Town of Yucca Valley
TOWN COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

To: Honorable Mayor & Town Council
From: Curtis Yakimow, Town Manager
Shane Stueckle, Deputy Town Manager
Date: May 28, 2025
Meeting Date: June 3, 2025

Subject: Animal Shelter Operational Review Draft Report

Recommendation:

That the Town Council

1. Receives and files the draft Operational Review of the Town's Animal Shelter operations.

2. Provides input and direction as desired.

3. Establishes a standing committee of the Town Council for Animal Care and Control and identify and appoint two council members to serve on the committee.

4. Direct staff to return to the Town Council with proposed budget amendments required to implement the immediate recommendations as directed by the Town Council.

5. Direct staff to propose and negotiate required changes to the existing Shelter Services agreement with the County to implement immediate recommendations as directed by the Town Council.

Prior Review

The Town Council directed an Operational Review of the Yucca Valley Animal Shelter on March 4, 2025. Update #1 was presented to the Town Council on April 1, 2025. Update #2 was presented to the Town Council on May 6, 2025.

Order of Procedure

Request Staff Report
Request Public Comment
Council Discussion/Questions of Staff
Motion/Second
Discussion on Motion
Call the Question

Discussion

The Town Council directed Town management to conduct an Operational Review of shelter operations, policies, and practices, and return to the Town Council within 90 days.

Focused operational reviews can be helpful to confirm or correct statistics, affirm or clarify operational practices, evaluate procedures for consistency with industry best practices,

consider modifications that may improve desired outcomes, and provide communication and transparency to the public.

While the day-to-day operations of the Shelter are managed by the Town's Animal Care and Control Manager, the operational review was performed by the Town Manager and Deputy Town Manager. Shelter operations fall within the Town's Community Development functions overseen by the Deputy Town Manager with terminal management responsibility under the Town Manager.

Given the Council's desire for timely reporting, the Review is intended to identify broad issues facing the Shelter. It is not designed to provide detailed analysis of each observation and assessment. The operational review was performed to yield the following outcomes:

- Shelter performance evaluation framework.
- Development of actionable recommendations for operational enhancements.
- Identification of broad areas for process improvement and efficiency gains.
- Optimization of resource allocation recommendations.
- Enhanced platforms for community engagement.
- Improved data driven decision making.

The draft report is included as an attachment to this staff report and provides an overall assessment of the Town's shelter operations. Much of the content has been presented in various forms to the Council as part of the interim updates. Final recommendations are included for the Council's review, discussions, and policy modifications. Upon completion of the draft Review, the Town Council directed staff to circulate the document for peer review.

Finally, animal shelter operations are ongoing and daily activities. A report given at a single point in time will not be sufficient for long-term policy and practice change. While specific recommendations are presented, meeting the Town Council's established performance factors will be a marathon, not a sprint. Successful implementation will require Town Council commitment, public engagement, professional collaboration, financial commitments, public education, and staff accountability.

Alternatives
None recommended.

Fiscal Impact
None with this item.

Attachments:

Draft Operational Review

Yucca Valley Animal Shelter

Operational Review

June 3, 2025

DRAFT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Town of Yucca Valley operates the Yucca Valley Animal Shelter (Shelter) providing services to the Town of Yucca Valley and to the surrounding unincorporated areas of San Bernardino County. In response to public comments raised regarding Shelter operations, the Town Council directed Town management staff to complete an operational review (Review) of the Town's Animal Shelter operations.

The intent of the review was to assess current Shelter operations and compare and contrast those observations with public comments and concerns, as well as with modern best practices for public animal shelters.

Many of the challenges and concerns facing the Yucca Valley Animal Shelter are not unique nor dissimilar to challenges facing shelter operations throughout California. Illegal breeding, irresponsible pet ownership, economic hardship, increase pet ownership costs and similar challenges are consistently impacting public and private animal shelters across the country with public shelters facing even greater strain due to mandates and regulations unique to publicly funded shelters.

Certain aspects of the Shelter's operation were identified as historically meeting or exceeding public shelter standards. Many other practices fell short in meeting common best practices used in modern public shelter operations and were aligned with public concerns.

Town management staff have identified numerous recommendations for immediate, intermediate, and long-term implementation. While not a panacea for every operational concern, when implemented, the recommendations will address the majority of public concerns and shortcomings of the Shelter operation.

In conclusion, Town management has identified both positive aspects of the current Shelter operation as well as shortcomings in the application of best practices. With a modest increase in financial investment, many of the shortcomings can be addressed in an accelerated timeframe.

While these immediate changes will aid the Shelter in delivering enhanced positive animal outcomes, significant challenges will remain with respect to animal intake, limited adoption absorption rates, capacity management, and euthanasia rates. Sustainable changes to those factors will require a community effort focused on responsible pet ownership, public assistance programs for spay/neuter/vet care, active rescue group participation in Shelter placements, and community education and participation.

INTRODUCTION

At the February 18, 2024, Town Council meeting, the Town Council received significant public comments including concerns and observations regarding shortfalls in the operation of the Yucca Valley Animal Shelter (Shelter). While the comments were varied and diverse, some central themes revolved around the Shelter's animal intake processes, adoption availability notification process, canine adoption rates, canine euthanasia rates, community outreach and volunteer opportunities, best practices, and community engagement.

While the Town Council meeting of February 18 was the first meeting with substantial public comments, some in the community highlighted frustration with their prior efforts to engage with Shelter and the Town to highlight concerns and have an opportunity for meaningful dialog to improve observed shortfalls in Shelter operations.

At the March 4, 2025, Town Council meeting, the Town Council directed Town management staff to complete an operational review (Review) of the Town's Animal Shelter operations. To keep the Town Council and public informed during the operational review, the Council directed interim updates on April 1, 2025, and May 6, 2025, with the final draft operational review report due by June 3, 2025.

While the day-to-day operations of the Shelter are managed by the Town's Animal Care and Control Manager, the operational review was performed by the Town Manager and Deputy Town Manager. Shelter operations fall within the Town's Community Development functions overseen by the Deputy Town Manager with terminal management responsibility under the Town Manager.

Given the Council's desire for timely reporting, the Review is intended to identify broad issues facing the Shelter. It is not designed to provide detailed analysis of each observation and assessment. The operational review was performed to yield the following outcomes:

- Shelter performance evaluation framework.
- Development of actionable recommendations for operational enhancements.
- Identification of broad areas for process improvement and efficiency gains.
- Optimization of resource allocation recommendations.
- Enhanced platforms for community engagement.
- Improved data driven decision making.

Upon completion of the draft Review, the Town Council directed staff to circulate the document for peer review. Once that process has been completed, the Report will be returned to the Town Council for final acceptance.

SHELTER BACKGROUND

Prior to the Town's incorporation, the County of San Bernardino provided Animal Control services, including both field and shelter services, to the Yucca Valley area. There were no field officers assigned full time to Yucca Valley specifically, and County field officers responded to calls for service based upon available resources and types of cases reported. On November 27, 1991, the Town incorporated and began providing Animal Control field services within the Town boundaries on July 1, 1992. Shelter services were provided under a contractual arrangement with the Hi-Dez Kennels through Mid-2006. In Mid-2006, Hi Dez Kennels was purchased by the Town, and the Town began operating shelter services at that time.

In November 2008, the Town entered into a Joint Powers Authority or JPA with San Bernardino County on a project for a replacement animal shelter serving both the Town area and the unincorporated County areas. The new facility was built and began operations in 2013.

While the Town's staffing of both field and shelter services has changed over the years, the following outlines the current staffing levels of the Shelter.

1 FT Animal Care and Control Manager
1 FT Administrative Assistant
3 FT Shelter Specialist / Animal Control Officer 1
1 FT Senior Shelter Specialist
2 PT Kennel Technicians

Based upon Town Council action at the Council meeting of May 6, 2025, the following position was added to the above staffing structure.

1FT Shelter Specialist

The Shelter **public hours are Tuesday through Saturday, from noon to 5PM**. Animal Control provides field coverage Monday through Friday from 8AM to 5PM. After these hours, field officers are on-call to respond to emergencies and priority calls, which are dispatched through the Sheriff's Department dispatch center.

The County of San Bernardino contracts with the Town for bringing animals to the Yucca Valley Shelter. The contract with the County provides for approximately fifty (50) percent of total Shelter funding. In addition, County Animal Control Field staff operate from the Yucca Valley Animal Shelter facility. County staff do not provide any shelter services to either Town or County residents.

Budgetary Background

For fiscal year 2013-2014, the Animal Shelter had a budget of $564,136. This budget has increased to the fiscal year 2024-2025 budget of $1,011,451. The table below outlines actual Shelter annual expenditures since 2014.

YV Animal Shelter Expenditures											
	2014	**2015**	**2016**	**2017**	**2018**	**2019**	**2020**	**2021**	**2022**	**2023**	**2024**
Salaries	$369,048	$383,910	$397,599	$345,044	$398,399	$444,893	$431,731	$444,742	$458,067	$504,874	$521,646
Operating Supplies	$135,515	$149,216	$146,730	$147,146	$162,900	$153,269	$140,617	$135,124	$160,977	$227,073	$223,988
Administrative Overhead	$59,573	$63,147	$69,500	$71,585	$73,733	$75,945	$78,220	$80,570	$80,570	$85,294	$91,690
Total	**$564,136**	**$596,273**	**$613,829**	**$563,775**	**$635,032**	**$674,107**	**$650,567**	**$660,436**	**$699,614**	**$817,241**	**$837,324**
Annual Percent Increase (%)		5.70	2.94	(8.15)	12.64	6.15	(3.49)	1.52	5.93	16.81	2.46

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT & CONCERNS

Over the past six months, there has been significant public comment provided to the Town Council about Shelter operations. These comments included but were not limited to the following concerns:

- **Ineffective Use of Social Media:** Effective use of social media markets adoptable animals without the need to visit a shelter. These tools assist in maximizing live release rates and placing animals in their new forever homes and to assist in effective and timely return to owner efforts. Town operations lacked effective use of these platforms.

- **Lack of a Volunteer Program**: Volunteers are common resources at public open admission shelters. Volunteers can function as an extension of the Town staff in providing valuable services to the community. Town operations offered no such opportunities.

