirectly on the basis of finders fees (for recruiting donors);
- Encourages donors to ask questions when making donations and provides prompt, truthful and forthright answers.
- Does not knowingly accept donations from individuals or organizations whose values are not in concert with those of SoHumane.