

Volunteer Orientation Handbook



Mission Statement

The Humane Society of Southern Arizona, Inc., is a non-profit organization dedicated to the general welfare, sheltering and placement of animals; prevention of cruelty to animals and overpopulation; education concerning humane treatment of animals; and involvement in other animals welfare issues.

Thank You!

The Humane Society of Southern Arizona has a small but dedicated paid staff that oversee the day-to-day operations, business, and maintenance of our facilities.

We rely heavily on the generosity of our volunteers, who give us their time and skills to help us provide the best possible care for the animals that are entrusted to us.

Your service is invaluable and greatly appreciated!



hu•mane (hju:méin) adj. *Having the feelings and dispositions proper to human beings; having tenderness, compassion, and a disposition to treat others with kindness; particularly in relieving them when in distress or in captivity, when they are helpless or defenseless; kind; benevolent; sympathetic; merciful.*

A Few Facts About H.S.S.A

- ◆ HSSA is a charitable, non-profit organization, incorporated under the laws of the State of Arizona in 1944. It is not a federal, state, county or city government department, nor is it a branch of any other charitable organization.
- ◆ The governing body of HSSA is our Board of Directors. HSSA is headed by the Executive Director, who is assisted by approximately 75 employees and 500 volunteers.
- ◆ The Humane Society of Southern Arizona is an “open door” shelter committed to taking in all sick, injured, abused, stray and unwanted animals.
- ◆ Approximately 19,000 animals are taken in each year at HSSA. About 62% of the animals received are surrendered by their owners; the remaining 38% are strays brought to the shelter by members of the public. Approximately 7,000 of these animals are eventually adopted into new homes. Only about 9% of the total strays received at the shelter are reclaimed by their owners.
- ◆ HSSA can house up to approximately 150 dogs and 160 cats at any given time. HSSA also provides care for other animals such as rabbits, mice, hamsters, guinea pigs, domestic birds, reptiles and assorted fowl.
- ◆ The HSSA Spay and Neuter Clinic performs over 16,000 sterilization surgeries each year to help stem the flow of unwanted animals in our community.

Some Important Statistics

- ◆ A dog can have as many as two litters each year, with an average of six to nine puppies each litter. Cats can breed three times a year, with an average of four to six kittens per litter.
- ◆ According to Humane Society of the United States, one female dog and her offspring can produce 67,000 dogs in six years. In seven years, one cat and her offspring can produce 420,000 cats.

The HSUS estimates 8-12 million animals enter shelters every year. Only 25 to 35 percent of these are adopted to new homes. Only one out of every nine dogs born in the U.S. will have a permanent home. Only one out of every 15 cats will have this opportunity.

The Humane Society of Southern Arizona (originally The Humane Society of Tucson) was incorporated in August of 1944 by a group of concerned individuals led by the organization's first president, Mrs. Guerin Wilson. From 1944 to 1949, HSSA shared quarters with the Pima County Animal Control facility at 802 West Speedway. In time, however, the basic philosophical differences between a law enforcement agency and an animal welfare group prompted the Humane Society administration to begin looking for a new home.

The purchase of the current HSSA land was secured through an ironic twist of fate. In 1949, a society supporter declared that if his horse won at the Rillito Race Track, he would donate the entire purse so that land could be purchased for a permanent facility. When the horse won, the society obtained the land at 3450 North Kelvin Boulevard. In these first years a mobile home served as both the office and caretaker living quarters. Kennels and cages were crude affairs, constructed largely of chicken wire and wood. Over the next eleven years, HSSA's facility slowly grew and improved. A small building and fourteen permanent dog kennels with outside runs were the first permanent structures. In 1961, eighteen additional kennels, three cat rooms, and a new lobby were added to help process the nearly 10,000 animals which were being brought to HSSA annually. The number of dog kennels doubled in 1972, and further expansion in 1989-1990 included comfortable receiving and adoption areas. This latest improvement resulted in a noticeable increase in the number of animals adopted.

Because spaying and neutering is the only certain cure for the pet overpopulation problem, the HSSA Spay/Neuter Clinic was formed in 1974. The clinic was housed in a mobile home which allowed for the sterilization of approximately 3,200 animals each year. When the clinic offered low-cost spaying and neutering to the Tucson community, the response was overwhelming. In attempt to relieve this burden, two satellite clinics were opened. A year later, HSSA began mandatory sterilization of all dogs and cats adopted through the shelter.