- **Lack of an Animal Foster Program**: Different forms of animal foster programs are common at public open admission shelters. Foster programs can function as an extension of shelter services, increasing live release rates while reducing total shelter population. No Town programs exist that support fostering opportunities.

- **Ineffective Use of Rescue Groups:** Effective use of rescue groups reduces shelter population and reduces shelter euthanasia rates. These tools aid in maximizing live release rates and placing animals in their new forever homes. Limited Town use of such groups.

- **High Euthanasia Rates & Euthanasia Without Sedation:** Euthanasia rates had increased at the Shelter to very high levels. Live release outcomes fell below public shelter averages.

- **Public Adoptable and Non-Adoptable Animals Information Available Online:** In addition to animals classified as available for public adoption, requests for photos and information on all animals at the Shelter were consistently voiced. Availability of this information may assist in lost animals being claimed, as well as with rescue groups identifying animals that they are interested in adopting.

- **Need For Extended Days/Hours of Operation:** Comments and concerns were expressed on the Shelter's public facing hours and the need to have added hours or days of public access.

- **Temperament Assessment:** Public comments requested implementation of outside temperament testing in determining the adoptability of animals prior to staff identifying animal classification.

- **Desire for Community Engagement:** Input was provided about the desire to have a platform for community engagement in Town animal welfare operations.

OPERATIONAL ASSESSMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS

Services and Facilities

The Yucca Valley Animal Shelter provides shelter services for the Town as well as the surrounding unincorporated County areas. The County contracts with the Town to house animals brought to the shelter by County field officers, as well as for County field officers to operate from the Shelter. County personnel do not provide any Shelter services at the Yucca Valley Animal Shelter. Annual animal intake at the Shelter can vary significantly between years, ranging from approximately 1,100 to 1,400 total animals.

The Shelter has 59 dog runs, divided between what are termed the Impound and Adoptable Kennels. There are 33 dog runs in the Impound Kennel and 26 dog runs in the Adoptable Kennel. The Town has not established a "capacity population" for the Shelter. While designed to hold one dog in each run, multiple smaller dogs may be able to occupy one dog run, while a Great Dane, for example, would be housed in one run with no other dogs. As part of the outcome of this operational review, the Shelter will develop a "Shelter population" as a means of measuring daily capacity levels.

The Shelter has two cat rooms, one for adoptable cats and an isolation cat room for those that are ill. There are a total of 46 cat cages available.

A small room is available for other types of small animals brought to the Shelter such as birds, rabbits, Guinea pigs, tortoises and turtles, and other similar animals. An outdoor pig/chicken/other animal enclosure is available and used on a frequent basis. Large animals impounded by the Town are sheltered at private commercial facilities. These limited cases have involved horses, which the Town Shelter is not equipped to house. Laundry services, consisting mostly of blankets for the animals, are performed on site by Shelter staff.

The Shelter facility is approaching thirteen years of operation. The Shelter is consistently visited by thousands of visitors annually, with an average of slightly below 4,000 visitors yearly over the last five years. Daily operations have the kennels cleaned and animals fed by 10:30 a.m. daily, prior to opening for public access at noon Tuesday through Saturday. Consideration of the extension of public operating hours should occur upon completion of higher priority recommendations. **The Shelter staff does an excellent job of caring for the facility and keeping it clean for the animals and visitors alike.**

While modern, the Shelter lobby has remained relatively unchanged for the past 10 years. The lobby area should be updated to reflect a welcoming and encouraging motif and feel. This can be done independently or in conjunction with a broader Shelter branding effort that is coordinated and consistent throughout the Shelter's operations.

Current staffing and operational budget levels constrain the ability to address desired programs, such as a foster program, a volunteer program, and in expanding adoption, spay/neuter and vaccination events, and dedicated special events for increasing live release rates and decreasing animal intake demand. These programs cannot be consistently implemented and run with existing staffing levels and budget.

County support and implementation of similar efforts in the areas of spay/neuter and vaccination programs in the unincorporated County area are also essential in long-term efforts to increase live return rates and reduce euthanasia rates at the Shelter.

Shelter Data Systems

As the Review began, many of the initial public and managerial requests for information from the Shelter centered around various forms of data. The requests for data took significant staffing efforts over longer than expected times. This was attributable to the Shelter's manual data entry and management systems currently deployed. As an example, data information cards are used for each animal within the Shelter. These cards are manually updated by staff for each of the various steps of animal movement and care during the animal's stay at the Shelter.

Consolidation and centralized input of the individual animal information cards may occur during the course of the month, with final reporting sometime by the end of the succeeding month. Therefore, the data systems currently in use do not allow for instantaneous or even day-to-day clarity on Shelter capacity, animal inventory, or animal management within the Shelter.

This approach to data management complicated all aspects of the operational review and is an archaic and outdated process for managing Shelter data. Further, the manual approach to data management lends itself to lower accuracy of reported data, and the need for frequent revision of reported data.

Shelter data and statistics need to be available daily and are best addressed through software system implementation which includes both Shelter and field service data needs. Shelter data and statistics are also essential for transparency and public information on Shelter operations.

Many optional tools and programs are available to automate data management systems to lend efficiency, accuracy, and timeliness to data management. **Acquisition and implementation of modern data tools should be among the highest high priorities for the Shelter.** Until this transition is complete, manual data transcribing will continue to be used as source data for the required information needed to successfully manage Shelter operations.

Shelter Staffing Structure

Identified in the background section earlier in the Review, the Shelter staffing structure has been in place for approximately the past ten years. While able to meet the basic operational needs of the Shelter, the staffing structure does not provide sufficient bandwidth or redundancy for effective operations.

The Town's Animal Care and Control services are operated at minimal staffing levels, following Town budget reductions in fiscal year 2012-2013. Those changes resulted in the elimination of dedicated field officers while combining field functions with Shelter employees' daily operations. With the minimal staffing levels, any extended absence from the work environment by one employee results in difficulty in delivering quality day-to-day services.

This staffing structure weakness is most acute when evaluating and implementing Best Practices. With primarily limited part-time shelter technicians responsible for daily feeding and cleaning, these core functions are often left to the Animal Shelter Specialist / Animal Care and Control Officer positions during times of high volume or normal staff absences. While highly cost effective, this approach limits the use of Animal Shelter Specialist/ACO positions to implement best practice initiative or policy modifications.

Activities such as social media management, data management and analysis, volunteer program supervision, or other best practice efforts are deprioritized when the available staff needs to perform basic daily tasks including feeding and cleaning.

The Town Council recently authorized the addition of an Animal Shelter Specialist who would be assigned solely to Shelter operations and implementation of Shelter best practices as directed.

Additional changes in the Shelter staffing structure will likely need to occur as various policy changes are recommended for implementation by the Town Council. Effective volunteer programs, foster programs, social media management and other initiatives require dedicated staff. Changes in the staffing structure will lead to significant cost impacts on the Shelter budget and will require Council consideration as part of the routine review of Town-wide operation and demands.

Equally important is to ensure that both new and existing Shelter staff receive proper training and certification programs as identified in formal job descriptions. Such training can often be postponed during times of high demand. A proper level of Shelter staffing will ensure sufficient bandwidth to implement required and recommended staff training.

Best Practices Implementations

Volunteers

Volunteer programs at public animal shelters are highly common. Volunteers can fill many distinct roles at shelters, and shelters use volunteers in varied and different capacities. This report recommends the implementation of volunteer programs. It is expected that volunteer programs and functions will continue to evolve as new programs are implemented.

Foster Programs

Shelter foster programs can take several different forms, from fostering only young or sick animals, to foster programs functioning as an extension of shelter services in adopting straight to the community. Foster programs help reduce shelter populations and increase adoption successes. San Bernardino County Animal Control announced a foster program in May of 2025. This report recommends the implementation of foster programs over time.

Social Media Management

The use of social media to communicate animals available is an important part of increasing positive animal outcomes. All of the Town's standard social media platforms will be used to market shelter animals and activities, in addition to other platforms such as Pet Finder and Adopt-A-Pet, and related platforms.

Public Outreach Events

Vaccination clinics and Spay/Neuter/Chip clinics are common tools used by animal control agencies for outreach to animal owners, in an effort to reduce animal shelter intake populations and to reduce the number of unwanted animals in their communities. This report recommends the addition of these services into the annual operational budget. Other examples of events could include mobile animal adoption events, animal appearances at special events, and coordination with other Town events with active attendance.

Shelter Population Management

Shelter population management is a critical part of public shelter best practices. Spay/Neuter clinics, vaccination and microchip clinics, strategically managing owner relinquishments and after-hours drop off kennels, rescue group outreach and coordination, and Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) cat programs all impact Shelter animal population. While the Town has not historically used such programs on a regular basis, integration of these efforts are required for effective Shelter population management.

Animal Outcomes

Best management practices for shelters are designed to result in maximizing the live release rate in the combined areas of:

- Adoptions
- Return to Owner
- Transfer to Rescue
- Transfer to Shelter

The intended results of all recommended actions are to maximum the live release rate for the Shelter through all available tools and tied to those resources authorized by the Town Council for program implementation. In addition, programs designed to keep animals out of the Shelter to begin with, are also critical for positive animal outcomes.

The chart below identifies the Shelter's historical animal outcome for Dogs over the past 12 years.

YEAR	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013
TOTAL DOG INTAKE	**969**	**1009**	**950**	**775**	**705**	**906**	**925**	**896**	**1144**	**1323**	**1235**	**1669**
Adopted	18.19%	20.83%	18.00%	20.20%	21.80%	30.00%	31.70%	35.80%	30.10%	23.80%	32.00%	33.90%
RTO	15.75%	20.54%	21.40%	29.90%	30.40%	31.50%	23.60%	23.30%	22.00%	20.00%	21.00%	25.80%
Euthanasia	53.76%	46.44%	43.00%	26.20%	22.20%	22.20%	28.80%	24.10%	26.10%	33.90%	41.00%	32.40%
Dead Animals	4.98%	2.25%	5.80%	6.10%	7.20%	5.80%	7.50%	8.50%	7.20%	6.20%	5.00%	5.80%
Died in Kennel	1.73%	1.59%	0.80%	0.70%	0.40%	0.80%	0.10%	0.70%	0.80%	0.50%	1.00%	0.50%
Escaped/Stolen	0.10%	0.09%	0.00%	0.30%	0.30%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.20%	0.10%	0.00%	0.20%
O/req Euthanasia	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	3.30%	2.20%	1.80%	3.70%	4.70%	0.00%	1.40%
Quarantine	1.42%	1.41%	2.60%	2.40%	3.40%	2.40%	1.40%	0.70%	0.30%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Trans Rescue	1.02%	5.44%	5.70%	11.40%	3.70%	3.60%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Trans Shelter	3.05%	1.41%	2.60%	2.90%	10.70%	0.60%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Transferred	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	4.60%	5.20%	9.30%	10.80%	0.00%	0.00%
Total	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

Community Engagement

Departments within the Town of Yucca Valley regularly provide updates to the Town Council and the community. The Town's Animal Care and Control department provided annual updates and outcome data to the Town Council as an agendized department presentation over the past five years. Public engagement during these presentations has historically been light with few, if any, public participants providing input or comment. The Town's last update was provided in June 2024, with one public comment. Additionally, the Town received very few formal comments through the Town Clerk, Town Council or Town Management offices.

