

## Nonprofit Staffing Paid and Unpaid

By Dr. Becky Rhoades, Executive Director  
Kauai Humane Society  
28 paid staff  
75 active volunteers

### PAID STAFF

#### The Basics

**Job Descriptions:** What are staff expected to do?

**Employee Manual:** It sets the tone of the workplace – mission, house rules, attendance, sick leave, vacation, conflict of interest, workweek, communications, performance review process, etc.

**Policies and Procedures:** guidance to help keep work consistent

**Safety Program:** everyone's responsibility

**Organizational Chart:** review of operations and deciding how many people it takes to screw in a light bulb or what are your minimum daily staffing levels to provide your minimum level of quality service? (We do lots of cross-training – and I hate “that’s not my job”)

**Salary Levels and Ranges:** setting minimum, midpoint, and maximums based on similar positions in the community (Hawaii Employer's Council).

**New Staff Orientation & Training:** New staff complete an orientation of the entire organization by spending time with each department during the first 30 days. Our orientation period is 90 days to see if good match for employee and for us. Invest up front with training by lead staff, not line staff – to avoid teaching the wrong way.

#### Recruitment

**Word of Mouth:** If you have a good reputation for being fair, well run organization, people talk. We have hired many of our volunteers.

**References:** Three good work references are required.

**Hiring:** I meet with top candidates for any position to finalize hiring.

## Morale and Motivation

**Leadership:** I meet with new staff to discuss our mission, review of the organization and inform them of our simple work philosophy: be nice, be clean, be honest, study hard and work hard. Key to our success is surpassing client's expectations with customer service and animal care. If staff can understand our mission, they will do most anything you ask. I have zero tolerance for negative gossip but love good gossip. We laugh a lot.

**Staff Briefings:** Shelter staff meet briefly every morning to discuss needs of the day. Lead staff meet at least once weekly and more often as needed. All staff meet together every other month for training, updates, or celebrations. Communication is very important and time consuming.

**Coaching:** Timing is critical to correct poor performance. Lead staff work closely with employee issues so there are no surprises. Poor performers usually leave before termination is required. Good performers with personal issues are given great consideration to get them back on track – but if don't, are let go.

## UNPAID VOLUNTEERS

### Get Them in the Door

**New Volunteer Orientations:** Regularly offered (twice a month), brief 2 hours to review the basics (mission, philosophy, safety, job descriptions, logistics) and then let them go to work. About 30% become great regular volunteers, the rest come when they can or decide it's not for them. Staff feel the difference volunteers make and embrace them. Volunteers walk away rewarded for helping out.

**Advanced Positions:** For volunteers who want more, we offer dog training classes, specialized work in the clinic, front desk, pals training, outreach, etc.

**Structure:** Volunteers are unpaid staff and treated as such. They must follow the rules like the rest of us. All staff coach volunteers.

**Appreciation:** Thank them!