The satellite clinics were closed in 1995 because income for those clinics did not adequately offset their operating costs. The HSSA on-site Spay/Neuter clinic was then faced with trying to keep up with the needs of the entire Tucson community. In that same year, however, HSSA was presented with an offer it found difficult to refuse. The generous cooperation of HSSA's retiring neighbor to the south enabled the purchase of that parcel of land and existing buildings. This property is now the site of an expanded and modernized spay/neuter clinic which has increased the low-cost surgery capacity of HSSA without the overwhelming expense of satellite clinics.

ADOPTIONS

Much of our emphasis as an animal shelter is placed on adoptions. We strive to find permanent, loving homes for shelter animals available for adoption. HSSA does not “sell” animals; nor is the adoption donation the price of the animal. Our shelter animals are released to the lifelong care of responsible, loving homes after an application and screening process. Adoption fees help cover the cost of housing and care for the many animals in our shelter. They defray only a part of the actual cost of services provided for each animal adopted from us. Adoptions are made to approved homes only; a profile or “application” process is required.

Adoption fees vary according to the type of animal. Please check the General Information and Fees list for current adoption fees.

Each dog or cat adoption includes sterilization, initial upper-respiratory/distemper vaccination for cats, and parvovirus and INB (kennel cough) vaccinations for dogs. It also includes rabies vaccination for animals over 3 months, cardboard carriers for cats, and leash, collar and ID tag for dogs. Dogs over 3 months old will also receive their county license. Adoption includes a free health exam at a participating local veterinarian of the adopter’s choice. Appointments must be made within two working days of the adoption; **we cannot refer clients to specific veterinarians.**

In accordance with Pima County laws, ALL adopted animals are spayed and neutered prior to release. There are very few (illness-related) exceptions to this rule! Animals not already spayed or neutered will stay overnight and be released the next day following surgery. We spay and neuter as young as 8 weeks old. (Please read the section on Prepubescent Surgery to acquaint yourself with how and why we perform sterilization on animals this young.)

Other Adoptable Animals

Rabbits, Potbellied Pigs, Ferrets, Guinea Pigs, Fowl, and other small animals are occasionally available. Adoption fees on these animals vary.

◆ “Friends for Life” Program

Included with each dog adoption is an invitation to attend the two-hour “Friends for Life” introductory dog behavior and training class, developed specifically for families and individuals who just adopted a dog from HSSA. The main purpose of the class is to make it

easier for the new addition to the family to have the best chance possible to adjust to its new surroundings. The class covers leadership; dog language and reward systems; feeding and exercising; preventing unwanted behavior; protecting the pet from disease, household hazards and native desert creatures; grooming and obedience training. A discounted 8-week dog training course is also offered to new adopters.

RECEIVING LOST AND UNWANTED ANIMALS

We offer the community temporary shelter for animals they may find roaming and in danger (strays), and those companion animals for which they can no longer provide housing and care (owner released). As required by city law, we hold strays for a minimum of three days (7 days if current license is present) to allow their owners time to look for them. We make every effort to contact the owners of animals with any form of identification (license, personal ID, microchip, tattoo, etc.)

LOST AND FOUND

The Humane Society of Southern Arizona does everything possible to return lost pets to their rightful owners. We operate a telephone service to receive descriptions of lost and found animals which are entered in our computer database. We attempt to match lost and found pets via these computer records and newspaper lost/found listings. Persons reporting a lost animal must be encouraged not to rely solely on our lost and found efforts alone, as our workload and differences in the description of animals makes a positive identification difficult. We advise owners of lost pets to visit Pima Animal Control, place a “lost pet” ad in the local papers, check the Internet at *www.found-pets.org and petfinders.com* (these websites have photos and basic descriptions of animals that come to both HSSA and Pima Animal Control as strays) and visit the shelters in person, as frequently as possible, to help them find their missing pets.

SPAY/NEUTER CLINIC

The Humane Society of Southern Arizona offers owners a low-cost Spay and Neuter Clinic, which is open to the public Tuesday through Sunday by appointment only. Appointments may be made by calling 881-0321 daily between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 PM.

