



SERVICES & OPERATIONS HANDBOOK

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HOPE ANIMAL-ASSISTED CRISIS RESPONSE SERVICES & OPERATIONS HANDBOOK

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HOPE ANIMAL-ASSISTED CRISIS RESPONSE SERVICES & OPERATIONS HANDBOOK

1 - Introduction

This handbook documents HOPE Animal-Assisted Crisis Response policies and procedures regarding operations for call-outs, drills, events and training exercises.

The following are definitions for HOPE AACR activities:

- Call-out's: Responses to actual crises or disasters.
- Drills: Simulation training activities with or without other agencies.
- Events: Primarily educational, public relation efforts, and/or social gatherings
- HOPE Training: Training activities involving only HOPE members

The mission of HOPE Animal-Assisted Crisis Response (HOPE AACR) is to provide comfort and encouragement through animal-assisted support to individuals affected by crises and disasters. HOPE AACR's services are typically utilized in the recovery phase of an incident or disaster. HOPE AACR usually works in conjunction with response agencies or relief organizations.

2 - Operational Structure

HOPE's administrative structure comprises a Board of Directors, led by the President with Regional Directors (RD), who report to the President and supervise each region. RDs are responsible for the over-all coordination and administration of the teams. RDs may also appoint Coordinators for areas within the region to whom responsibilities may be delegated. In the event the President or RD is unavailable to receive requests for HOPE services, they are responsible for providing an alternate contact for the duration of their absence.

HOPE follows a formal operational structure when teams are in service (call outs, drills, etc). This structure provides an organized method of communication and oversight of the response. All members have the responsibility to report any resource needs, problems, concerns, or observations encountered on assignment up through the chain of command. Below is a diagram of this structure:

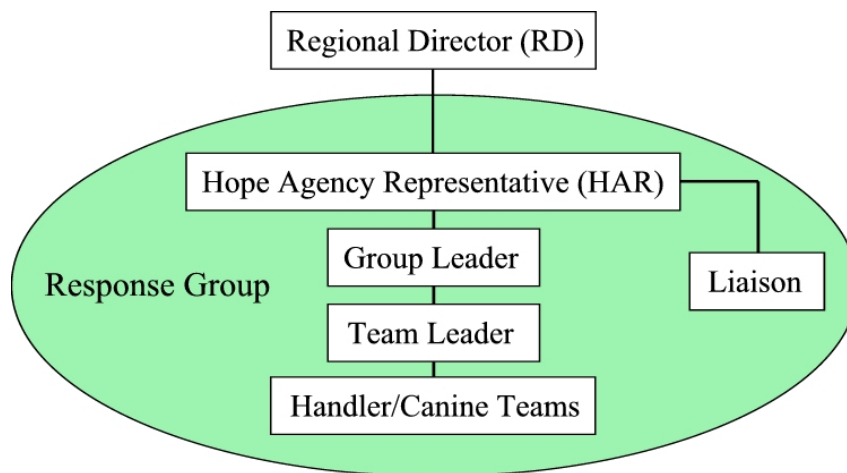


Figure 1

HOPE ANIMAL-ASSISTED CRISIS RESPONSE

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For every call out, the RD appoints the HOPE Agency Representative (HAR), who is in charge of the Response Group. If the response requires a large number of HOPE teams, or the response is separated into multiple areas, Sub-Groups with a Group leader in charge of each subgroup may be used. Within the Sub Groups are teams with Team Leaders that support and supervise up to four HOPE K9 teams. Teams are usually paired in a “buddy system.” The other formal position that reports to the HAR is the Liaison Officer. A Liaison Officer is a certified team member, often working without an animal, who serves as a communication link from the HAR to other agencies, responders, or even the media.

The RD and the HAR will assign appropriate HOPE AACR members to a call-out. Selection of members is based on suitability, experience, and availability. Whenever possible, more experienced teams are assigned with less experienced teams. This allows new members the opportunity to gain experience. Only handler/dog teams that have been certified together may provide HOPE services.

3 - Roles and Responsibilities

HOPE Agency Representative, Group Leaders, and Team Leaders form the leadership of the Response Group. They are responsible for maintaining awareness of the crisis response needs in their assigned area and the resources available to the group – including the diverse talents and skills of each HOPE member. They have the authority to supervise the responding members delivering services assigned to them and are responsible to support them based on the guidance and protocol of HOPE AACR’s policies and procedures. They have the authority and responsibility to communicate and coordinate the needs and movements of the members they supervise with the next level in the chain of command. One of the most important responsibilities of the HOPE Agency Representative, Group Leaders and Team Leaders is to support the teams under their care by monitoring, advising, and assisting them accordingly to remedy situations when they arise. They observe and monitor their assigned teams, know their stress signs and coping skills, assure their safety and that sufficient hydration, food and breaks are made available to them. They coordinate their teams’ transportation when directed and provide them with technical, administrative, and emotional support.

The “buddy system” is utilized when Teams are on assignment with two Teams working together. “Buddy Teams” are responsible to one another, stay in communication, and be aware of what is necessary for each other’s well-being, both humans and animals.

3.1 - All Members are responsible to:

- Follow HOPE’s policies and procedures and the HOPE ethics policy
- Follow the chain of command and Incident Command protocol
- Check in and checkout of response sites with their on-site leadership
- Participate in debriefings (required)
- File occurrence or grievance reports within 24 hours (if necessary)
- Complete an Assignment Report Form (on line form preferred) to their Regional Director within one week of their assignment

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Specific roles and responsibilities of the different Response Group positions are summarized below:

3.2 - HOPE Agency Representative (HAR) is responsible to:

- Report to Regional Director
- Support HOPE AACR members assigned to the Response Group
- Manage, supervise, and monitor all of HOPE's activities before, during, and after the call-out response
- Communicate directly with the emergency responder(s) in charge of the incident or the point of contact they assign
- Gather as much information as possible as to the nature of the assignment and communicate the necessary information to the assigned members
- Report any breach of conduct by HOPE AACR members to the Regional Director
- Ensure debriefing of the Response Group at the end of each day of the response and a final debriefing at the end of the response