Since March of 2025, community members have been significantly vocal in concerns about the Shelter. The community members represent a cross-section of residents in and outside of Town limits. Given the regional nature of the Shelter, residents from outside of Town limits have a vested interest in the operation of the Shelter as it is the shelter of services for the unincorporated areas surrounding Yucca Valley.

With no formal method of engagement or other pathways for providing input on Shelter operations, community members have used the standard Town Council meeting as a platform to share concerns. This approach is well-suited to identify broad issues of concern, but less effective in providing collaborative dialog and problem solving.

The recommended path for effective community engagement is the establishment of a regular standing committee of the Town Council dedicated to Shelter operations. In this format, two council members would be assigned to a standing committee that would hold regular meetings to discuss Shetler operations, practices, and potential modifications. The meetings would be agendized, subject to the Brown Act, and allow for ample public engagement on various issues. It is envisioned that the meetings would be structured in a workshop setting to encourage community participation, dialog, and input from subject matter experts. Recommendations from the standing committee would be brought forward to the full Town Council for consideration as appropriate.

Standardized Assessment Factors

In reviewing Shelter operations, it became clear that there were no established performance factors that provided clear guidance in evaluating Shelter performance. The lack of performance factors leads to differing levels of assessment, with some assessing performance based only on budgetary resources, some assessing only regulatory compliance, and others assessing only animal outcomes.

This disjointed approach inevitably leads to frustration. Clearly, key Shelter performance factors were necessary to establish a consistent and comprehensive basis from which to evaluate Shelter effectiveness and performance.

The Town Council identified and reviewed the establishment of Key Performance Factors described in detail later in this Review.

Shelter Capacity & Intake Management

With over 1,000 dogs coming into the Shelter on an annual basis, it is clear that both Shelter capacity and animal intake will remain a significant issue. In looking at intake data on a per capita basis, the Shelter intake numbers far exceed those from almost all shelters in the region, regardless of type. Without a reduction in Shelter intake, long-term meaningful reductions in euthanasia will be challenging. For example, the per capital rate of intake at the Shelter in 2023 was 33 dogs per 1,000 residents. Comparing that to the intake at the Rancho Cucamonga Shelter of 9 dogs per 1,000 residents highlights the challenges facing the Shelter. Given the rural nature of the service area, community adoption absorption rates are limited and likely to reach a saturation point affecting future local adoption numbers.

Overcrowding of the Shelter leads to many known challenges including:

- Increased stress levels of impounded animals
- Higher rates of disease
- Lower quality of life for impounded animals
- Animal behavior concerns
- Shelter environmental challenges

Tracking and understanding the flow of animals into the Shelter will be critical in developing effective Shelter programs. While Town impounds are a normal activity at the Shelter, the majority of intake occurs through Owner turn-in and through use of the Shelter's after hours drop off kennels.

After Hours Drop Off Kennels

As one of the only shelters in the Inland Empire offering after hours drop off kennels, the Shelter receives approximately one-third of the annual dog intakes through this feature. Information received with the dropped-off animal is often missing or incomplete. This process complicates animal care, increases length of stay, increases associated costs, and impacts the likelihood of adoption. Further, the geographic source of the animal is unlikely to be known.

Owner Relinquishment

The Shelter accommodates owner turn-in animals on a regular basis and generally without regard to Shelter capacity. With the Shelter typically running at or exceeding designed capacity, this practice increases the difficulty in effective capacity management. Alternatives for further analysis should include a review of owner turn-in programs including scheduled turn-ins, owner assistance, and foster care.

Length of stay

A primary objective of the Shelter should include a focus on reducing the length of stay within the Shelter. The longer the animal stays in the Shelter environment, the more difficult it is to accomplish a successful and effective live release. Additionally, the animals experiencing longer stays within the Shelter are subject to greater exposure to the negative impacts associated with shelter overcrowding.

SHELTER PERFORMANCE EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

Establishing clear performance factors is recommended to provide the Town Council and public with standards that can be evaluated on an objective basis, whether for budgetary performance, regulatory compliance, staff evaluation, or alignment with desired outcomes.

It is important to recognize that there are many factors that must be considered in shelter performance, and there is a relational dimension that determines overall performance.

To put this in practical application, it would not be appropriate to evaluate shelter performance only on one to two factors. This review, and the public input the Town Council has received, has proven just that. While the Shelter may have been performing well with resource allocation and regulatory compliance, that is not sufficient. Community engagement, live release rates, animal outcomes, and modern best practices were lessor priorities.

Similarly, evaluating the shelter only on animal outcomes does not recognize the limited resources of a taxpayer funded operation. Clearly then, a combination of primary factors must be identified and established as the baseline for evaluating shelter efficiency.

The Town Council identified five key performance factors for use in Shelter performance evaluation. Each factor represents a key component in the overall success of the Shelter. The various actions that have been identified through this operational review will generally fall within one of the key performance factors. This framework will also aid the public in understanding how Shelter performance will be evaluated.

Key Performance Factors

The Town Council identified the relationship between the various performance factors with the intention to provide a relational framework that reflects the multiple dynamics influencing overall Shelter performance. The factors are not intended to be absolutely proportional as operational, physical, or financial constraints may impose a ceiling on any given factor. Rather the intent is to efficiently categorize goals and initiatives in a framework that is roughly proportional while providing flexibility to shift emphasis among the factors as needs and resources are identified.

Key Performance Factors

1. **Regulatory Compliance** – Identifies the success of the Shelter in meeting state, county, and local regulations for a publicly run shelter. Regulatory Compliance establishes the baseline requirements and standards of operation.

2. **Best Practices Alignment** – Identifies a higher-level of standards that are specific to the Shelter. These standards may be derived from additional sources outside of regulatory compliance, and will provide guidance through policy covering many varied aspects of Shelter operations.

3. **Community Engagement** – Recognizes the value of engagement with the public and industry experts in the development of Shelter practices and policies, and the routine review of Shelter outcomes. Established factor to ensure a forum for collaborative engagement between policy makers, staff, and the public in a routinely scheduled workshop format.

4. **Animal Outcomes** – Provides for an objective factor that is data driven and reflective of actual operational outcomes. Further identifies the baseline data set that can be used to evaluate the effectiveness of Shelter operations and longer-term impacts of operational changes in policies or practices.

5. **Resource Allocation** – Identifies the objective impacts of Shelter operations on public resources. Establishes metrics by which to evaluate changes in practices, policies, or standards within the overarching resources and priorities of Town operations.

This framework is the basis for organizing and presenting the various actions, steps, goals, and objectives that have been named through the Review recommendations. Each of the recommendations will fall within one of the performance factors, helping identify which overall performance factor the recommendations are intended to bolster.

As the overarching framework for Shelter performance evaluation, this framework is recommended to be one of the initial discussion items for any standing committee to allow for expanded public input.

CONCLUSION

Many of the challenges and concerns facing the Yucca Valley Animal Shelter are not unique nor dissimilar to challenges facing shelter operations throughout California. Illegal breeding, irresponsible pet ownership, economic hardship, increased pet ownership costs and similar challenges are consistently impacting public and private animal shelters across the country with public shelters facing even greater strain due to mandates and regulations unique to publicly funded shelters.

For this Review, Town management engaged in a comprehensive assessment of Animal Shelter operations to understand the policies and practices being followed in day-to-day operations. These policies and practices were then compared and contrasted to current best practices used by many public shelters today. Finally, current policies and practices were evaluated in light of stated public concerns shared with the Town.

Certain aspects of the Shelter's operation were identified as historically meeting or exceeding public shelter standards including:

- Resource Utilization
- Facility Conditions
- Budgetary Impacts upon aggregate Town Operations
- Meeting of Contractual Obligations
- Regulatory Compliance

Many other practices fell short in meeting some of the common best practices used in modern public shelter operations and were aligned with public concerns. These observations have been identified in the Assessments/Observations section of this Review and discussed at a summary level.

Addressing the identified shortcomings requires clear and actionable steps. These steps cover a broad spectrum of actions and impacts on the organization. Some have been implemented already. Some are readily implementable with minimal impact on Shelter or Town operations. Others will require increased levels of investment from the Town Council through policy direction.

Many of the recommendations will require added research and analysis as they will necessitate higher levels of financial investment than currently exists in the Shelter operation today. The Town Council will need appropriate information, alternatives, and recommendations that consider Town wide operational impacts prior to investment decisions. Involving the Town Council's standing committee in providing added input on such recommendations would allow for expanded review and community input prior to final determination on the various recommendations.

On a positive note, many of the recommendations have already or can be implemented at once with minimal investment. Some of these recommendations, when functional, will add value to the operation and can free up resources for alternate deployment.

Town management staff have identified numerous recommendations for immediate, intermediate, and long-term implementation. Categorized using the Key Performance Factors, these recommendations are presented for Council consideration. While not a panacea for every operational concern, when implemented, the recommendations will address the majority of public concerns and identified shortcomings of the Shelter operation.

Each recommendation is identified, described, and assigned a priority and ideal timeframe for implementation. Lastly, the recommendation includes a general description of the level of financial investment required.