Sterilization fees vary according to the type and size of animal. Extra charges may apply for female animals in heat or pregnant, for males who do not have two normally descended testicles, or for other unusual circumstances. Please check the General Information and Fees list for current spay and neuter fees.

Vaccinations, County Dog Licenses, Feline Leukemia/Feline Immunodeficiency Virus Testing and Microchip ID are all available at the time of spay/neuter surgery.

LOW INCOME SPAY/NEUTER ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

◆ **PAL-SAL (“Prevent a Litter, Save a Life”):**

HSSA offers PAL-SAL spay/neuter certificates for low-income pet owners. PAL-SAL certificates are issued to owners who meet certain financial qualifications for a nominal, nonrefundable administration fee. The spay or neuter surgery and all vaccinations except the rabies vaccination and Feline leukemia vaccination are included. (These vaccinations may be obtained at the time of surgery for an additional charge.)

◆ **“Crafty Cats” Spay/Neuter Assistance Program:**

Conducted by a group of Humane Society volunteers, the Crafty Cats provide low-cost or free sterilization for pet owners who do not fall into any other existing low-income program. Surgeries subsidized by the Crafty Cats may only be obtained with the prior approval of the designated representative, and are only available at the HSSA clinic. This program does not cover the cost of vaccinations or licensing. However, vaccinations are offered at a discounted rate. You may call Crafty Cats at 321-3704 ext 129 for details.

VACCINATION CLINICS

In addition to vaccinating animals at the time of spay/neuter surgery, HSSA holds a public vaccination clinic for dogs and cats every Saturday. We do not offer vaccinations to the public at any other time. The vaccination clinics are held from 7:00 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. only, weather permitting. Those interested in having their pets vaccinated at our public clinic should be encouraged to come as early as possible, as the lines can be quite long, and the cutoff time of 8:30 a.m. is strictly enforced. Dogs must be kept under control (on a leash, crated or carried) at all times. Cats must be in a carrier. Please note that as a volunteer you may be able to bring your own animals in for vaccinations outside the Saturday vaccination hours; furthermore, discounted rates are available for volunteers who contribute a minimum of 100 hours per year. Please call the volunteer coordinator for more information or to make an appointment.

◆ **Vaccinations offered at our clinics are as follows:**

Dogs:

Rabies Intranasal Bordetella (Kennel Cough)

Coronavirus

DHLPP (Distemper/Parvo/Hepatitis/Leptospirosis/Upper Respiratory combo)

Cats: Rabies Feline Leukemia and FVRCP (Distemper/Upper Respiratory combo)

◆ **Microchip Identification**

This permanent microchip containing scannable identification is injected under the skin over the shoulder blades of dogs or cats. (See fee chart for current fees.)

◆ **Dog Licenses**

Pima County dog licenses are available at the Humane Society with the proof of a current rabies vaccination. They may also be obtained at our spay and neuter or vaccination clinics. There is no license required for cats at this time. Licenses may also be obtained directly from Pima Animal Control Center.

FOSTER CARE PROGRAM

The Humane Society of Southern Arizona's **Foster Care Program** allows animals that are too young for adoptions, are recovering from surgery or illness, or are in need of other special care, to stay in private homes until they are able to be placed into Adoptions. Volunteer foster homes provide a safe place for the animals to stay, nutritious food, socialization and health care to their animal guests. This important volunteer program enables us to save the lives of animals that might otherwise have to be euthanized. Along those same lines, HSSA also has an "emergency" short-term foster care program. This program was designed to help people in crisis situations (i.e., someone entering a shelter for battered women, a hospital, or other emergency housing) to keep their pets rather than surrender them. Emergency foster care is only available upon request/referral from a recognized public service organization.

PET VISITATION PROGRAM (PET VIP)

The Pet VIP Program is designed to assist people in a variety of settings through pet interaction. The psychological and physiological benefits of human/animal interactions are well documented: decreased blood pressure, decreased cholesterol levels, lowered anxiety, increased socialization and communication, boosted immune system, decreased aggression. Our visitation program assists patient-clients in a non-verbal, non-threatening manner that is conducive to health.

