

Adopter Support Volunteer Manual

**Michigan Humane Society**

**Overview of Adopter Support Program:**

Launched in November 2006, the MHS Adopter Support Program is designed to proactively contact MHS’ 7,000 annual adopters periodically with the goals of:

* Connecting them with MHS assistance with any problems they may be having with their adopted animal
* Gaining information about adopters’ impressions of the adoption and post-adoption experience
* Providing adopters with a virtual club through which they can access information about animals and interact with other adopters
* Folding adopters into the larger family of MHS supporters by making them aware of the broad range of MHS services, special events, volunteer and donor opportunities

The Adopter Support program involves:

* Collection of adopters’ email addresses at all three MHS Adoption Centers at the time of adoption;
* Emailing a survey to adopters one week, one month, and one year post-adoption;
* Offering a toll-free Adopter Support phone line that automatically redirects callers to:
	+ the MHS Veterinary Centers (for health questions),
	+ the MHS Behavior Helpline (for behavior questions), or
	+ the MHS Adoption Centers for other questions;
* Offering an Adopter Support email address for handling questions/concerns electronically; and
* Establishing an Adopter’s Club page on the MHS website with the information adopters need for their new animals along with links to other MHS services and opportunities.

The information that we gain from the surveys are reported back to the organization at large in order to help guide improvements to our adoption processes, customer service, and targeted Animal Welfare initiatives.

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**Role of Volunteers:**

Although the Adopter Support program is primarily web-based, we recognize that 10-15% of adopters in the Detroit area do not have email and/or internet access. This is especially true of adopters of retirement age and those at lower income levels. Additionally, up to 10% of the email addresses we collect are invalid. Therefore, the volunteer component of the program is designed to reach out to 25% of our adopters by telephone. Your role is therefore crucial in connecting a significant number of MHS adopters with the help they may need in order to achieve adoption success.

**Volunteer Duties:**

Time Commitment

Volunteers working in this program are asked to work approximately 6-8 hours a month for one-two hours at a time, once a week.

Location

Adopter Support volunteers may work at one of two locations: the Westland animal care center or the Bingham Farms administrative office. A computer and telephone are provided in the work station. Please wear your MHS volunteer identification badge.

Scheduling & Recording Volunteer Time

Please sign up for your shift online. For other locations, please let the facility management know about your schedule. Record your volunteer hours in Volgistics online.

If You Have to Cancel or Change your Scheduled Shift

Call or email Don at least 24 hours in advance, if at all possible.

When You Arrive

At the start of your volunteer shift, make sure you have a pen, the set of highlighters (labeled), and a place to record notes. You will also need a set of pre-stuffed stamped envelopes with the coupon reward for the appropriate survey.

**Follow these steps to access the online Adopter Support surveys:**

1. Turn on the computer. (Power button is on the tower under the desk)
2. Log in as “**xyz”**; password is “**xyz”**
3. Touch on the Internet Explorer icon on the desktop.
4. You should now see the SurveyMonkey website homepage. If not, then type [www.surveymonkey.com](http://www.surveymonkey.com) into the web address bar.
5. Under Member Login at the top left, type in “ralphie@michiganhumane.org” in the Username box, and “MHS” in the Password box. Touch “Enter.”
6. You should now see MHS’ surveys.
7. When you are ready to survey an adopter over the phone, select the appropriate survey from the following list under the **Survey Title column** and touch the **Collect** icon:
	1. 2011 One Week Survey
	2. 2011 One Month Survey
	3. 2011 One Year Survey
8. *Please do not touch on the design, analyze, or other icons, in order to protect the integrity of the surveys.*
9. Touch **Volunteer Collector** in the Collector Name column.
10. Touch the **Manual Data Entry** button.
11. Touch **Add New Response.**
12. You should now see the first question on your screen.

