

# St. Sophia's Forgotten Felines

## Code of Ethics and Rescue Culture Agreement

### **I. Be a Part of the Rescue**

- a. Being part of St. Sophia's Forgotten Felines is a privilege, not a right. When you volunteer, you represent the rescue in all rescue-related activities. Inasmuch, maintaining professionalism in appearance and conduct at all times is important.
- b. Volunteering is done because we support a united St. Sophia's Forgotten Felines. Volunteers are expected to honor and respect differences between volunteers, practice "we" thinking, and understand that we are all responsible for the whole.

### **II. Take Care of the Animals**

- a. Humane Treatment of our cats is demanded of each volunteer at all time. Harm caused to any cat or kitten will not be tolerated.
- b. All cats in the care of the rescue are the responsibility of all volunteers.

### **III. Become Part of the Team**

- a. Attitude has a direct impact on effectiveness. Displaying a bad attitude toward the rescue, other volunteers, or the public has a detrimental affect on the rescue and reduces effectiveness and undermines the rescue mission.
- b. All volunteers are to provide courteous, efficient, and friendly service to all parties you come in contact with. Curtness, rudeness, and display of temper will not be tolerated.
- c. Integrity and honesty is expected of each volunteer in dealing with the public, fellow volunteers, and all aspects of the rescue.
- d. Volunteers are expected to work cooperatively with others in a teamwork atmosphere. Practice collaboration, cooperation and coordination by providing access to information about decisions, decision-making processes and what's going on.
- e. Address problems proactively and constructively. Treat complaints, suggestions, and ideas with respect. Take responsibility to bring issues needing attention to someone who can take action. Think constructively, look for solutions.
- f. Deal with conflict responsibly. Problems should be brought directly to the person or persons with whom you have the problem. Agree to resolve outstanding conflicts as they occur. Be active in resolving conflicts; deal with conflict directly; show respect—keep your voice calm and your language clean; and respect other people's right to their own perspectives.
- g. Embrace diversity and practice open-mindedness. Every volunteer is different, so expect as much. Look for the contribution that each person is trying to make to help the animals, and seek commonalities and to understand differences.
- h. Practice open, direct, prompt communications. Words can sting; volunteers are expected to take a stand to stop gossip, and instead practice proactive listening.

- i. Promote trust. Everyone needs to take responsibility for themselves and each person is accountable for their actions. Trust that everyone at ST. SOPHIA'S FORGOTTEN FELINES is making decisions for the animals in good faith—or check it out if you have questions.
- j. Demonstrate respect. Respect people's right to different opinions, respect decisions made, respect the right to disagree, extend compassion to your coworkers, and value each other regardless seniority, position, or opinion.
- k. Acknowledge feelings and the emotional aspects of our work. Recognize the importance of having a sense of humor. Identify healthy ways to reduce or release stress—ask for help if you need it. Find ways appropriate to the setting to express sadness, grief, and anger when those feelings arise. Respect others' response to emotions—help them find creative and appropriate outlets to express their feelings. Keep things in perspective—help yourself and others maintain a positive outlook.
- l. Show appreciation. Remember why we have chosen to volunteer here. Practice appreciation at all levels of the organization. Acknowledge people across the organization when they're really fantastic.

#### **IV. Reduce Conflict of Interest**

- a. St. Sophia's Forgotten Felines' status as a non-profit corporation is important both for its continued financial stability and for public support. As a non-profit organization, St. Sophia's Forgotten Felines is subject to scrutiny by and accountable to such governmental authorities such as the IRS and the State of IL, as well as to members of the public.
  - i. Board Members and volunteers alike have the responsibility of administering the affairs of St. Sophia's Forgotten Felines honestly and prudently, and of exercising their best care, skill, and judgment for the sole benefit of the rescue.
  - ii. All transactions involved in St. Sophia's Forgotten Felines' duties shall be for the benefit of the rescue and volunteers and Board Members shall not use their positions within the rescue to conduct operations for their personal benefit. The interests of the organization must be the first priority in all decisions.
    - 1. Potential Conflicts of Interest:  
Conflicts may arise in any of the following situations:
      - a. Persons and firms supplying goods and services to St. Sophia's Forgotten Felines
      - b. Competing, partnering, or partnering organizations
      - c. Agencies, organizations, and associations with which St. Sophia's Forgotten Felines has contracts.
      - d. Family members, friends, and donors.
    - 2. Examples of Conflicts of Interest:
      - a. Holding office, serving on the board, participating in management, or being otherwise employed (or formerly employed) with any third party dealing with St. Sophia's Forgotten Felines.
      - b. Receiving payment for services with respect to individual transactions involving St. Sophia's Forgotten Felines.
      - c. Using St. Sophia's Forgotten Felines' time, personnel, equipment, supplies, or good will for other than St. Sophia's Forgotten Felines-approved activities, programs, and purposes.
      - d. Receiving personal gifts or loans from third parties dealing or competing with St. Sophia's Forgotten Felines.

3. Disclosure and Approval Exceptions

Transactions with parties with whom a conflicting interest exists may be undertaken only if all of the following are observed:

- a. The conflicting interest is fully disclosed;
- b. The person with the conflict of interest is excluded from the discussion and approval of such transaction;
- c. A competitive bid or comparable valuation exists; and
- a. The Board of Directors has determined that the transaction is in the best interest of the organization.