3.3 - Group Leader is responsible to:

- Report to the HAR
- Support assigned members within their designated group
- Manage, supervise, and coordinate the response of one or more Team Leaders and work with them to oversee the HOPE AACR Teams within the Group
- Ensure that group's needs for breaks, water, food, etc. are met

3.4 - Team Leader is responsible to:

- Report to HAR or Group Leader
- Work without an animal preferably
- Manage, supervise and coordinate the response of up to four assigned teams
- Be knowledgeable about the experience, stress signs, and other information relevant to the activities and well being of both animal and human team members
- Observe teams for stress signs and makes sure need for breaks, water, and food are met

3.5 - Assistant is responsible to:

- Report to HAR, Group Leader, or Team Leader
- Work without canine
- Assist with any tasks necessary to facilitate the smooth operation of the response
- Provide relief and support to teams

3.6 - Liaison Officer is responsible to:

- Report to the HAR
- Act as a link with other responders, agencies, and/or media
- Report relevant outside information to the HAR

3.7 - Home Base is responsible to:

- Coordinate with RD and HAR as required
- Serve as an information or support resource that is on-call at all times

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- Research and acquire support that teams in transit or service require (tow truck, local veterinarian, emergency accommodations (if plans fall through), local restaurants
- Lend a confidential ear for someone to talk

4 - Conduct

All certified members including canines are considered “on duty” whenever wearing the HOPE AACR ID or vest. This includes training, drills, call-outs, travel to call outs, presentations and any other instances when they are representing HOPE AACR. While on duty, members will adhere to HOPE AACR policies, procedures and the HOPE AACR ethics policy. A breach of the expectations of conduct may be cause for an Occurrence or Grievance Report and potential termination or suspension per the HOPE AACR bylaws.

4.1 - Members

Our members define and represent HOPE AACR to individuals and the community as a whole. We want to be recognized as professional and committed to delivering only high quality service.

In addition to following the HOPE AACR Code of Ethics, members are expected to:

- Operate or act in a manner that is beneficial to the best interest of HOPE at all times
- Show respect and concern for everyone with whom we work and serve
- Display a courteous, pleasant, helpful demeanor at all times
- Provide services to all on an impartial and neutral basis and without taking sides or expressing opinions relative to any controversies or hostilities
- Maintain the confidentiality of all information obtained during service as a HOPE representative
- Ensure that all information submitted, whether verbal or written, is accurate to the best of the member’s knowledge
- Report to the incident site able to function effectively and professionally free from alcohol or drugs. Both handler and dog should be in good health when responding
- Protect all property for which HOPE representatives have responsibility, use, or access
- Take steps to ensure that individuals and agencies understand that HOPE canines are not service dogs or search dogs
- Never self-deploy
- Never accept or seek personal remuneration for services provided as a HOPE representative. (Donations made to HOPE AACR may be discretely accepted and delivered to the Treasurer)
- Never appear to or provide psychological therapy or counseling

4.2 - Handlers

HOPE AACR handlers always serve as their canine partner’s advocate. The HOPE AACR Team Welfare Guidelines Handbook is a valuable resource regarding issues to be considered to perform this responsibility. The handbook illustrates Risk Factors to be considered for each call out or drill. There is a value rating system for each of the following Risk Factors:

- Travel
- Living Conditions
- Predictability (Deployment Scene)

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- Temperature (Hot)
- Temperature (Cold)
- Noise Exposure
- Congestion
- Air Quality Index
- Team Experience
- K9 Characteristics

In addition to the risk factors listed above, handlers must:

- Follow the HOPE AACR Team Welfare Guide, other applicable guidelines resources and common sense to ensure their dog's safety, comfort, and well-being
- Maintain control of their dogs at all times (unless placed in the care of another HOPE member)
- Keep dogs on lead at all times
- Ensure proper conduct of their dogs
- Ensure the safe and appropriate interaction with all individuals and other HOPE dogs
- Recognize and respond accordingly to their dog's stress signals
- Pay careful attention to their dog's willingness and ability to work in what can be extremely stressful and fatiguing environments

4.3 - Canines

Dogs are the focus of HOPE AACR's mission to provide comfort and encouragement to those affected by crisis or disaster. It is vital that our partners continue to uphold the standards to which they were certified to perform the mission of HOPE AACR.

While on duty, HOPE canines must:

- Be friendly, outgoing and attentive, but not pushy, in seeking contact
- Appear to and enjoy the interactions with responders, individuals, and others
- Be responsive and attentive to handler
- Demonstrate strong obedience skills
- Not lunge, bark, growl in a threatening manner, snap, bite, or otherwise show undue aggression to humans or animals
- Not engage in disruptive behavior, such as repeated barking (more than once or twice, after which the handler is expected be able to control the behavior), whining, howling, licking, or jumping up
- Not be in heat, ill, have any open wounds, bandages, stitches, or suffering from diarrhea.

Dogs in any of the conditions listed should not participate in any HOPE activity

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5 - Identification

Members are required to wear their HOPE AACR Photo Identification Tag (aka badge or ID) while on duty. Members shall not wear any other organization's identification tag or badge while wearing the HOPE ID. This is to ensure that everyone, particularly the insurance company for HOPE AACR, knows you are serving as a HOPE AACR volunteer. Wearing multiple IDs does not provide double coverage, but rather, *it provides both insurance companies with an excuse to not cover you*. Instructions on how to reorder badges are on the "Member's Only" section of the website.

HOPE AACR canines are required to wear their HOPE AACR vest as identification while on duty. The order form on the "Member's Only" section of the website provides instructions on how to order dog vests.

6 - Attire, Appearance and Gear

Appearance and attire are important as a means of presenting a good image to the public, as well as providing a method of identifying HOPE members. HOPE representatives are clean, neat, and professional in appearance at all times.