Phone Contacts

Weekly lists of adopters from each adoption center will be either emailed to you and/or maintained in the Bingham Farms 2012 notebook. You will be assigned to call adopters from a particular facility. Calls should be made to adopters without email addresses and for whom the email address is crossed through*.* Most of the calls will reach answering machines or voicemail systems. Leave a message like this:

* **Hello, this is *(your name)*. I’m a volunteer with Michigan Humane Society and I’m calling to thank you for adopting an animal recently. I also wanted you to know about our Adopter Support program in case you have any questions or concerns about your new animal.**
* **You can call Adopter Support toll-free during normal business hours, six days a week, at 1-877-387-7386 or email us at AdopterSupport@michiganhumane.org**
* **We want to make sure your health, behavior, or other questions are answered promptly and professionally.**
* **Again, that number is 1-877-387-7386**
* **Thank you for giving an animal a second chance!**

Indicate that a call was successfully made by highlighting the row in pink after you leave a message on an answering machine or voice mail system. One week callers mark at the left side of the space where the email address goes; one month callers mark the right side of the same space, and one year callers in the 2011 notebook.

***Please note that adopter information is private and must not be shared outside the organization.***



Surveying Adopters

You will reach a few of our adopters in person when you call. **Introduce yourself as a volunteer with Michigan Humane Society, and ask them how their adopted pet is doing.** If they are having health or behavior problems, ask if they would like a call back to help them with those. Take down their information on the form provided. If you are working from one of the adoption centers, be sure to email this information to Don at the end of your shift, so we can respond to adopter’s problems promptly.

**Ask if they have an email address to take a short online survey about their adopted pet.** Write the email address in the space on your sheet. **Ask if they would have the time to take the survey over the phone.** It takes about 10-15 minutes to take a phone survey. Tell them they will receive a $10 off coupon for any MHS Vet (1 week survey), a $25 microchipping coupon, plus pet disaster preparedness information (1 month survey), or a 20% off coupon towards another adoption (1 year survey) as a thank you for taking the survey.

* **If they DON’T have time to take the survey:** give them the Adopter Support toll-free phone number (1-877-387-7386) and encourage them to call anytime in the future if they have questions or concerns about their new animal.
* **If they DO have time to take the survey:**
	+ Ask the person the questions as written. Enter their responses until the end of the survey. Ask if they would like a coupon. If so, write “Mailed” in the spot for email address and handwrite their name and mailing address on a pre-stuffed envelope. Touch “Done” to submit the survey. Mail the envelopes when you are done with your shift.
	+ ***Hints:***
		- *Only survey adults. Do not survey children, or a household member that did not take part in the adoption.*
		- *If an adopter does not know an answer or wants to skip a question, you can usually just skip the question. A very few questions cannot be skipped. These have asterisks.*
		- *If the adopter wants to stop part-way through, thank them and remind them of the Adopter Support toll-free phone line. Skip to the end of the survey if you can, or simply close the survey.*

Recording Adopter Surveys

* Mark the left of the email space in orange if you take an Adopter Support 1-Week survey over the phone.
* Mark the right of the email space in blue if you take an Adopter Support 1-Month survey over the phone.
* Mark the email space in green if you take an Adopter Support 1-Year survey over the phone.

Handling Adopter’s Questions

***Do not give health or behavior advice over the phone.***These calls will be returned within 72 hours by specially-trained staff or volunteers.

**If the person has a BEHAVIOR question or problem with their new animal:**

* Record their name, phone number and the general category of the behavior question on the form provided in the notebook. Also record the best time to reach the adopter over the next couple of days.

**If the person has a HEALTH question or problem with their new animal:**

* Record their name, phone number and the general category of the health question on the form provided in the notebook. Also record the best time to reach the adopter over the next couple of days.

**If the person has ANY OTHER question, problem, complaint or compliment:**

* Ask if they would like to have a call back. If so, record their name, phone number and the question on the form provided in the notebook. Also record the best time to reach the adopter over the next couple of days.
* These calls will be returned within 72 hours by an MHS staff member.

***Thank you for helping our adopters succeed by volunteering for the Adopter Support program!***

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