In conclusion, Town management has identified both positive aspects of the current Shelter operation as well as shortcomings in the application of best practices. With a modest increase in financial investment, many of the shortcomings can be addressed in an accelerated timeframe. **While these immediate changes will aid the Shelter in delivering enhanced positive animal outcomes, significant challenges will remain with respect to animal intake, limited adoption absorption rates, capacity management, and euthanasia rates. Sustainable changes to those factors will require a community effort focused on responsible pet ownership, public assistance programs for spay/neuter/vet care, active rescue group participation in Shelter placements, and community education.**

REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS

Factor – Categorized within one of five Key Performance Factors

- Community Engagement
- Regulatory Compliance
- Resource Allocation
- Best Practices Alignment
- Animal Outcomes

Recommendation – Summarized course of action
Description – Practical application of the Recommendation
Priority – Assigned priority on a scale of 1 (Highest) to 3 (Lowest)
Cost – Rough magnitude of fiscal impact on a scale of $$$ (Highest) to $ (Lowest)
Timeline – Anticipated timeline or critical path needed for implementation

Community Engagement

Factor	#	Recommendation	Description	Priority	Cost	Timelin
Community Engagement	1	**Form Town Council Standing Committee**	Establish Town Council Standing Committee to implement ongoing communication opportunities with the community.	1	$	Form Committe June 202 meetin approxima quarterl
Community Engagement	2	**Review Town Volunteer Policy and Program**	Ensure Town Policy adequately addresses volunteer needs and opportunities for the Yucca Valley Animal Shelter.	1	$	June /July,
Community Engagement	3	**Establish Volunteer Positions and recruit for those Volunteer Positions**	Ensure priority volunteer positions meet the Shelter's operational needs and that the appropriate staffing and supervision structure exists for those volunteers.	1	$$	August/Se 2025
Community Engagement	4	**Establish Donor and Donor Recognition Program**	Develop outreach for financial and service donors and ensure proper recognition of all donors.	2	$	Jan 202
Community Engagement	5	**Implement Spay Neuter Vaccination Clinics**	Sponsor and coordinate spay neuter chip events throughout the year to support public education and responsible animal ownership.	2	$$$	Summer 2
Community Engagement	6	**San Bernardino County Animal Control Coordination**	Encourage San Bernardino County to hold spay neuter vaccination clinics for the unincorporated Morongo Basin Area.	2	$	June 2025 ongoin
Community Engagement	7	**Maximize customer feedback on Shelter customer service levels and performance.**	Modify customer service form to continually receive customer feedback on Shelter performance.	2	$	October 2
Community Engagement	8	**Review Animal Care and Control Fees for Services**	Consider adjusting adoption fees for seniors, veterans, and for animals that have been at the Shelter for 60 or more days.	2	$$	Summer/F 2025
Community Engagement	9	**Expand use of local media to market adoptable animals**	Radio station and newspaper advertisements encouraging adoption of Shelter animals.	1	$$$	May 2025 a ongoin

Regulatory Compliance

Factor	#	Recommendation	Description	Priority	Cost	Timelin
Regulatory Compliance	1	**Implement state mandated holding periods**	Ensure compliance with mandatory holding periods for known owned and non owned animals.	1	$	Immediate ongoing
Regulatory Compliance	2	**Make animals available for public adoption pursuant to California law.**	Ensure compliance with State laws for defining adoptable animal including Food and AG Code 17005 and Penal Code 599d.	1	$	Immediate ongoing
Regulatory Compliance	3	**Use all resources available to contact owners of shelter animals with owner identification.**	Ensure compliance with state law in all efforts to contact known animal owners.	1	$	Immediate ongoing
Regulatory Compliance	4	**Local regulation review**	Evaluate local regulations for potential modifications that will support Shelter operations and Key Performance Factors.	3	$	FY 2025-2

Resource Allocation

Factor	#	Recommendation	Description	Priority	Cost	Timelin
Resource Allocation	1	**Amend FY 2025-26 Budget to address staffing needs identified through the 90 Day Operational Review**	Make recommendations to the Town Council for necessary funds to implement programmatic changes.	1	$$$	June - Aug 2
Resource Allocation	2	**Review staffing levels 6 to 9 months following implementation.**	To consider further staffing modifications if necessary.	1	$$	Jan thru Ju 2026
Resource Allocation	3	**Amend FY 2025-26 Budget to address operational needs identified through the Review**	Volunteers Program, Foster Program, Spay Neuter Vaccination Clinics, Software Purchase, training and implementation.	1	$$$	June - Aug 2
Resource Allocation	4	**Amend FY 2025-26 Budget to address local and social media needs**	Expand use of local and social media to increase live outcome rates.	1	$$	Immediate ongoing
Resource Allocation	5	**Consider future budget amendments if necessary to implement further operational change**	Monitor data and statistics in evaluating modified program implementation and effectiveness.	3	$$	Jan thru Ju 2026
Resource Allocation	6	**Consider expanding operational hours for public access to the Shelter**	Evaluate an expansion of the operating hours for public access to the Shelter based on visitation data, resident surveys, best practices, and fiscal resource requirements.	2	$$$	FY 2026-2

Best Practices

Factor	#	Recommendation	Description	Priority	Cost	Timelin
Best Practices Alignment	1	**Review, purchase and initiate new field and shelter software**	Implement modern data systems for shelter management and public information.	1	$$	June throu Dec 202
Best Practices Alignment	2	**Ensure daily online information for all animals at the Yucca Valley Animal Shelter**	Implement modern data systems that provide information on public adoptable, lost, and non public adoptable animals that is updated daily.	1	$	Jan 202
Best Practices Alignment	3	**Establish and implement Foster Program that function as an extension of the Shelter.**	Implement foster programs that function as an extension of shelter services where animals may even be adopted directly from fosters.	1	$$	Jan 202
Best Practices Alignment	4	**Establish and implement Volunteer Program.**	Ensure priority volunteer positions meet the Shelter's operational needs and that the appropriate staffing and supervision structure exists for those volunteers.	1	$	August September
Best Practices Alignment	5	**Provide professional training opportunities for Shelter staff**	Ensure necessary certifications and professional animal shelter and control training for staff.	1	$	Ongoin
Best Practices Alignment	6	**Implement Spay Neuter Vaccination Clinics**	Sponsor and coordinate spay neuter chip events throughout the year to support public education and responsible animal ownership.	2	$$$	Ongoin

Animal Outcomes

Factor	#	Recommendation	Description	Priority	Cost	Timelin
Animal Outcomes	1	**Maximize Animal Adoption Rates**	Use all available tools including adoption fees, foster programs, community education, and special adoption events to maximize adoption rates.	1	$$	June 2025 ongoin
Animal Outcomes	2	**Minimize Animal Euthanasia Rates**	Use all available tools to transition animals from the shelter to forever homes through adoption, return to owner, transfer to rescue and other shelters, and through education and outreach to the community.	1	$$$	June 2025 ongoin
Animal Outcomes	3	**Maximize Rescue Group Outreach, Coordination and Adoption.**	Ensure ongoing outreach to add animal rescue organizations to the Town's approved list, and distribute data daily on available rescue group animals	1	$$	June 2025 ongoin
Animal Outcomes	4	**Maximize Spay Neuter Clinics for Town Residents**	Sponsor and coordinate spay neuter chip events throughout the year to support public education and responsible animal ownership	1	$$$	Summer 2
Animal Outcomes	5	**Encourage and Coordinate County Animal Control Spay Neuter Clinics in the Unincorporated County Area**	Encourage San Bernardino County to hold spay neuter vaccination clinics for the unincorporated Morongo Basin Area.	1	$	Summer 2
Animal Outcomes	6	**Maximize Return to owner efforts where possible.**	Through compliance with state law and maximizing use of shelter population data, use social media to maximize availability of lost and owned pets to be returned to their owners. Coordination with other social media resources	1	$	June throu December 2
Animal Outcomes	7	**Public Education**	Evaluate best practices for public education programs and initiatives to highlight responsible pet ownership, pitfalls of illegal breeding, importance of spay/neuter programs and similar campaigns.	1	$$	Oct - Dec 2

Town of Yucca Valley
TOWN COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

To: Honorable Mayor & Town Council
From: Debra Breidenbach, Human Resources and Risk Manager

Date: May 29, 2025
Meeting Date: June 3, 2025

Subject: Administrative Volunteer Policy Review

Recommendation:
That the Town Council approves this review and summary of the revision of the Town's Administrative Policies and Procedures, subject to final Town legal review and non-substantive edits.

Prior Review
This item was last reviewed at the Town Council meeting on May 5, 2015.

Order of Procedure
Request Staff Report
Request Public Comment
Council Discussion/Questions of Staff
Motion/Second
Discussion on Motion
Call the Question

Discussion
Administrative Policies and Procedures are important to the Town as they provide an objective set of rules by which the Town operates. Policies and procedures also help establish the legitimacy of management action by ensuring the application of these rules and decisions are done in an objective, fair and consistent manner.

Throughout the years, policies have been created and implemented as the need for them are identified. It is important to periodically review, and if necessary, update the Administrative Policies and Procedures to ensure that the information is current with federal, state, and local laws. Since the last Council review, Staff has worked on updating and creating new policies to minimize risk exposure to the Town.

The policy for review with this report is:

- Volunteer Program and Guidelines Policy

During the recent Operational Review reports to the Council regarding the Animal Shelter, the

topic of volunteering at the Shelter occurred as a common theme. The Town Council directed staff to review the Town's current volunteer policy and provide an update based on best practices.

Staff conducted a review of volunteer programs from several comparable agencies as well as non-profit organizations to evaluate how they manage their programs, specifically looking at the two main topics consistently brought up during public comment, minimum age requirements and background checks.

Based on the information gathered, the Town's current volunteer program is consistent with the practices of other agencies. The age requirements and the use of background checks align with widely accepted standards in animal shelter volunteer programs. It is important for the safety of the staff, other volunteers, and animals to ensure the Town completes its due diligence in reviewing volunteer qualifications.

Staff recommends that the Town Council approve the revised Volunteer Program policy, along with the supplemental documents to be effective for all departments on June 3, 2025. Approval of this program will allow the Town to move forward with establishing volunteer opportunities in the Town's Animal Shelter operations in the near future.

Staff will continue to monitor trends to ensure the policy remains effective in line with evolving best practices.