Required attire for members is a dark green collared shirt with an embroidered HOPE logo, solid black or beige (khaki) pants, and appropriate footwear. Open-toed shoes, shorts, cutoffs, tank or halter-tops, and tight-fitting or provocative clothing are not permitted. Deviations from the above due to weather or site conditions may only be approved by the Regional Director.

Dogs are well groomed and wear their HOPE AACR vests. Acceptable gear for canines includes plastic snap or buckle collars, all fabric martingales, non-restrictive harnesses, and leather, cloth or nylon leashes. No flexi-leads, slip leads, choke collars, metal link collars, prong collars or head halters, or costumes of any kind are permissible.

Caution

In some instances, dogs may need to wear booties; however, these must be used with caution and for brief periods only (a few minutes) during hot weather. Even the most "breathable" bootie significantly inhibits the dog's ability to sweat, which can cause the dog to overheat very rapidly.

HOPE AACR backpacks are recommended for working and traveling. Besides being a practical and efficient means of keeping our personal items, working gear, snacks, water, dog paraphernalia, etc., they are easily identifiable. A fanny pack may be used when appropriate, and when the full contents of your backpack are not required.

Note: See "Member's Only" section of the website for information on how to order HOPE clothing and gear. available clothing and gear.

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7 - Call Outs

HOPE AACR's goal is to work with local and national emergency response groups prior to a disaster to set up mutual aid agreements. These agreements describe the roles and responsibilities of both parties in a disaster situation. Becoming members of local Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster (VOADS) is often a key to receiving call outs. Other possible affiliations are organizations such as American Red Cross, Salvation Army, FEMA, US Forest Service (wild fires), Police Departments, Fire Departments, Emergency Management Agencies, Trauma Intervention Programs (TIP), 9-1-1 dispatch centers and local Critical Incident Stress Management Teams (CISM), Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART), and Community Emergency Response Teams (CERTs).

Where prior agreements don't exist, HOPE members must coordinate with their Regional Directors (RDs) and then make direct contact with the agency in charge of (or supporting) a disaster. Coordination with the RD prevents multiple members from calling the same group, which causes unnecessary work for responders and is unprofessional.

HOPE AACR policy is that no one will self-deploy. HOPE AACR is invited to the site or participation falls under previous memorandums of agreement. Only HOPE AACR members assigned to the call out by the Regional Director or HOPE Agency Representative are on site. The RD may place all members in the region on stand-by in anticipation of a pending call-out. Once a stand-by notice is sent, members notify their RD or designated HAR of their availability and any limitations they may have. The RD or HAR may ask members to travel to a location close to but not at the call out site to reduce response time in anticipation of the formal invitation to the site. In most cases, teams are not put into motion until services are requested by an agency to limit unnecessary travel or stress for teams.

8 - Before - Preparing for a call-out

The Regional Director for each region (or coordinator for a designated geographical area) maintains an up to date list of active members. When a call-out, or potential callout, occurs, the Regional Director contacts all active members in the region to ask for availability for assignment to the call-out. Selection for assignment of available members is made using fair judgment with the consideration of the member and dog's experience, health, and suitability for the response.

Active members must ensure they are prepared to go on call-outs. This includes obtaining relevant training, working independently with their canine partners to develop skills, participating in HOPE AACR drills and training, and ensuring that their gear and paperwork are packed and ready to go at all times. Appendix A includes a checklist of required documents and recommended equipment to bring on a call out; however, be sure to bring everything you and your partner might need. *Paperwork is often critical for HOPE AACR to gain access to call-out sites.*

HOPE AACR members are responsible to become familiar with the different protocols and systems used by the various responders, agencies, and organizations with whom they may work at an incident. This enables HOPE AACR members to understand and adapt to whatever instructions we are given, and communicate effectively with those in charge.

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Familiarization can be achieved by taking classes and/or becoming a volunteer for an emergency response organization, such as American Red Cross, TIP, CERTS, taking on-line study courses, such as the FEMA's ICS series (the basic course is free and is required for HOPE members in their first year), and reading available manuals and texts from responding agencies.

Other recommended areas of training/reading include:

- Mental health
- Supporting the caregiver and self
- Team Welfare Manual (including recommended reading list in manual)
- HOPE workshop materials

9 - During a Call-out

Once HOPE AACR receives a call out, the Regional Director or HOPE Agency Representative gathers as much information about the call-out site as possible in order to provide it to the members assigned to the call-out. This includes, but is not limited to:

- person who authorized HOPE's participation
- point of contact on site – including cell phone number
- number of teams desired
- start time of call-out
- duration of call-out
- mode of communication on the site
- number of responders and civilians on site
- conditions of the site
 - stability of the site
 - shelter available on site
 - air conditioned/heated site
 - food/water on site
- meeting location for HOPE members (off-site may be preferred)
- available parking
- appropriate potty area for dogs
- guidance on if photos will be permitted
- other site and situation specific information

After HOPE is authorized to participate, the use of a "lead team" is recommended. This small group can include dogs, and assesses the site for further information to send back to the rest of the members about the actual details of the site. For example – plans do change, and HOPE might not actually end up with access to a building with air conditioning, may have to park far away from the site, or might not have access to water. This information could change the list of members appropriate for the call-out, cause members to bring different gear/provisions, or even end the call out if the site is not suitable for HOPE participation.

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As teams prepare to travel to a call-out, a “Home Base” point of contact should be established. Home Base is a person who is on-call at all times (during their assigned hours) to support the Response Group with unexpected needs. This may be anything from a tow truck, to an emergency veterinarian, to a dog friendly restaurant near their pit stop or location. Home Base is also expected to be able to support Response Group members by simply lending a confidential ear – to just be there to listen.

9.1 - Operations on Call-outs

The HOPE Agency Representative has the authority and responsibility to communicate with and coordinate the members assigned to the crisis. Minimum information provided with the initial phone call includes: site conditions, probable duration, arrangements for transportation and directions to meeting place, arrival details, relevant phone numbers, and modes of communication will be used on site. Members’ questions about the assignment are answered to the best of the HOPE Agency Representative’s knowledge. At this time, members are required to notify the HOPE Agency Representative if they are not able to participate for health, schedule, or other reasons. To provide effective emotional support to others, HOPE AACR members maintain good mental and physical health.