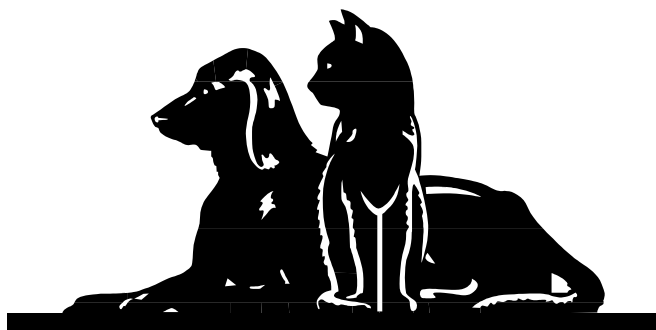
The Pet VIP program has a long history of bringing joy and healing to many people, and the benefits are far-reaching. We visit more than 50 locations, including hospitals (our pet partners visit all types of health care facilities — from pediatric, cancer and burn units to Alzheimer's units), nursing homes,

correctional facilities, long-term care facilities, homeless shelters, assisted living communities, hospice facilities and adult day care centers.

EDUCATION

Education is the key to ending animal cruelty, irresponsible ownership, and pet overpopulation. Our **Education Department** is available for speaking engagements to schools and civic organizations on numerous topics relating to animals and services offered by the Humane Society. HSSA also invites educators to seek our assistance in incorporating humane education into existing classroom curriculum.

HSSA's Education Department offers a variety of specialized programs to enable our community to become better aware of the unique relationship between humans and animals. The **Our Village** program assists teachers in integrating humane themes into their classroom activities. **Cruelty in Common** promotes awareness of violence towards animals and children through public outreach and resource materials for teachers, counselors, law enforcement personnel, and animal and child protection advocates. The **Hand-in-Paw Kids' Club** allows children under 18 to become active in special events and hands-on activities promoting kindness to animals, and the **Humane Education Research Library** offers a large collection of animal-related resources for students or prospective pet owners to use on-site. For more information on any of these programs, contact the HSSA Education Department.



COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROGRAMS

◆ **Volunteers**

Volunteers are a vital part of The Humane Society of Southern Arizona. Each year they donate thousands of hours of service in virtually every department of the shelter, which allows us to accomplish so much more to help the animals. In-shelter tasks range from comforting and caring for the animals as dog handlers and cat care volunteers to assisting potential adopters in customer service roles. For those who think working directly with the animals may be too emotionally demanding, we have several departments where volunteers may work away from the shelter (or even at home) by helping with Off-Site Adoptions, special events, bulk mailings, and post-adoption follow-up calls. **We simply would not be able to offer the services we provide to the public or the animals without the assistance of volunteers!**

◆ **Offsite Adoptions**

Off-site Adoptions is a program in which shelter animals are taken to various locations, such as PetsMart, to meet prospective adopters who may not wish to visit the shelter. This is also a great way to educate the public about the services offered by The Humane Society of Southern Arizona.

◆ **Membership**

Memberships are vital to HSSA, as the income derived from them helps us with day-to-day operating expenses. Our Membership Department conducts an ongoing direct-mail campaign to solicit new members and continue to serve existing members. Each membership in HSSA includes quarterly newsletters and mailings. Gift memberships are also available.

◆ **Pet Loss Support Group (Grief Counseling)**

This program helps owners cope with the death of a pet. Because the loss of a pet can be extremely difficult to work through, the Humane Society has formed a free Pet Loss Support group for the community. Participants are welcome to attend as many sessions as needed. For more information, call the HSSA main phone line.

Your Questions Answered

What is a “no-kill” shelter?

In order to operate a “no-kill” facility, an organization must limit the number of animals it receives to those it has room to house at any given time. In a world where there are many more animals in need of homes than there are homes available, a “no-kill” shelter can only maintain that status by turning some animals away. Those denied admission must be taken elsewhere, either to be adopted or euthanized. While “no-kill” shelters can help some of the animals in a community, they cannot meet the needs of the majority of stray or at-risk animals who are served by “open-door” shelters like HSSA.

How long do animals stay up for adoption at HSSA?

Our shelter has no set time limit for animals held in adoptions. HSSA is a private organization dedicated to animal welfare, therefore we are not required to set definite time limits as a county government agency like Pima Animal Control does. Adoptable animals are held as long as they remain healthy and temperamentally sound, and as long as room is available. We do, unfortunately, run out of room faster during the busy spring and summer months when the majority of litters are being born and turned into us.