Alternatives
None

Fiscal Impact
None

Attachments:
Volunteer Policy rev. - 06032025
Workers Compensation Resolution No. 92-33
Animal Services Volunteer Waiver Agreement
Volunteer Waiver Agreement General 06032025
Volunteer Program Handbook revised on 06032025
2-5 Town of Yucca Valley Employee Harassment and Discrimination Policy
Town of Yucca Valley Volunteer Application - Revsion as of 06032025

TOWN OF YUCCA VALLEY
VOLUNTEER POLICY STATEMENT

Policy Number: 2 - 9

General Subject:

Date Issued: 5/05/2015

Volunteer Program and Guidelines

Revision Date: 6/03/2025

_____
Town Manager Signature

INTRODUCTION:
Volunteers are a key resource for the Town of Yucca Valley. These individuals bring a broad spectrum of skills and knowledge in a variety of areas. Volunteers expand and improve services provided to the community, enable the Town of Yucca Valley to stretch tax dollars to improve the lives of its citizens, and encourage participation in Town government. The Town of Yucca Valley understands that individuals choose to volunteer for many reasons, and the Town values the contribution, commitment, and participation of the community.

PURPOSE:
This policy establishes procedures for an effective Volunteer Program that encourages citizens to contribute their time and talents to public service while minimizing associated risks to the Town.

The Town of Yucca Valley Volunteer Program is designed to coordinate and manage all volunteer efforts which support the Town services provided to the community. The program addresses community service needs, while placing special emphasis on the Town of Yucca Valley's priorities. The Program is designed to effectively match individuals to departments that have volunteer opportunities.

SCOPE:
This policy applies to all individuals who provide volunteer services to the Town of Yucca Vally without compensation. It does not apply to employees or contractors.

VOLUNTEER DEFINITION:
A volunteer is an individual who willingly provides services without financial compensation or expectation of future employment. Volunteers supplement but do not replace the work of paid staff.

RECRUITMENT and ELIGIBILITY:
- Volunteers must be at least (18) eighteen years old.

- Volunteers must complete an application, background clearance process, and orientation before starting.
- The Town of Yucca Valley reserves the right to decline or terminate volunteer services at any time.

RIGHTS AND REPSONSIBILITES:

Volunteers have the right to:

- Be treated with respect and dignity.
- Receive training and supervision appropriate to their role.
- Work in a safe and inclusive environment.
- Be recognized for their contributions.

Volunteers agree to:

- Follow the Town of Yucca Valley policies, procedures, and ethical guidelines.
- Maintain confidentiality regarding sensitive information.
- Be reliable and notify their department supervisor of any schedule changes.
- Represent the Town of Yucca Valley in a professional and respectful manner.
- Not act as a representative of the Town.
- Hold harmless, indemnify and release the Town, its officers, employees, agents and volunteers from and against any and all claims, damages, lawsuits, costs, expenses, and other liabilities while providing voluntary services for the Town.

STAFF ASSIGNMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY:

1) **Human Resources:** Manages the Volunteer Program, providing oversight for the recruitment, selection, and screening of all volunteers. Assigns volunteers to departments based on skills, experience, and need. Ensure that the volunteer candidate goes through the required clearance process before placement is approved. Also responsible for maintaining records and working with the respective department liaison to enforce volunteer policies and procedures to ensure a successful program.
2) **Volunteer Liaison:** Designee at the department level that serves as the main contact for each volunteer.
3) **Department Heads/Supervisors:** Educates the volunteer on safe work practices, identifies requirements of each task, develops schedules, monitors use of equipment, and provides necessary training. All Department Heads are responsible for supervising volunteers, ensuring that policies and procedures are followed, and reporting all incidents which may expose the Town to liability.

SUPERVISON AND TRAINING:

- Volunteers will be assigned a liaison who will provide guidance and support.
- Orientation and ongoing training will be provided to ensure volunteers can perform their duties effectively.

CODE OF CONDUCT:

- Volunteers must adhere to the same ethical and professional standards as town staff.
- Discriminatory, harassing, or inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated.
- Any conflict of interest must be disclosed directly to the assigned supervisor.
-

SAFETY AND LIABILITY:

- Volunteers must follow all safety procedures and report any hazards or incidents to their assigned supervisors immediately.
- Volunteer injuries will be covered under the town workers compensation policy (See resolution.)
- Volunteers are responsible for their personal property.

RESOLUTION:

Workers' Compensation shall be the exclusive remedy for all volunteer injuries and illnesses. The Town of Yucca Valley has adopted Resolution 92-33 (See attachment) naming volunteers as employees for the purpose of providing workers' compensation benefits while acting in the course and scope of the authorized services of the Town under the direction and control of the Town.

PROCEDURE:

Recruitment:

Volunteers shall be recruited without regard to race, color, religion, gender, age, sex, marital status, gender identity, national origin, veteran status, disability, medical condition, pregnancy, childbirth and related medical conditions, military service, genetic information or testing, sexual orientation or any other classification protected by federal, state and local law and ordinances. Volunteers may be recruited either through an interest in specific functions or through a general interest in volunteering for a specific department, which the agency will do their best to match their experience or interests by department.

Application:

All volunteers must complete a Town volunteer application. The application shall be used to identify special skills, interests, background, and qualifications. Applications for the Fall/Winter Youth Basketball program are completed online only. All other applications are completed in person and turned into the Human Resources department for further processing. It is important for the Town to know of any medical conditions which may affect the individual's ability to perform certain tasks.

No one may volunteer until they are fully cleared through the Human Resources department, which will entail all necessary forms completed and submitted, background results received and any other designated requirements.

SCREENING:
The Town of Yucca Valley shall obtain the volunteer's authorization to conduct an appropriate screening and background check. The scope of these activities will vary depending on the volunteer position. For example, the requirement for a seasonal volunteer to coach during the Town's Basketball program may be more inclusive than a volunteer to maintain the native plant garden. Depending on the nature of the position, use of any or all the following screening techniques may be appropriate:

- Criminal background check;
- A copy of the original current state driver's license or identification card.
- If necessary, verification of education, training, certifications, and licenses.

All positions require a criminal background check. Potential volunteers have the right to refuse to have a criminal background conducted. In doing so, such individuals **will not be eligible to volunteer**. Human Resources is to provide a Fingerprint Scan Request (Live Scan) to volunteers for which fingerprinting is required. The individual will be directed to the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department in Joshua Tree, CA to have their fingerprints completed. Volunteers **may not begin** his/her position until the results from the Department of Justice and/or FBI have been received, and the Human Resources Department has given the Department Head and the volunteer candidate the clearance to begin.

Protection of Privacy:
The Town of Yucca Valley recognizes that it may collect and maintain a copy of original current state driver's license or identification card, birth date, and Social Security numbers (SSN) as part of the volunteer selection process. This information is legally protected data and is highly confidential. The Town of Yucca Valley is dedicated to ensuring the privacy and proper handling of this information in accordance with State and Federal Regulations.

Positions:
Some of the opportunities available within the Town of Yucca Valley are:

Community Services	Animal Services
Youth Basketball Coach	Administrative Assistance
Summer Camp	Adoption Services
Museum	Animal Socialization
	Community Outreach
	Event Coordination
	Laundry
	Photographer
	Social Media outreach

~~**Position Description Evaluation:**~~
~~Each department shall complete a job description for the volunteer position(s) offered within their department. The position description shall identify the duties and~~

~~responsibilities as well as the qualifications, skills, and other requirements of the position (Exhibit B~~).

~~Once a volunteer has been cleared, he/she will receive a copy of the volunteer position description. The signed original form will be forwarded to Human Resources to be kept in their volunteer file~~.

ORIENTATION AND TRAINING:
Each volunteer shall receive an orientation with the Department designee on or before the first day of service. This orientation session shall assist the volunteers in their new roles with the agency. The orientation shall include:

- Town policies, such as those addressing safety, customer service, accident reporting, non-discrimination, sexual harassment, drug and/or alcohol, code of conduct, etc.
- Information procedures and responsibilities, when, how and to whom issues should be reported.

Training shall be specific to the type of work the volunteer will be performing. The Department designee will review position risk assessment to determine the type of training needed.

SUPERVISION:
Each volunteer must have a clearly identified supervisor who is responsible for direct management of that volunteer. This supervisor shall be responsible for day-to-day management and guidance in the work of the volunteer and shall be available to the volunteer for consultation and assistance.

VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION:
The Town of Yucca Valley views volunteers as a valuable resource and an integral part of the Town of Yucca Valley's ability to provide and enhance community services. The Town of Yucca Valley appreciates volunteer contributions. Recognition of volunteers may include awards, activities or a simple "Thank You" for their efforts in helping make our community a better place to live.

VOLUNTEER LIABILITY:
The Volunteer Protection Act of 1997 provides that no volunteer of a public entity is liable for harm caused by the volunteer on behalf of the entity when certain requirements are satisfied. The Town of Yucca Valley will ensure all the requirements are satisfied to limit the volunteer's and agency's liability.

INJURY TO VOLUNTEERS:
The policy and procedures for reporting employee work related injuries shall be applied to volunteers as well. The supervisor shall follow the Town's standard workers' compensation process. The agency will attempt to immediately notify the parent or guardian of an injured minor.

The supervisor will inform Human Resources of any injury. Human Resources will conduct an initial investigation, determine cause, recommendations to prevent future occurrences, and document all findings.

SERVICE AT THE DISCRETION OF THE TOWN~~RELEASE OF VOLUNTEER:~~

A volunteer may be dismissed at any time, at the complete discretion of the Town. Volunteers who do not adhere to the rules, policies and regulations of the Town of Yucca Valley and fail to perform their assignments satisfactorily are subject to dismissal. The Town of Yucca Valley reserves the right to request that a volunteer leave immediately. No prior notification is necessary to release a volunteer of their services.

APPROVAL, REVISION & CANCELLATION:

All revision requests will be forwarded to the Town Manager~~ via your supervisor.~~

RESOLUTION NO. 92-33

RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF YUCCA VALLEY, CALIFORNIA, PROVIDING FOR WORKERS' COMPENSATION COVERAGE FOR VOLUNTEER PERSONNEL

WHEREAS, The Town of Yucca Valley desires to provide Workers' Compensation Insurance coverage for persons authorized to perform volunteer services for the Town.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Council of the Town of Yucca Valley hereby adopts the policy that an unsalaried person as designated and authorized by the Town to perform volunteer service for the Town shall be deemed to be an employee of the Town for the purpose of Workers' Compensation Insurance benefits provided for by law for any injury sustained by him or her while acting in the course and scope of the authorized services of the Town under the direction and control of the Town.