At a drill or on assignment, the responding agency in charge of the incident directs HOPE AACR’s role in the incident, providing the work is within the scope of HOPE AACR’s policies and procedures. When any instructions conflict with HOPE’s standards of conduct or principles of operation, the HOPE Agency Representative decides on the appropriate course of action. Members are required to follow the instructions of the HOPE Agency Representative or Team Leader, unless doing so will result in physical or emotional harm, or clearly violate HOPE AACR’s code of ethics, policies, procedures, or any law. In that situation, when no resolution is achieved after politely communicating concerns with the leadership in charge, an Occurrence Report is submitted by the member to the Regional Director. This is done after leaving the site.

At incident sites, always obey directions given by emergency officials. Do not cross fire or police lines or barricades without permission from the appropriate authority. When you arrive, always assess the site to be sure it is safe. The personal safety of all HOPE AACR members while on site is the Response Group’s most important priority. Unsafe conditions are reported to your HOPE Agency Representative, Team Leader or the appropriate official on-site. Learn and follow blood borne pathogen protocol. Report any personal injury, no matter how slight, to the HOPE Agency Representative or Team Leader immediately.

9.2 - Arrival and Check In

If members arrive separately, they gather at the designated meeting place. They do not proceed to assignment until the HOPE Agency Representative arrives and directs their participation in the response. The HOPE Agency Representative briefs the members in a designated meeting place prior to being sent to their specific assignments. All members check in with the HOPE Agency Representative and the responders in charge of the site control. HOPE’s role is explained, when, how, and where breaks or shifts will take place will be determined, location of necessary facilities described if possible, methods of communications, and any other helpful information unique to the site given.

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While working on site, members must be able to recognize the stress signals for themselves as well as those of their fellow members. Completed SOS cards found in the Team Welfare Guidelines are provided to the Team Leader on the site. In order to maintain your ability to perform HOPE's mission, you and your dog must take frequent breaks, where you are both able to rest, eat, and drink. Take breaks at a minimum following the schedule laid out by the HOPE Agency Representative or Team Leader. Inform your Team Leader, if a break is needed sooner than scheduled. Be alert to changing weather conditions over the course of a call out and take measures to prevent heat-related illness and hypothermia. All handlers must serve as their canine's advocate.

HOPE canines are with the handler or another HOPE AACR member at all times. If that is not possible, arrangements are made for the animal to be in a safe, secure environment (a car is a life-threatening place to leave an animal unattended in hot and warm weather). If a HOPE AACR member takes responsibility of looking after more than one dog, they must remove themselves from active service until they once again have the responsibility for only one dog.

Sometimes people interacting with the dogs want to give them food or treats. It may be a way for them to make a connection and be nurturing. The handler will need to assess whether their dog's health or digestion will be at risk by what is being offered. If necessary, kindly state that the dog has a sensitive stomach, and simply substitute the dog's normal food or treat for what is being offered.

9.3 - Communications

The HOPE Agency Representative ensures that a communication method(s) is in place. This is typically cell phones or PDA's. In some areas, there is no service, or service is disrupted. Two-way radios can be helpful in these situations, but training to learn how to use them on assignment is important. It is the HAR's responsibility to make sure everyone in the Response Group has a list of fellow members' cell phone numbers prior to leaving for the site. When electronic communication is not possible, regularly scheduled check in times are established if members are widely dispersed. Assistance and information may be sought through the Chain of Command from the responders-in-charge, or other responders in proximity to the HOPE AACR Response Group.

9.4 - Working with those Affected by Crisis and Disaster

The "emotional first aid" that HOPE provides is NOT psychological therapy. Rather it is designed to reduce distress caused by traumatic events and support the normal psychological recovery process.

Review your HOPE workshop materials for in depth information on working with people affected by crisis and disaster.

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Before going on a call out, review the list below of things to do as HOPE members.

1. Listen, Listen, Listen. Listen for their concerns and feelings. Listen without trying to solve problems. Acknowledge the person's loss; give them permission to express their thoughts and feelings. People have a right to their feelings, whether or not you think they are justified. Never try to take someone's feelings away in order to make them feel better. Listen to their pain and to the happy memories.
2. Show Empathy and understanding. Empathy is being able to understand a person's feelings. You keep the focus on them, until you are certain they have expressed themselves fully. Do not interrupt.
3. Repeat and rephrase their concerns and feelings to let them know you heard and understood them. (Reflective or Active Listening)
4. Offer support by mutual agreement. If your assistance is not wanted, do not force it upon the individual.
5. Clinical results show that victims are relieved to know that their crisis reactions are normal. Normalize their concerns and feelings. Share information about normal crisis reactions and stress management strategies.
6. Give Facts! You may have to repeat information repeatedly. Convey information in honest, truthful ways. Dispel rumors or incorrect beliefs about the crisis.
7. Reaffirm their strengths and resiliency and promote their self-confidence. Help them feel a sense of control over their recovery.
8. If needed, provide connections to additional resources, if known.
9. When working with a group, keep things light. Try to work separately with those who are more intense or needy.
10. Become sensitive to cultural norms and customs before beginning work with an unfamiliar community.
11. Be prepared. Educate yourself about loss and grief.

9.5 - Relieving Stress and Care of the Caregiver

While on a call out, during breaks, and after a call out, find ways to relieve stress and take good care of yourself and your partner. Make a list of the best ways to relieve your stress (things to do during breaks, after the day is over, and for days off). Research on dogs has shown that mental stimulation is considered as valuable as physical exercise in relieving stress. Remember to be overly cautious about giving dog chews, treats or food that will disrupt your dog's digestive systems. A dog with diarrhea should never be on a call out. Dehydration can be life threatening, and a dog cannot control its elimination appropriately when they have diarrhea.

