

Humane Society of Sonoma County Job Description

Job Title:	Academy of Dog Instructor	Location:	Santa Rosa/Healdsburg
Department:	Public Training	Hours:	Part-time
Salary Range:	non-exempt \$17-\$22 per hour	Reports To:	Canine Behavior & Training Manager

SUMMARY

The Academy of Dog Instructor position requires excellent personal mechanics in “Positive Reinforcement Dog Training” in addition to superlative customer service skills and must also be capable of teaching group “companion dog” training classes from beginning through advanced levels at both Santa Rosa and Healdsburg shelter locations.

This person will teach specialty classes, including *Kinderpuppy*, *Recall*, *Loose Leash Walking* and other classes that meet the needs and interests of the public and will conduct workshops that focus on dog-training skill development. This individual is also responsible for accomplishing department goals, working collaboratively with internal and external HSSC stakeholders and supporting the mission, goals and philosophy of HSSC

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Academy of Dog Instructor

- Instruct classes as assigned by the Behavior and Training Manager for up to eight clients; class size is determined by location and curriculum.
- Instructor will fill class time slots as assigned by manager. Classes are scheduled according to the shifting needs of the community.
- Instruct classes **in a safe and humane manner by** adhering to science-based, reward-based, least intrusive, minimally aversive, positive reinforcement animal training.
 - Methodology and philosophy shall include force-free, dog centered training. HSSC does not condone the use of balanced or aversive training methods, defined as, “any circumstance or event that causes pain, fear, or emotional discomfort.” HSSC forbids the use of choke chains, prong collars, spray bottles, striking or hitting, scaring, or other punishing methods.
- Classes shall have at least three (3) or more registered participants. If less than three (3) class will be rescheduled or clients moved to an alternate class.
- Hold makeup classes in a timely manner for any classes cancelled by the trainer or manager during a class series. Consult with manager for scheduling concerns.
- Contact enrolled Clients (and any paid or unpaid assistant) at least (24) hours prior to class commencement and after each class session with pre- and post-class notes. If client cannot be reached via email, phone client before first class date to discuss pre-class notes and/or requirements.
- Communicate via email to the AOD (Academy of Dog) administrator of any changes to the class roster following the start date, including but not limited to clients canceling, unforeseen schedule changes or absent clients.
- Consult with clients regarding “next class” options that are best suited to their skill level and dog’s behavior.
- Fulfill required end-of-class cleaning process defined by the Canine Behavior and Training Manager.

Volunteer Management and Training

- Supervise and work with Classroom Training Assistant volunteers (CTAs). Explain needs for each weekly class with clear communication. Ensure that CTAs are integrated into the training instruction and practice and are viewed as part of the training “team.” Provide feedback to CTAs regarding their assistance with class operations and clients. Thank CTA’s for their assistance with classes. Regularly communicate to the AOD admin about CTA needs.
- Recruit CTAs and connect them with HSSC’s Volunteer Training Coordinator.

Customer Service

- Provide exemplary customer service by consistently demonstrating courteous, prompt and compassionate service to both internal and external customers.
- Fosters teamwork, respect, integrity and a work culture aligned with HSSC mission and values within the Canine Behavior and Training department as well as the larger HSSC community.
- Works respectfully, professionally and compassionately with all HSSC volunteers. Provides guidance and training in procedures and protocols as needed.

Class Marketing

- Follow directions of manager to help develop, market and promote new classes to the public.
- Send photos and video clips of classes when appropriate to HSSC social media.
- Conduct demonstrations, workshops, attend special events, write articles and post social media as needed.

Skill Development

- Actively pursues continuing education, which may include reading published material, watching videos/webinars, listening to podcasts, following social media, attending training classes and/or professional seminars.
- Ability to keep pace with the growth and changes occurring in the Dog Training Industry by demonstrating a willingness to adapt and be flexible.
- Participation in training classes offered by the Canine and Behavior Department.

Safety and Security

- Model and encourage safe practices and regulatory compliance throughout the organization.
- Must be committed to a high standard of safety and be willing and able to comply with all safety laws and all of the employer's safety policies and rules.
- Maintain appropriate files and records as assigned.
- Adhere to the files and records retention policies and procedures.

SUPERVISION: This position reports directly to the Canine Behavior and Training Manager.

DESIRABLE QUALIFICATIONS: An ideal Candidate will possess the following knowledge, skills and abilities:

- Skilled at training dogs of different ages, breeds and sizes.
- Specialized training in dog sports, such as scenting and tricks. Competition experience is required.
- Knowledge of dog breed characteristics.
- Knowledge of canine behavior and modification.
- Flexible, patient and capable of "thinking on your feet" to meet the needs of a diverse class of clients and dogs with varied skills, aptitudes and learning styles.
- Passionate about continually improving their teaching skills and curriculum.
- Ability to teach the class curriculum within the time allowed for each class session and series.
- Ability to provide constructive criticism in a positive and encouraging fashion.
- Ability to teach group dog training classes in a variety of indoor and outdoor environments.
- Ability to manage and direct volunteers in assisting clients and their dogs.
- Skilled at speaking in front of an audience of people and dogs.
- Organized and skilled at multi-tasking.
- Good writing skills for composing follow-up emails to clients.

- Strong customer service skills and a passion for understanding of the HSSC mission to create and grow lifetime relationships between pets and people through adoption, training, education and care.

EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE:

- A typical way of gaining the necessary knowledge, skill and ability outlined above is:
- High school diploma (or equivalent) and a minimum of two of years teaching group dog training classes or four years actively assisting in dog training classes.
- CPDT-KA or KPA-CTP or currently pursuing education specific to dog training through an equivalent accredited certification program preferred.
- For Nose Work applicant: Participant in nose work classes for at least three years, with additional participation in nose work fun matches, trials and workshops to achieve a good understanding of the sport and current training methods.
- Possession of a valid California Drivers' License may be necessary.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS AND WORK ENVIRONMENT

The physical demands and work environment characteristics described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions. Must be able to interact with animals.

- Must be able to sit at a desk for significant periods of the day.
- Must be able to do phone or computer work for blocks of time.
- Must be able to interact with animals.
- Must be able to communicate effectively (speak and listen).
- Must be able to lift and move paperwork and files, up to 30 pounds.
- While performing the duties of this job, the employee is regularly required to sit; stand, walk, use hands to handle objects/operate keyboards and telephones; reach with hands and arms; talk and hear.
- Specific vision abilities required by the job include close vision, distance vision, depth perception, and the ability to adjust focus.
- Exposure to moderate noise levels (such as barking dogs).

NOTES

Nothing in this job description restricts management’s right to assign or reassign duties and responsibilities to this job at any time and the employee is expected to adhere to all company policies. The above information is representative of the work performed in this position, however it is not all-inclusive. The omission of a specific duty or responsibility does not exclude it from the position if the work is similar or related to the essential duties and responsibilities.

I have read and understand this explanation and job description and am able to perform all duties contained herein.

Employee Name

Manager Name

Signature

Signature

Date

Date