How is it decided which animals will be placed in adoptions and which will be euthanized?

Unclaimed strays and unwanted pets are evaluated as to adoptability by a health and temperament exam. If found to be adoptable, they will be placed in Adoptions and allowed as much time as our space and their health and temperament allows to be adopted into a home. In some cases, we are able to do special adoptions or work with rescue groups in placing hard-to-adopt animals. Those animals that would not qualify for adoption are those with aggressive behavior, containment problems (fence-jumpers, etc.,) or those whose physical state involves pain or on-going suffering. Healthy puppies and kittens younger than 8 weeks old or weighing under 2 lbs. are also unable to be placed into adoptions. These animals may be

placed into foster care until they reach the adoptable age and size, but this depends on the availability of a foster home, and is less likely during our busy season.

Why are so many animals euthanized?

Far more animals are turned into shelters across the country every day than there are permanent, loving homes available for them. Ideally shelters shouldn't have to euthanize healthy, loving animals. Yet animals, like humans, need more than food and shelter. They need affection and responsible companionship. Without it they suffer. Shelters can provide a temporary, caring place to house unwanted animals, but it is no substitute for a permanent home environment. If we can't offer the opportunity for a permanent home for every animal in our care, we have the responsibility to release these animals from suffering, and to make sure this release is humane as possible. We also have the responsibility to work toward a time when all pets will have responsible, caring owners and euthanasia is no longer necessary except as an escape from suffering or to protect people and other animals.

How is euthanasia performed?

Euthanasia, the act of facilitating a humane death, is done by intravenous or intraperitoneal injection of an overdose of sodium pentobarbital. Approximately 8 seconds after the injection, the animal becomes unconscious; its entire system shuts down within 3-5 minutes. The procedure is a quick and painless one.

Why is it so important to spay and neuter companion animals?

Pet overpopulation is a serious and growing problem in the United States. It is estimated that between 10 and 20 million unwanted companion animals are euthanized each year. Many healthy animals are put to death simply because there are not enough homes available for them. There are also many health and behavioral benefits of spaying and neutering.

How early can you spay or neuter an animal?

The Humane Society of Southern Arizona sterilizes every dog and cat leaving the shelter. Since we adopt animals out at eight weeks, we will spay or neuter a dog or cat as early as eight weeks. This early-age sterilization is extremely safe, due to the use of isoflurane gas anesthetic. Prepubescent sterilization has been endorsed by the American Veterinary Medical Association as a safe procedure which is effective in helping to reduce animal overpopulation.

Why Do We Sterilize Young Puppies and Kittens?

by Scott M. Ruth, D.V.M., former HSSA Supervising Staff Veterinarian

Many people are unaware of just how important it is to spay and neuter dogs and cats. Surgical sterilization is an extremely effective and humane method of helping to control pet overpopulation. Additionally, there are definite health benefits for both sexes of dogs and cats. Finally, the pets are free of the instinct to reproduce, which is a major cause of roaming. These benefits allow our pets to live happier, healthier and longer lives.

Traditionally, veterinarians have put off sterilization surgery until the patient is at least six months old. However, pets can be adopted from animal shelters as young as two months of age — indeed, the most popular and most frequently adopted animals are the youngest available. Adhering to traditional schedules can produce a time period as long as four months between adoption and the possibility of sterilization. Humane shelters encourage or require adopters to have these pets sterilized, but compliance is often disappointing. Adopters often develop an aversion to the procedure, perceiving it to be dangerous, painful, or otherwise undesirable. Ideally, adopted pets should be sterilized before leaving the shelter, thereby avoiding the need to pursue surgery later.

There is a growing trend in humane shelters to lower the age at which puppies and kittens are sterilized. Colleges of veterinary medicine have conducted extensive research on the effects of early sterilization in dogs and cats. With the advent of new, safer anesthetic agents, the primary danger of early surgery has been greatly reduced, and serious after-effects have not been encountered. Additionally, younger animals tolerate surgery far better than older animals. Their smaller reproductive organs have smaller blood vessels so bleeding is greatly reduced, and a smaller incision can be used. Younger animals recover from the anesthetic more quickly and easily, heal faster than the older individuals, and seem to have MUCH less postoperative discomfort. The younger patients can even eat food 20 to 60 minutes after surgery, an advantage unheard of in older surgery patients.