Disaster work causes emotional and physical demands on both humans and dogs, so we need to be prepared to take care of ourselves as well. To do this, we need to remember to do the following:

1. Debrief with other crisis responders each day to:
 - a. Vent feelings and provide mutual support
 - b. Assess the needs for the next day or future visits
2. Develop mentor/mentee relationships
3. Get Exercise

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4. Get rest/sleep
5. Maintain normal routines and comfortable rituals
6. Eat well balanced regular meals
7. Use relaxation techniques
8. Surround yourself with support
9. Pursue your passions

At times, crisis response workers can overextend themselves by wanting to help beyond their own limits. The following are warning signs of the overextended crisis intervention worker:

1. Obsessive thoughts about the event, though not actually present
2. Excessive worry about victims
3. Intense irritability
4. Sleeplessness
5. Forgetfulness
6. Eating problems
7. Chronic fatigue
8. Anger at co-workers or loved ones
9. Depression, guilt, shame, withdrawal
10. Compulsion to be part of every crisis situation

This work can be emotionally draining yet very rewarding. We need to remember to take care of ourselves and support each other!

9.6 - Media Contact on Assignment

HOPE members must contact their HOPE Agency Representative or Liaison Officer if they are planning to contact the media proactively. Remember that you are representing HOPE, and should keep the organization's best interests as your priority.

When approached by or working with the media and the HAR or Liaison officer is not close by:

- Ask for identification from the media to be shared with the HAR/Liaison Officer and how the interview will be used
- Ask what the story will be about and how much time is needed for the interview
- Assess your comfortableness with proceeding. If uncomfortable, decline politely or refer the media to the HAR or Liaison Officer and assist in making the connection.
- If comfortable proceeding, talk about AACR work; avoid speaking for other agencies, giving opinions, speculating about information or commenting about HOPE policies. Confidential information about those we serve is never released.
- If in doubt, err on the side of caution - saying too little is better than saying too much.

9.7 - Taking Photos on Assignment

Taking photos on assignment is not allowed without the permission of the HOPE Agency Rep. HOPE members must respect the privacy of those we serve and focus on delivering our services professionally. Photos taken for HOPE AACR use require a photo release (appendix B1). Photos taken without a photo release can not be used in HOPE materials. The HOPE Agency Representative has the authority to prohibit cameras on assignment (for individuals or the entire response group).

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9.8 – Checking out: Closing Out Operations on Assignment

Before HOPE AACR responding members leave any call-out site, they are required to check out with the HOPE Agency Representative. At checkout, the member informs the HOPE Agency Representative of any issues, and the HOPE Agency Representative informs the members about the planned date and time for the call-out debriefing. The HOPE Agency Representative is required to check out with the lead agency point of contact before ending the HOPE AACR call-out and leaving the site.

9.9 - Long Term Call-outs

When call-outs are over extended timeframes or days, special considerations are made. Shifts and days off become necessary to ensure the well-being of human and canine members. Our canine partners may have less endurance to do their work than their handlers may, or it could be the other way round. It is our responsibility as caretakers of our animals to make sure their limits of endurance are not approached or exceeded. In addition, energy levels can change from day-by-day or crisis-to-crisis for both humans and animals.

9.9.1 - Shifts

When Group Leaders, Team Leaders, and Groups/Teams are relieved by replacements, the departing leaders brief their incoming counterparts on the status of the Teams' activities, any concerns or suggestions, and what will be expected to take place.

The HOPE Team Welfare Guide provides information on how to assess the Risk Factors for call out sites. These Risk Factors, all information available about the site, and the member and dog's conditions should be considered as part of the design of a shift schedule. The HOPE Agency Representative will determine a shift schedule that will effectively deliver HOPE AACR's services in a meaningful and safe way.

9.9.2 - Days off

During long-term recovery efforts, HOPE AACR members may be on the site, and quite possibly away from home, for many days. In such situations, days off must be taken. Dogs should not serve for more than 3 days in a row, and handlers should expect to be scheduled out of the rotation of shifts for days off.

10 - After a callout

Our "job" is not done when we leave a call-out site. The following are issues that need attention before a call-out can be considered complete:

10.1 - Status of Members

The HOPE Agency Representative is responsible for reporting to the Regional Director that the call out has ended, and that all members are accounted for. The Regional Director is responsible for following up with any members as recommended by the HOPE Agency Representative.

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10.2 - Call out Review and Debriefing

The responder(s) in charge may request that all responding organizations participate in their debriefing at the end of the response or drill. This is typically an information exchange, not a stress management event (like Critical Incident Stress Management debriefings). The HOPE Agency Representative will select the members to attend if participation is possible.

HOPE AACR's debriefing is typically an information exchange, but can be a stress management event. The call out debriefing is scheduled by the HOPE Agency Representative, preferably at the end of each day of a multi-day assignment, or when the assignment is completed. Members of the call-out are required to attend. The debriefing is a very important part of the call out as it gives everyone the opportunity to share both positive and negative experiences, what went right, what went wrong, suggestions for improvement, and finally, a summary of lessons learned. It also provides the HOPE Agency Representative an opportunity to determine which members and teams should continue on the call out the following day, and which should take a day off. The debriefing can be led by the HOPE Agency Representative, the Regional Director, or preferably a member with specific training in debriefings. HOPE AACR does not endorse any specific method for debriefings. An example agenda for a debriefing is included in Appendix E.

10.3 - Documentation

To ensure continuous improvement in the delivery of HOPE AACR's services and document our call outs, members are required to submit an Assignment Report Form (Appendix B) to their Regional Director within one week of their service at the call-out. These can be published to the HOPE email list to inform the membership of regional activities. The Regional Director will typically select one report to forward to the membership. All Assignment Report Forms are stored in the "Member's Only" section of the web site after review by the Regional Director. Members may decline to have their report published by noting this in their report. The reports acknowledge positive performance, areas that need improvement, and especially lessons learned.

The Regional Director provides a summary of the call out to the webmaster for inclusion on the HOPE AACR service history.

In addition to Assignment Report Forms, Occurrence and Grievance Reports are written and submitted according to HOPE AACR Policies and Procedures.