APPROVED AND ADOPTED this 2nd day of July, 1992.

TOWN OF YUCCA VALLEY

Kindred I. Pedersen

KINDRED I. PEDERSEN
Mayor

ATTEST:

Lyle W. Alberg

LYLE W. ALBERG
Town Clerk

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO

TOWN OF YUCCA VALLEY

I, Lyle W. Alberg, Town Clerk of the Town of Yucca Valley, California do hereby certify that Resolution No. 92-33 was duly and regularly adopted by the Town Council of the Town of Yucca Valley, California, at a meeting thereof held on the 2nd day of July, 1992, by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Burnside, Crouter, Reed, Richmond and Mayor Pedersen

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

Lyle W. Alberg
TOWN CLERK

Animal Services Volunteer Waiver Agreement

I, on behalf of myself, hereby acknowledge that I have voluntarily applied to participate in performing Volunteer services ("Services") for the Town of Yucca Valley. I am voluntarily participating in the Services with the knowledge that there is a risk that I may be injured while I do so, and I freely and voluntarily expressly assume all the risks of participating in the Services. This risk includes but is not limited to being bitten, scratched, jumped upon, knocked over, chased, tripped, infected with a disease, or otherwise injured or frightened.

I certify that I am physically fit and in proper physical condition to participate in the Services and have not been advised otherwise by a qualified medical person. I agree to accept and abide by the rules and regulations of the Town of Yucca Valley while participating in the Services.

I understand that the Town of Yucca Valley's policy is to cover volunteers as employees of the Town of Yucca Valley for purposes of Worker' Compensation benefits. I also understand that under Workers' Compensation laws, Workers' Compensation benefits will be my sole and exclusive remedy in the event I am injured while participating in the Services.

IN CONSIDERATION OF MY PARTICIPATION IN THE SERVICES, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF WORKERS' COMPENSATION BENEFITS, I HEREBY RELEASE AND HOLD HARMLESS ON MY BEHALF AND ON BEHALF OF MY HEIRS, GUARDIANS, LEGAL REPRESENTATIVES AND ASSIGNS, THE TOWN OF YUCCA VALLEY, ITS ELECTED OFFICIALS, OFFICERS, EMPLOYEES, CONTRACTORS, AND AGENTS FROM ANY AND ALL LIABILITY OF ANY KIND OR NATURE FOR INJURIES TO PERSONS OR PROPERTY, INCLUDING DEATH, ARISING FROM OR IN CONNECTION WITH MY PARTICIPATION IN THE SERVICES, THAT THIS WAIVER AND RELEASE IS APPLICABLE EVEN THOUGH THE ACTIVELY OR PASSIVELY NEGLIGENT ACTIVITIES OF THE TOWN OF YUCCA VALLEY MAY HAVE CAUSED OR CONTRIBUTED TO THE INJURIES SUFFERED.

I understand and agree that this liability waiver does not apply if I participate in the Town of Yucca Valley Animal Foster care program. When I perform foster care duties, I will be subject to that release and waiver of liability.

I further agree that photographs and/or video which depict my participation in the program may be used for program publicity and for other uses consistent with the law without any further written agreement or authorization.

I HAVE READ THIS RELEASE OF LIABILITY AND ASSUMPTION OF RISK AGREEMENT. I FULLY UNDERSTAND ITS TERMS. I UNDERSTAND THAT I HAVE GIVEN UP SUBSTANTIAL RIGHTS BY SIGNING IT, AND I SIGN IT FREELY AND VOLUNTARILY WITHOUT ANY INDUCEMENT

_____

Print Name of Undersigned

_____

Signature of Undersigned Date

_____

Phone number of Undersigned

Volunteer Waiver Agreement

I, on behalf of myself, hereby acknowledge that I have voluntarily applied to participate in performing Volunteer services ("Services") for the Town of Yucca Valley. I am voluntarily participating in the Services with the knowledge that there is a risk that I may be injured while I do so, and I freely and voluntarily expressly assume all the risks of participating in the Services.

I certify that I am physically fit and in proper physical condition to participate in the Services and have not been advised otherwise by a qualified medical person. I agree to accept and abide by the rules and regulations of the Town of Yucca Valley while participating in the Services.

I understand that the Town of Yucca Valley's policy is to cover volunteers as employees of the Town of Yucca Valley for purposes of Worker' Compensation benefits. I also understand that under Workers' Compensation laws, Workers' Compensation benefits will be my sole and exclusive remedy in the event I am injured while participating in the Services.

IN CONSIDERATION OF MY PARTICIPATION IN THE SERVICES, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF WORKERS' COMPENSATION BENEFITS, I HEREBY RELEASE AND HOLD HARMLESS ON MY BEHALF AND ON BEHALF OF MY HEIRS, GUARDIANS, LEGAL REPRESENTATIVES AND ASSIGNS, THE TOWN OF YUCCA VALLEY, ITS ELECTED OFFICIALS, OFFICERS, EMPLOYEES, CONTRACTORS, AND AGENTS FROM ANY AND ALL LIABILITY OF ANY KIND OR NATURE FOR INJURIES TO PERSONS OR PROPERTY, INCLUDING DEATH, ARISING FROM OR IN CONNECTION WITH MY PARTICIPATION IN THE SERVICES, THAT THIS WAIVER AND RELEASE IS APPLICABLE EVEN THOUGH THE ACTIVELY OR PASSIVELY NEGLIGENT ACTIVITIES OF THE TOWN OF YUCCA VALLEY MAY HAVE CAUSED OR CONTRIBUTED TO THE INJURIES SUFFERED.

I further agree that photographs and/or video which depict my participation in the program may be used for program publicity and for other uses consistent with the law without any further written agreement or authorization.

I HAVE READ THIS RELEASE OF LIABILITY AND ASSUMPTION OF RISK AGREEMENT. I FULLY UNDERSTAND ITS TERMS. I UNDERSTAND THAT I HAVE GIVEN UP SUBSTANTIAL RIGHTS BY SIGNING IT, AND I SIGN IT FREELY AND VOLUNTARILY WITHOUT ANY INDUCEMENT

_____

Print Name of Undersigned

_____

Signature of Undersigned Date

_____

Phone number of Undersigned

Volunteer Program Handbook

The Town of Yucca Valley

57090 Twentynine Palms Highway
Yucca Valley, CA 92284
760-369-7207

A Message Regarding the Town of Yucca Valley

When you join the volunteers at the Town of Yucca Valley you join a committed and honorable tradition of town citizens who have chosen to make a difference. All over the country, volunteers are making an impact on their local government. The Town of Yucca Valley is no different. Through outreach programs and community links, Town volunteers affect many parts of community life. By taking the time to participate on our boards and commissions programs, volunteers influence the future of Yucca Valley. In assisting staff with both daily tasks and new programs, volunteers enhance the levels and types of quality services the Town of Yucca Valley provides.

On behalf of the Town Council and the staff we thank you for your gift of time and skills. We welcome each volunteer as you choose to make a difference in Yucca Valley. It is our hope that this handbook will provide references and answer any questions you might have regarding the day-to-day aspects of volunteering for the Town.

If you have any questions, concerns, or ideas, please contact the Human Resources Department at 760-369-7207.

The Town of Yucca Valley

Our History

The Town of Yucca Valley started life as "Lone Star" in the early 1900s and served as a resting point for the horse-drawn supply trains between the town of Banning and the mining areas around Twentynine Palms. Development in the area started in 1923 with the first gas station at the "Lone Star Ranch." In the 1930s more gas stations and numerous food markets opened and by 1949, when the small town was renamed to "Yucca Valley," a thriving community had developed on the open desert.

The Town is a truly unique community that was built on a foundation of community involvement and civic pride. The citizenry is comprised of actively engaged residents that participate on a number of commissions, community-based organizations, and volunteer groups providing the essential core of commitment and civic pride.

The Town is situated adjacent to the Joshua Tree National Park and has provided a refuge for the early settlers, year-round tourists, and celebrities, all looking for privacy, solitude, and incredible natural surroundings. The Town is a rural desert community, widely known for starry nights, spectacular sunsets, wide-open spaces, and genuine hometown hospitality.

Yucca Valley possesses a rural, small-town atmosphere, which historically has been enjoyed and supported by its economically diverse citizenry.

Our Government Structure

The Town of Yucca Valley is a general law Town, incorporated in November 1991. Yucca Valley is governed by a Town Council-Town Manager form of government. The Town Council serves as the Town's legislative body and is responsible to the Town's residents for municipal programs and services under the jurisdiction of the Town. The five Town Council members serve overlapping four-year terms, with elections held every two years. Every year, the Council elects one of its members to serve as Mayor and another to serve as Mayor Pro Tem for one-year terms.

The Council establishes local policies affecting Town Residents in a number of areas, including land use, solid waste air quality, public safety, and protecting the Town's economic and quality of life levels. The Council adopts the Town's two-year budget and five-year Capital Improvement Program budgets.

Assisting the Council in an advisory capacity are various boards and commissions, including the Planning Commission and the Parks and Recreation Cultural Commission. The Council also appoints the Town Manager and Town Attorney.

While core services are provided by Town staff, the community is serviced by a variety of other local governmental agencies and outside contractors. These include: The San Bernardino County Sheriff providing law enforcement services; San Bernardino County, providing fire and library services; and The High Desert Water District providing water service. Also, the Town contracts for additional legal services as needed.

The mission of the Town of Yucca Valley is to provide a government that is responsive to the needs and concerns of the diverse citizenry and ensures a safe and secure environment while maintaining the highest quality of life.

Purpose of the Volunteer Handbook

The purpose of the volunteer handbook is to provide overall guidance and direction to staff and volunteers. As you begin volunteering for the Town, you may have many questions. This handbook is intended to help guide you and to give you the information necessary to help make your time spent volunteering a positive experience.

The policies herein are intended for internal management guidance only, ***and do not constitute, either implicitly or explicitly, a binding contractual or personnel agreement.*** Please feel free to contact the Human Resources department or your immediate department liaison at any time with any questions and comments. Your input is valuable in keeping this handbook updated, relevant, and useful for training volunteers and staff.

Function of Volunteer Services

The function of the volunteer services is to provide central coordination between staff and volunteers so that their combined efforts jointly enrich and expand opportunities for the delivery of quality service to the citizens of Yucca Valley.