Reducing the number of homeless and unwanted companion animals clearly benefits our community. Having all adopted pets sterilized before leaving the shelter insures that they will not add to the tragedy of pet overpopulation. We

at The Humane Society of Southern Arizona are delighted with the progress of prepubescent sterilization program.

Volunteer Policies & Procedures

In order to work well with the staff and to present HSSA in the best possible light, we ask that you adhere to the following policies and procedures while you are on duty as a volunteer. Failure to comply may result in termination.

QUALIFICATIONS:

- ◆ Volunteers must be at least fifteen years of age to work without parental supervision, and must enjoy working with all types of people. They must show a genuine concern for the welfare of animals. A willingness to work hard, get dirty, and pitch in wherever needed is required. The ideal volunteer is self-motivated, mature, sensitive, dependable, and a team player. He or she must have the ability to meet assignments promptly, reliably and with flexibility.
- ◆ Volunteers who work in direct contact with animals must exhibit a willingness to learn about animals and how to properly interact with them. They must be able to react quickly to avoid any mishaps between animals and people.
- ◆ Volunteers who will be driving a HSSA vehicle for animals transport or any other purpose must possess a valid Arizona driver's license, a copy of which will be kept in our files.

REQUIREMENTS:

- ◆ Volunteers must complete a basic orientation session as scheduled by the Volunteer Coordinator before reporting to their first assignment. Additional training may also be required depending on the area in which you wish to volunteer.
- ◆ Animals in our care must be treated kindly and professionally at all times.

- ◆ Volunteers must agree to represent The Humane Society of Southern Arizona and to support the Society's philosophy, to perform in a professional manner whenever so doing, and to refrain from allowing personal views and opinions from overshadowing or conflicting with the Humane Society's purpose.

TIME COMMITMENT AND SCHEDULING:

- ◆ We ask each of our volunteers to sign up for as many duties and hours as other time commitments permit. A minimum (average) of 2 hours of service per week is requested but not required. Volunteer hours are flexible depending on the assignment. With the exception of major holidays, our volunteers are welcome to come in any time from 7:00AM to 6:00 PM, seven days a week.
- ◆ Once you have agreed to be available for a particular shift and duty (this is required of offsite, special event, greeter and adoption counselor volunteers), we count on you to be there. In the event you are unable to be at your assigned shift, please call the Volunteer Coordinator as soon as possible at 321-3704 ext 126 so we may arrange for a replacement.

SIGNING IN:

You must sign in each time you come to work and sign out each time you finish your shift. Please also sign in/out or call to report any offsite/in-home service hours.

DRESS PROTOCOLS:

You are as much a representative of HSSA as our paid staff. Your appearance and conduct will reflect the Humane Society. All

volunteers—even those who don't specifically work as dog or cat handlers—are likely to come in contact with the animals. For this reason, **we require that all volunteers wear long pants and closed-toe shoes with good traction. Volunteers with inappropriate attire (shorts, sandals, etc) will be prohibited from handling animals and may be excused from their shift. Volunteers are also required to wear nametags** while on duty at the shelter or off-site. For the first 10 hours of service, you will be wearing a blank nametag that just reads 'volunteer'. If you cannot find your nametag after completing 10 hours of if you lose your tag, please inform the Volunteer Coordinator ASAP so that a new nametag can be made for you.

RESTRICTED AREAS OF THE SHELTER:

◆ Volunteers are not allowed in the **Euthanasia room, R-2 (Wild and Sick Cat Room)** and **Spay/Neuter Clinic** (unless you are a Vaccination Clinic volunteer). While the Receiving Lobby is not 'off-limits' per se, this is a high risk and high stress area; volunteers should avoid lingering in the receiving lobby as much as possible. Also, please do not handle dogs in the stray holding kennels or cats in the cat exam room ("iso") unless a shelter technician or supervisor specifically requests that you do so.

CUSTOMER RELATIONS

◆ The success of our organization depends upon the quality of the relationships between HSSA, our employees, volunteers, customers, suppliers and the general public. Our customers' impression of HSSA and their interest and willingness to utilize our services is greatly formed by the people who serve them. In a sense, regardless of your position, you are HSSA's ambassador. The more goodwill you promote, the more our

customers will respect and appreciate you, HSSA, and the services HSSA provides.