10.3.1 – Occurrence Reports

Occurrences are incidents that are inconsistent with HOPE's code of ethics, policies, procedures, or the routine operation of the organization. They are also used to report any injuries to members during an assignment. This form (refer to Appendix B-3) is necessary to document and address an incident, and it facilitates an improvement of services. All incident reports are reviewed with your Regional Director as soon as possible and forwarded to the President within 24 hours of the occurrence. If a major incident occurs (for example, a dog bite), this is reported immediately.

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10.3.2 – Grievance Reports

This form (refer to Appendix B-4) is an abbreviated version of the occurrence report form, and is intended for use when there is complaint regarding an unjust or unfair act within the HOPE chain of command.

10.3.3 – Thank You's

Regional Directors are responsible for sending thank you notes and/or acknowledgments to any agencies, organizations, or individuals relevant to HOPE AACR's involvement.

11 - Expenses

Currently, members of the Response Group are responsible for any expenses incurred while on assignments or drills. If HOPE AACR is asked to participate in a response by a responding agency, it is possible that that agency will reimburse our volunteers for travel and lodging. We are actively working on securing grants and donations to reimburse our members for expenses incurred while providing HOPE services.

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APPENDICES LIST

APPENDIX A: ITEMS TO BRING ON ASSIGNMENT

- A-1 Necessary Documents and Identification
- A-2 Equipment

APPENDIX B: BLANK FORMS TO BRING ON ASSIGNMENT

- B-1 Photo Release Form
- B-2 Assignment Report Form (preferred method is on line form)
- B-3 Occurrence Report Form
- B-4 Grievance Report Form

APPENDIX C: Words that Help – Words that Hurt

- C-1 Words That Help
- C-2 Words That Hurt

APPENDIX D: Sample Debriefing Agenda

APPENDIX E: Emergency Contact Informaton Forms

- E-1 Emergency Contact Form
- E-2 Emergency Information Form (Dog)

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APPENDIX A-1

Identification and Documents Required On Assignments

- VALID DRIVER'S LICENSE**
 - YOUR HEALTH INSURANCE CARD**
 - HOPE AACR ID BADGE**
 - DOG'S HOPE AACR VEST**
(HOPE ID Badges for dogs are optional. DO NOT have other organization ID tags on your dogs collar.)
 - COPY OF CURRENT HOPE AACR CERTIFICATION LETTER**
(Your ID card is not valid without a current certification letter)
 - COPY OF CURRENT HOPE AACR INSURANCE POLICY**
(Posted on the "Members Only" web page)
 - COPY OF CURRENT RABIES CERTIFICATE**
(Provided by your veterinarian health care provider)
 - COPY OF CURRENT VETERINARIAN HEALTH FORM**
(Canine health record form, filled out annually by your veterinarian as part of the HOPE renewal process. This form is available on the Members Only web page.)
 - SOS CARD**
(This card is optional, but highly recommended. It's FREE. You can order a SOS card on the Members Only web page)
 - EMERGENCY CONTACTS FORM**
(Available in Appendix E of this guide. Also posted on the Members Only web page)
 - HOPE MEMBERS PHONE LIST**
(Posted on the Members Only web page)
-

Blank copies of all of the following forms should be taken on assignment:

(blanks are posted on the Members Only web page and are included below.)

- B-1 PHOTO RELEASE FORM**
- B-2 ASSIGNMENT REPORT FORM**
- B-3 OCCURRENCE REPORT FORM**
- B-4 GRIEVANCE REPORT FORM**

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APPENDIX A-2 Recommended Items to Bring On Assignments

The items required for a specific assignment will be determined by the nature and location of the incident. Assignments away from home, and of longer duration, will require more planning and organization. Below is a checklist of recommended items to bring on assignment.

FOR RESPONDING MEMBER	FOR RESPONDING DOG
<input type="checkbox"/> HOPE Backpack	<input type="checkbox"/> Food and Treats (non-perishable and familiar)
<input type="checkbox"/> HOPE Uniform Clothing	<input type="checkbox"/> Waters
<input type="checkbox"/> HOPE Business Card	<input type="checkbox"/> Collapsible food/water dishes
<input type="checkbox"/> HOPE Brochures	<input type="checkbox"/> Medications (if used)
<input type="checkbox"/> Prescriptions/Medications	<input type="checkbox"/> Proper collar and leash and spare
<input type="checkbox"/> Debit/Credit Cards	<input type="checkbox"/> Poop bags/clean-up supplies
<input type="checkbox"/> Cash (minimum of \$20 in small bills recommended)	<input type="checkbox"/> Animal First Aid Kit (see team welfare guide or workshop materials)
<input type="checkbox"/> Extra glasses, contacts, sunglasses	<input type="checkbox"/> Familiar sleeping pad
<input type="checkbox"/> Cell phone and battery charger	<input type="checkbox"/> Collapsible mesh crate (small light weight crates are best)
<input type="checkbox"/> Two-way radio/walkie-talkie/HAM radio	<input type="checkbox"/> Contact information - microchip company
<input type="checkbox"/> Personal hygiene items	<input type="checkbox"/> Cooling pad or collar for hot weather
<input type="checkbox"/> Small notebook, pens, post-its, paperclips	<input type="checkbox"/> Booties
<input type="checkbox"/> Watch	<input type="checkbox"/> Toys
<input type="checkbox"/> Off-work clothing	<input type="checkbox"/> Retractable leash (for off-duty exercise)
<input type="checkbox"/> Hat and gloves	<input type="checkbox"/> Grooming tools (brush, nail clippers, etc.)
<input type="checkbox"/> Rain gear / ground cover	<input type="checkbox"/> Clean-up kit (wipes paper towels, odor remover, rubber gloves)
<input type="checkbox"/> Camera / film (you must have permission to take photos while on a call-out)	<input type="checkbox"/> Puppy training pad (if necessary)
<input type="checkbox"/> Sunscreen / bug spray	
<input type="checkbox"/> Anti-bacterial gel	
<input type="checkbox"/> Small disposable wipes	
<input type="checkbox"/> Lint remover	
<input type="checkbox"/> Tissues	
<input type="checkbox"/> First Aid Kit (human)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Flashlight and batteries	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other crisis response training documentation (i.e. CPR/First Aid)	

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**APPENDIX B-1
PHOTO RELEASE**

I hereby grant HOPE AACR permission to use my likeness in photographs taken on:

Date: _____

Location: _____

HOPE AACR may use these photographs in any and all of its publications, including website entries, without payment or any other consideration. I understand and agree that these materials will become the property of HOPE AACR and will not be returned.