Becoming a Volunteer

You may have volunteered for your services to the Town for many different reasons; you may want to meet new people or make a difference in our community.

Each volunteer must complete an application. We ask that you keep us informed about any changes to your primary address and contact number. It is also important to let us know of any medical conditions which may affect your volunteering. If you are a minor, your parents must also sign any designated forms. ***No one can volunteer until all processes and documentation are complete and on file with the Human Resources Department.***

All volunteers go through a formal screening process. The degree of screening may depend upon the type of volunteer opportunity you choose. All volunteer candidates must pass a criminal background check, and a tuberculosis screening if applicable.

You can expect general orientation and specific training by the staff members with whom you will be volunteering. We encourage you to ask questions.

Being a Volunteer

What are the rules?

The following Town of Yucca Valley policies also apply to volunteers.

- Smoking
- Workers' Compensation
- Livescan Background Screening
- Harassment

Are You Covered by Workers Compensation While Serving as a Volunteer?

As a volunteer you are covered by the Town's Workers Compensation program if you are acting within the scope and course of your assigned duties.

Your Duties as a Volunteer

You will receive training on your volunteer duties and responsibilities during orientation.

It is important for the business of the Town for our volunteers to perform their duties as agreed. If you have a planned absence, please inform the Volunteer Liaison as far in advance as possible, so that alternative arrangements may be made. If you are ill, please call the Volunteer Liaison.

TOWN DEPARTMENTS

- ***Town Manager's Office***
- ***Town Clerk***
- ***Human Resources and Risk Management***
- ***Finance***
- ***Community Development (includes Planning and Engineering)***
- ***Community Services (includes Recreation, Senior Center and Museum)***
- ***Public Works (includes Streets, Parks and Facilities Maintenance)***
- ***Animal Services***

TOWN POLICIES

Volunteer Conduct Policy

The purpose of this policy is to recognize the Town of Yucca Valley's responsibility to conduct all business affairs, including volunteer affairs, within the spirit and intent of high ethics, honesty, and integrity. It is for these reasons that all volunteers within the Town's jurisdiction will adhere to the same high code and conduct, that applies to all of our Town staff.

The Town reserves the right to excuse volunteers from their positions for any reason whatsoever.

Volunteer Responsibilities

Volunteers are expected to follow safe work practices. Questions concerning safety problems or violations should be directed immediately to the Volunteer Liaison. It is your responsibility to know and follow established safety policies and procedures for your volunteer placement. You should immediately report any accidents and injuries to the Volunteer Liaison. As well as all unsafe practices and procedures.

Volunteers are expected to follow personal hygiene and grooming habits and manner of dress that allow safe completion of the volunteer duties.

Smoking

Smoking is prohibited on Town premises, as defined by State law.

Harassment

All Town volunteers have a right to work in an environment free from all forms of discrimination and conduct which can be considered harassing, coercive, or disruptive. Consistent with the Town's respect for the rights and dignity of each volunteer, harassment based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, or any characteristic protected by law, will not be sanctioned, or tolerated.

We Appreciate You!

The Town of Yucca Valley appreciates the many hours and vital energy you give to our community.

I understand and acknowledge the information as outlined in the Volunteer Program Handbook for the Town of Yucca Valley:

_____

Signature Date

_____

Print name

TOWN OF YUCCA VALLEY
EMPLOYEE HARASSMENT AND DISCRIMINATION POLICY STATEMENT

Policy Number: 2 - 5

General Subject:

Date Issued: 7/19/2010

Employee Harassment

Revised Date: 5/30/2017

Town Manager Signature

POLICY:
The Town is committed in all areas to provide a work environment that is free from harassment, discrimination and retaliation in the workplace and to provide a procedure for investigating and resolving internal complaints regarding such conduct. This Policy applies to all Town employees while they are on any Town property or premises, and/or while performing services on behalf of or for the Town. The Town encourages all covered individuals to report any conduct they believe violates this Policy.

This Policy also applies to all non-employees, including Town elected and appointed officials, job applicants, vendors, contractors, business associates, volunteers, and members of the public, who are on any Town property or premises, and/or performing services on behalf of or for the Town pursuant to contract or other arrangements. Except where the context requires otherwise, all references to employees in this Policy shall include non-employees specified in this paragraph.

Harassment or discrimination between supervisors and employees, co-workers, and employees and non-employees on the basis of a protected classification, as defined herein, is prohibited and will not be tolerated while they or any of them are on any Town property or premises, and/or performing services on behalf of or for the Town. This Policy prohibits harassment and discrimination because: (a) of an employee's protected classification; (b) of the perception that an employee has a protected classification; or (c) the employee associates with a person who has or is perceived to have a protected classification.

Harassment or discrimination based on race, color, ancestry, national origin, religion, creed, gender, age (over 40), sex, gender (including pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding or related medical conditions), marital status, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, military and veteran status, disability, mental and physical, medical condition, genetic information, or any other classification protected by federal, state and local law and ordinances will not be tolerated. All employees, including supervisors and other management personnel, are required to abide by this policy. No person will be adversely

affected in employment with the Town as a result of bringing or participating in the investigation ofcomplaints of unlawful harassment, discrimination or retaliation.

Retaliation is prohibited against a person for filing a harassment, discrimination and/or retaliation charge or complaint; instituting or causing to be instituted any proceeding under or related to this Policy; testifying or about to testify in any such proceeding or investigation; providing information or assisting in an investigation; and/or associating with a person who is involved in reporting harassment and/or discrimination or who participated in the complaint or investigation process. No employee shall be subject to any form of retaliation for reporting any violation, or participating in any investigation under this Policy, provided that they have done so truthfully and in good faith.

The Town has a zero tolerance policy, and will take appropriate and immediate corrective action when it concludes that discrimination, harassment, and/or retaliation has occurred. Employees found to be discriminating, harassing, and/or retaliating against another employee shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and potentially including dismissal.

Definitions:

"**Protected classification**" includes race, color, ancestry, national origin, religion, creed, gender, age (over 40), sex, gender (including pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding or related medical conditions), marital status, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, military and veteran status, disability, mental and physical, medical condition, genetic information, or any other statutorily protected classifications.

"**Discrimination**" includes treating an individual differently because of the individual's protected or perceived protected classification.

"**Harassment**" includes any conduct which would be unwelcome to a reasonable person of the recipient's same protected classification and which is taken because of the recipient's actual or perceived protected classification.

Examples of harassment include, but are not limited to, the following types of behavior that is taken because of a person's actual or perceived protected classification:

1. Verbal harassment, such as speech, epithets, derogatory comments or slurs, or propositioning on the basis of a protected classification. This might include inappropriate comments on appearance, including dress or physical features, or dress consistent with gender identification, or race, sexual, or ethnicity oriented stories or jokes.

2. Physical harassment, such as assault, impeding or blocking movement, offensive touching, or physical interference with normal work or movement. This includes pinching, grabbing, patting, propositioning, leering or making explicit or implied job threats or promises in return for submission to physical acts.

3. Visual harassment, such as derogatory posters, notices, e-mails, bulletins, cartoons, pictures, or drawings; related to a protected classification.

4. Sexual harassment, such as unwanted sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or unwelcome written, verbal, physical and/or visual contact with sexual overtones, when submission to such conduct is explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment, when submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is a basis for employment decisions affecting that individual, or when such conduct has the purpose or effect of reasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

It is no defense that the recipient appears to have voluntarily consented to the conduct at issue. A recipient may not protest for many legitimate reasons, including the need to avoid being insubordinate or to avoid being ostracized.

Simply because no one has complained about a joke, gesture, picture, physical contract, or comment does not mean that the conduct is welcome. Harassment can evolve over time. The fact that no one is complaining now does not preclude someone from complaining if the conduct is repeated in the future.

Even visual, verbal and/or physical conduct between two employees who appear to welcome it can constitute harassment of a third person who observes the conduct or learns about the conduct later. Conduct can constitute harassment even it if is not explicitly or specifically directed at an individual.

Conduct can constitute harassment even if the person engaging in the conduct had no intention to harass (e.g., gifts, over attention, or endearing nicknames). Even well intentioned conduct can violate this Policy if the conduct is directed at or implicates an actual or perceived protected classification, and if a reasonable person of the recipient's same actual or perceived protected classification would find it offensive.

All Forms of Harassment: Examples of what may constitute sexual and/or discriminatory harassment include, but are not limited to the following:

Inappropriate or offensive remarks, slurs, jokes or innuendos; inappropriate comments regarding an individual's body, physical appearance, attire, marital status, pregnancy or sexual orientation; unwelcome flirting or sexual propostions; off-duty unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that affects the work environment; unwelcome hugging, kissing, or other physical contact of a sexual nature; lewd gestures, profane or vulgar language, posters, photographs, drawings, cartoons, stories, nicknames or statements that convey derogatory attitudes about a particular gender.

Similar conduct, when applied to other protected classes (race, color, religion, gender, age, sex, marital status, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, national origin, military and veteran status, disability, medical condition, pregnancy, childbirth and related

medical conditions, family medical history or genetic information or testing, or any other classification protected by federal, state and local law) may constitute harassment and violation of this policy. For example, racial jokes or degrading comments about age or ethnic background and constitute harassment under this policy.

Romantic or sexual relationships with subordinates are discouraged. There is an inherent imbalance of power and potential for exploitation in such relationships. The relationship may create an appearance of impropriety and lead to charges of favoritism by other employees.

"**Retaliation**" includes any adverse conduct taken against an applicant, employee, contractor, or volunteer because he or she has reported harassment and/or discrimination, or has participated in the complaint and/or investigation process regarding such a complaint. "**Adverse conduct**' includes but is not limited to: (a) taking sides because an individual has reported harassment and/or discrimination; (b) spreading rumors about a complainant; (c) shunning and/or avoiding an individual who reports harassment and/or discrimination; or (d) a direct or implied threat of intimidation to prevent an individual form reporting harassment or discrimination. The following individuals are protected from retaliation:

- Those who make good faith reports of harassment or discrimination;
- Those who associate with an individual who is involved in reporting harassment or discrimination or who participates in the complaint or investigation process.

Prohibited behavior by all Employees: The Town has a zero tolerance policy for any action that creates a hostile work environment, constitutes discrimination, harassment or retaliation, or advocates adverse conduct on the basis of another individual's actual or perceived membership in a protected classification, as discussed above.