I hereby irrevocably authorize HOPE AACR to edit, alter, copy, exhibit, publish or distribute these photos for purposes of publicizing HOPE AACR or for any other lawful purpose. In addition, I waive the right to inspect or approve the finished product, including written or electronic copy, wherein my likeness appears. Additionally, I waive any right to royalties or other compensation arising or related to the use of the photograph. I hereby hold harmless and release and forever discharge HOPE AACR, or it's Members, or other persons volunteering for HOPE AACR from all claims, demands, and causes of action which I, my heirs, representatives, executors, administrators, or any other persons acting on my behalf or on behalf of my estate have or may have by reason of this authorization.

I am at least 18 years of age and am competent to contract on my own name. I have read this release in it's entirety before signing and fully understand the contents, meaning, and impact of this release.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____ E-mail: _____

Address: _____

Consent for Minors

If the person being photographed is under age 18, there must be consent by a parent or guardian, as follows:

I hereby certify that I am the parent or guardian of _____, named above, and do hereby give my consent without reservation to the foregoing on behalf of this person.

Parent or Guardian Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____

NOTE: A separate form must be completed for each person photographed.

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**APPENDIX B-2
ASSIGNMENT REPORT FORM**

Please fill out one report for each day of response and submit a copy to your Regional Director, Coordinator, or Team Leader within 48 hours of completion of assignment.

(Note: Online reporting is preferred over submitting a paper form.)

Certified Member: _____ **Report Date:** _____

Assignment Date: _____

Arrival Time at Site: _____ **AM** **PM** **Departure:** _____ **AM** **PM**

Location of Assignment: _____

Type of assignment (check one): Local Regional National

Type of response: _____

Purpose: _____

Responding Agency responsible for Call-Out: _____

Agency Contact person(s): _____ **Phone:** _____

Other Responding Agencies on Site: _____

Other Agency Contact Person(s): _____

HOPE AACR Leadership On Site:

Regional Director: _____

Coordinator: _____

HOPE Agency Rep: _____

Group Leader: _____

Team Leader: _____

Other HOPE AACR teams on site:

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**APPENDIX B-3
CONFIDENTIAL OCCURRENCE REPORT FORM**

Directions for Completing Form:

- Occurrences are any event that is not consistent with the routine operation of the organization; they represent an opportunity for improvement of services.
- All incident reports should be reviewed with your supervisor as soon as possible and forwarded to the President within 24 hours of the occurrence. If a major incident occurs (for example, a dog bite), this should be reported to your supervisor and to the President *immediately*. The president can be contacted at any time by calling 877-HOPE-K9s (877-467-3597).
- If information in any category isn't available, please note this on the form.
- Please identify your recommendations for corrective action, if necessary. For example, if an incident occurred between two visiting dogs, you should identify what actions could have been taken to prevent the occurrence. Your honest input is important to maintain the quality of our services.
- If multiple individuals/dogs are involved in an occurrence, the individuals may either complete one form that everyone signs or multiple forms signed by each individual. Please assure that the information reflects your understanding of the events before you sign the form.

Date of Incident: _____

Incident Involving: _____

Exact Location of Occurrence: _____

Time of Occurrence: _____ AM PM

Nature of Occurrence: _____

Description of Occurrence:

If incident involved injury to person or animal:

Was medical attention sought and obtained? Yes No Not Applicable

If medical treatment was obtained please check all that apply:

First Aid: EMT: Nurse Practitioner/Physician's Assistant/Medical Doctor:

Hospital or Other Treatment Facility: Veterinarian or Vet Tech:

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OCCURANCE REPORT FINDINGS

Review/Findings of Assigned Occurrence Investigator

Review/Findings of President, Executive Committee, Board Members:

Corrective Actions Taken; Policy/Trend Implications:

Signature of President: _____ **Date:** _____

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**APPENDIX B-4
CONFIDENTIAL GRIEVANCE REPORT FORM**

Date of Incident: _____

Incident Involving: _____

Exact Location of Occurrence: _____

Time of Occurrence: _____ AM PM

Nature of Occurrence:

Brief Description of Occurrence:

Did other individuals witness the occurrence? Yes No

If so, whom?

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Resolution Sought by Member Filing Grievance Form:

Name of Person Preparing Grievance Report: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

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GRIEVENCE REPORT (cont.)

Date Form Received by HOPE Leadership: _____

Person Receiving Grievance Report: _____

Review/Findings by Regional Director, Executive Committee, President:

Additional Information:

Actions Taken; Policy/Trend Implications:

Signature of Regional Director: _____ Date: _____

Signature of President: _____ Date: _____

Date of Review by Board of Directors: _____

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APPENDIX C-1 WORDS THAT HELP

Words help to heal along with **silence**. At times words hurt. The following is a suggested list of words and phrases that you might use to *ease someone's pain and suffering*. The comfort that our K-9s give is beyond words. The K-9s are able to help people calm down when the world is coming down around them. When you are working with your K-9 you do not need to use many words. ***The use of words depends on appropriate timing.*** Using your own instincts and intuition helps determine when to say:

- I'm sorry.
- I'm so sorry.
- Is there anything I can do to help?
- You can hug Duke. [Your K-9's name]
- I am sorry you are so sad.
- I realize you are in pain.
- It must be awful not to know where your [son, daughter, friend, spouse, pet, etc] is.
- What can I do to help?
- Would you like to talk about it?
- Would you like to tell me about ~ name of loved one?
- Tell me what happened.
- It must be so hard for you.
- Uh Hum
- [Nod your head in affirmative—no words]
- Your loss is profound. I wish I could help somehow.
- I understand how angry you are.
- Of course you are angry [frustrated, mad, anxious, helpless, Etc.]
- What could I do to help?
- I hear your anger. You felt betrayed by God. I'm so sorry.
- You are reacting normally.
- You have a NORMAL fear [anger, frustration, helplessness...] to an ABNORMAL event.
- I am so very sorry.
- Let me get someone that might assist you to... [Whatever they have asked of you.]
- May I get you some water?
- Would you like to pet [hold, touch etc.] "Duke"? [use K-9 name.]
- Take a deep breathe

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APPENDIX C-2 WORDS THAT HURT

Just as words can heal they can also ***hurt***. Verbal abuse is considered as severe as physical abuse. In the event of a crisis and tragedy the helper might say something that could hurt the person, even though the helper did not intend to hurt. Taking the focus off the person and putting the focus on you is **not helpful**. The following is a brief list of words and phrases that are **not helpful**.

- This too shall pass.
- Don't worry about it so much.
- Yeah, you are acting "crazy."
- Your sad feelings will soon go away.
- Time heals all.
- You shouldn't be so angry [frustrated, hurt etc.]
- Won't you just stop your crying it is upsetting everyone?
- Quit acting like a baby.
- It doesn't hurt.
- I've experienced death too you know. I'll tell you how I got better. [Proceed to talk about yourself.]
- You just need to "bite the bullet."
- Here is a tissue. Wipe your tears away.
- Don't be angry with God. God will take care of you.
- You need to get a grip on yourself and stop this.
- Maybe you need some medication.
- This too shall pass.
- I guess you don't want me around because you aren't petting Duke. [Your K-9's name]. Walk away.
- You can always build another house.
- Think of it this way--you lost your dog/cat, but you can get another one. Your family is still alive.
- I suffered from loss too. I became a volunteer to help others.
- I came here to have my dog petted. You need to pet him/her.
- Let me tell you what happened the last time I went to a crisis response. Proceed to talk about your experience.
- You're acting like a big baby.
- You'll get over it in a year or two.
- Snap out of it!

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APPENDIX D SAMPLE DEBRIEFING AGENDA

Mitchell's Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD) Model

"This session has been scheduled to help everyone come to terms with the thoughts and feelings that arose out of the recent tragic situation you all faced. This session will probably last from {1-2 hours} and will cover these six areas":

1. Initial Phase - Introductions, a discussion about confidentiality, an explanation of the purpose of the session and a review of some other guidelines for the session. Some general rules:
 - Confidentiality
 - Please speak only for yourself
 - No press, No outsiders allowed in session
 - No break until it is ended
 - Plan to stay entire session
 - No beepers, phone calls, or other interruptions
 - Not a time of investigation or critique
 - You may ask questions at any time
 - No one has to talk if they don't want to.
2. Fact Phase – review what actually happened during and after the incident. Discuss what each person, heard, saw, smelled, touched, thought and did.
3. Thought Phase – review of the thoughts each person had at the time of the incident and in the time since the incident
4. Reaction Phase – Review of the reactions each person had at the time of the incident and in the time since the incident
5. Symptom Phase – examination of the physical and psychological after effects of the incident
6. Teaching Phase – Reminded everyone that the symptoms they are experiencing are normal responses to the abnormally stressful situation they have faced.
7. Re-Entry Phase - This is the time to wrap up, answer any questions, and develop a plan for any future follow-up for emotional support that may be needed.

General Guidelines for Debriefing Process

- Everyone should attend
- Recommended Debriefing within first 24-72 hours after event with follow-up sessions as needed
- Allow lots of time, especially during the initial stages/phases when facts, thoughts and feelings are being discussed.
- Separate into groups by trauma-exposure level to avoid exposing others to new stress through debriefing process.
- Participants not required to speak, but good to draw everyone into conversation as quickly as possible.
- It is for assessing and supporting individuals that have experienced or witnessed trauma.

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**APPENDIX E-1
EMERGENCY CONTACT FORM**

Note: It is recommended you have a SOS card made so you can carry it with you on assignments.

Name: _____ Phone (cell): _____

Address: _____

Emergency Contact #1:

Name: _____

Phone: (home): _____ Phone (cell): _____

Address: _____

Emergency Contact #2:

Name: _____

Phone: (home): _____ Phone (cell): _____

Address: _____

Primary Care Doctor:

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Your Allergies? _____

Other medical issues: _____

Local Contact While Traveling (update with each trip)

Date: _____ Name: _____

Phone (home): _____ (cell) _____

Date: _____ Name: _____

Phone (home): _____ (cell) _____

Date: _____ Name: _____

Phone (home): _____ (cell) _____

HOPE AACR 24 Hour Contact #: 877-HOPE-K9s (877-467-3597)

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APPENDIX E-2

EMERGENCY INFORMATION FORM (dogs)

Note: It is recommended you have a SOS card made so you can carry it with you on assignments.

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY
MY PET MAY BE TRAVELING WITH ME!

Owner Name: _____

Phone (cell): _____

Phone (home): _____

Address: _____

Dog's Name: _____ Sex: _____

Breed: _____ Altered: Yes No Weight: _____ Age: _____

Special characteristics/needs of my dog: _____

Micro-Chipped: Yes No Micro-Chip Phone: _____

Micro-Chip ID #s: _____

If I am incapacitated, please honor the following requests:

- If my dog needs medical attention, please contact the vets listed below and treat my pet for injuries, making him as comfortable as possible.

Primary Vet Name: _____ Phone: _____

Emergency Vet Name: _____ Phone: _____

- If my dog does NOT require medical attention, please contact the person(s) identified below. If they are not available, please transport my pet(s) to:

Contact #1: _____ Phone: _____

Contact #2: _____ Phone: _____

Kennel: _____ Phone: _____

I guarantee payment of all vet and kennel charges for my pet.

Signature of Owner: _____ Date: _____



ASPCA Poison Control 1-888-426-4435 (fee for service)
American Poison Control Center 1-800-222-1222 (free)