- No Department Head, manager, supervisor, or any other employee in the Town shall create a hostile or offensive work environment for any other employee by engaging in any discriminatory harassment or by tolerating it on the part of any other employee based on that employee's membership in a protected class, as identified by the California Fair Employment and Housing Act ("FEHA"), Government Code sections 12900 et seq., and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

1) **DEFINITIONS:**

PROCEDURE:

Obligations of Department Heads/Managers/Supervisors

This information is reviewed with all employees of the Town at their initial hire, as well as displayed in each department throughout the Town. In addition, a Town-wide training will be conducted for staff every two years.

Employees may file complaints about sexual harassment or other illegal employment discrimination with the Department of Fair Employment and Housing or with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. The Human Resources will make available upon request their contact information.

Obligations of Employees

Any employee who believes he or she has been unlawfully harassed, discriminated against or retaliated against, should bring the matter to the attention of his or her immediate supervisor or department head and the Human Resources and Risk Manager; and provide a full and factual report of the incident. Additionally, all employees are responsible for compliance with this Policy and for each of the following:

1. Treating all employees and non-employees with respect and consideration.

2. Modeling appropriate behavior.

3. Participating in periodic training.

4. Cooperating with the Town's investigation by responding fully and truthfully to all questions posed during the investigation.

5. Maintaining the confidentiality of any investigation that the Town conducts by not disclosing the substance of any investigatory interview, except as directed by the Town Manager, department director or the Human Resources and Risk Manager.

6. Reporting any act he or she believes in good faith constitutes harassment, discrimination and/or retaliation as provided for in this Policy.

Directors, managers, supervisors and other Town management personnel are responsible for compliance with this Policy and each of the following:

1. Informing employees and non-employees of this Policy.

2. Modeling appropriate behavior.

3. Taking reasonable steps to prevent harassment, discrimination and retaliation from occurring.

4. Receiving complaints in a fair and serious manner, and documenting steps taken to resolve complaints.

5. Monitoring the work environment and taking immediate protective action to stop potential violations, such as removing inappropriate pictures or correcting inappropriate language.

6. Following up with employees who have complainted to ensure that the behavior has stopped and that there are no reprisals.

7. Informing employees who complain of harassment and/or discrimination of their option to contact the EEOC or DFEH regarding alleged violations.

8. Assisting, advising or consulting with Human Resources or employees of other Town department(s) regarding this Policy.

9. Assisting in the investigation of complaints involving employee(s), and, if the complaint is substantiated, recommending appropriate corrective or disciplinary action in accordance with the Town's employment policies, up to and including dismissal.

10. Implementing appropriate disciplinary and remedial actions.

11. Reporting potential violations of this Policy of which he or she becomes aware, regardless of whether a complaint has been submitted to any Town department or management personnel.

12. Participating in periodic training and scheduling employees for training.

Supervisory personnel who are aware of ongoing harassment, discrimination and/or retaliation, as defined in this Policy, but do not take responsible appropriate steps, as set forth above, shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

Investigative/Corrective Action

Complaint Procedure: If an employee or job applicant believes he or she has been unlawfully harassed and/or discriminated against based on his or her protected classification, or retaliated against, he/she should make a complaint, either orally or in writing, to his/her supervisor or manager and to the Human Resources and Risk Manager. If the employee is uncomfortable reporting to the his/her direct supervisor or if the is individual who has allegedly done the harassing, the employee should report the incident to the Human Resources and Risk Manager or Town Manager.

Any supervisor, manager or director who receives a harassment, discrimination and/or retaliation complaint shall immediately notify the Human Resources and Risk Manager. A complaint accusing the Human Resources and Risk Manager of harassment, discrimination and/or retaliation shall be reported to the Town Manager.

Employees, contractors or applicants for employment may file complaints of harassment, discrimination or retaliation with the California Department of Fair Employment and Housing (DFEH) or the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). These administrative agencies offer legal remedies and a complaint process. The nearest offices are listed in the government section of the telephone book or employees can check the posters that are located on the Town's bulletin boards for office locations and phone numbers.

EEOC CONTACT INFORMATION
The EEOC's National Contact Center (NCC) customer service representatives are available to assist you in more than 100 languages between 8:00a.m. and 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time. An automated system with answers to frequently asked questions is available on a 24-hour basis. You can reach the NCC:

By mail:
U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
P.O. Box 7033
Lawrence, Kansas 66044

By phone: 1-800-669-4000

By Email: info@ask.eeoc.gov

EEOC Headquarters is located at:
U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
1801 L Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20507
Phone: (202) 663-4900
TTY: (202) 663-4494

DFEH CONTACT INFORMATION
Employment/Public Accommodations: 1-800-884-1684
Housing: 1-800-884-1684
Hate Violence: 1-800-884-1684

Investigation
The Town Manager or Human Resources and Risk Manager shall authorize or conduct the investigation of any incident of alleged harassment, discrimination or retaliation reported. If a complaint of harassment, discrimination or retaliation is against the Human Resources and Risk Manager, the Town Manager or designee shall be responsible for investigating such complaint, and if it is against the Town Manager, the Town Attorney or designee shall be responsible for investigating the complaint. The investigation shall be conducted in a way which ensures, to the extent feasible, the privacy of the parties involved. Complaints of harassment, discrimination and retaliation will be promptly investigated and employees found in violation of this Policy, may be disciplined, up to and including termination.

The Town takes a proactive approach to potential violations of this Policy and will conduct an investigation if its officers, supervisors, or managers become aware that harassment, discrimination or retaliation may be occurring, regardless of whether a recipient of the conduct (victim) or third party reports a potential violation.

In each case, provide the employee who is the victim of harassment, discrimination and/or retaliation an oral or written reply on the results of the investigation and the action taken, if any. However, specifics as to the disciplinary action taken, if any, shall not be disclosed to the employee. If the Human Resources and Risk Manager is the person being investigated, the reply to the employee shall be provided by the Town Manager.

The Town shall take reasonable steps to protect the victim(s) from further harassment or discrimination and from retaliation. Nothing herein, however, obligates the Town to release information about any disciplinary actions.

Under no circumstances shall a supervisor, manager or other authority figure retaliate in any way against an employee who has made a complaint or who has provided information as a witness to an incident of alleged harassment.

The Town will seek to protect the identities of the alleged victim and harasser, except as reasonably necessary (for example, to complete an investigation successfully). The Town will also take the necessary steps to protect from retaliation those employees who in good faith report incidents of potential sexual harassment. While all complaints will be kept confidential to the greatest extent possible, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.

While the Town vigorously defends an employee's right to work in an environment free of harassment and discrimination based on his or her protected classification, and also free of retaliation, the Town also recognizes that false accusations can have serious consequences. Accordingly, any employee who is found, through the Town's investigation, to have knowingly and falsely accused another person of harassment, discrimination and/or retaliation will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

Investigation

APPROVAL, REVISION & CANCELLATION:
All revision requests will be forwarded to the Town Manager via your supervisor.

Yucca Valley

VOLUNTEER APPLICATION

Thank you for offering to share your time and talents through the Town of Yucca Valley Volunteer Program. Your interest in the Town of Yucca Valley is vital to our community. To start the process of finding an assignment that fits your needs and ours, we ask that you complete this application. Please answer all questions completely to the best of your knowledge. Please print or type in blue or black ink. Feel free to attach a resume if you believe it will help support your request to work in a specific area. Please be sure to provide complete information in all areas.

Name: _____ Today's Date: _____
Last Middle First

Address: _____ City:_____ Zip Code:_____

Home Telephone #: _____ Cell #: _____

E-mail: _____ Best way to be reached:_____

Do you have any medical or physical conditions that would require special accommodation?

☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, please specify:

_____

_____

Are you at least 18 years of age: Yes ☐ No ☐

VOLUNTEER INTERESTS

Museum ☐ **Office Staff** ☐ **Animal Shelter** ☐ **Special Event** ☐ _____

Recreation Program ☐_____ ☐ **Other** _____

Please indicate day(s) and time(s) you are available to volunteer:

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Morning							
Afternoon							
Evening							

Anticipated Time Commitment: *(check one category)* 3 months 6 months 1 year

KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

What experience/knowledge do you have in the area you are requesting to volunteer?

_____

_____

_____

Volunteer Experience: _____

_____

_____

Special training (CPR/First Aid, computer programs, etc._____

_____

Other beneficial information in determining where your skillset can benefit the Town:

_____

_____

REFERENCES

Please list two people (not related to you) whom we could call for a reference.

Name: _____ Telephone: _____*home*
_____*work*

Relationship to applicant: _____ Years Known: _____

Name: _____ Telephone: _____*home*
_____*work*

Relationship to applicant: _____ Years Known: _____

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

In case of emergency please list two people to notify

Name: _____Relationship: _____

Address: _____ City: _____

State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Telephone: *(home)* _____ Telephone: *(work)* _____

Name: _____Relationship: _____

PLEASE REVIEW AND ACKNOWLEDGE

_____ I understand all volunteers are subject to a screening process that may include, but is not limited to a fingerprinting background check, tuberculosis test, interview, and contacting references. I understand I have the right to refuse any of these screening processes, but in doing so may become ineligible for volunteer opportunities.

_____ I understand that as a volunteer, I will not be paid for my services.

_____ I understand that my selection as a volunteer is dependent on my review of the job description, if applicable and the ability to perform the essential functions, duties, and responsibilities of the position.

_____ I understand that I may not begin an assignment until I have completed orientation and all requested documentation has been submitted.

_____ I understand that I am voluntarily participating in the services that are assigned, and that the Town's policy is to cover volunteers of the Town of Yucca Valley for purposes of Workers' Compensation benefits only. I also understand that under Workers' Compensation laws, benefits will be my sole and exclusive remedy if I am injured while participating in volunteer services for the Town.

_____ I understand that if using my personal vehicle, the Town is not liable for any damage unless caused by the Town's sole negligence. In the event of an accident, it is my responsibility to immediately notify my volunteer supervisor.

_____ I understand that as a volunteer, I may be dismissed at any time at the discretion of the Town, with or without notice or cause.

I certify that all statements made in this application are true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand that any false statements of material fact will subject me to disqualification or dismissal from any volunteer program.

_____ _____

Volunteer Applicant Signature **Date**