Policy:

The purpose of this policy is to help employees and volunteers, including board members, understand their roles and responsibilities in *Pawsibilities*, the Humane Society of Greater Akron’s (PHSGA) implementation of communication technology including but not limited to: web sites, social networking sites, personal networking sites, blogs and microblogs, message boards and chat rooms, podcasts and webinars, video sharing sites, texting and instant messaging, etc.

Scope of Policy:

*Pawsibilities*, the Humane Society of Greater Akron recognizes that employees and volunteers may engage in communication while on and off duty as appropriate for performance of their duties and/or for the advance of our animal rescue mission. This policy applies to social media content – written, verbal and images - on the PHSGA social media (Facebook and other media) as well as information you post on your personal site(s) or on someone else’s site on the Internet.

Employees and volunteers who engage in blogging or posting should be mindful that their comments, even if done off premises and while off-duty, could have an adverse affect on PHSGA’s legitimate business interests, animal rescue mission and animal privacy interests. In addition, some readers may view you as a *de facto* spokesperson for the *Pawsibilities*, the Humane Society of Greater Akron.

PHSGA depends on strong community support and good will. Our reputation is a valuable and important corporate asset. Please consider whether you are potentially damaging our reputation before you post on any site, especially if/when you identify yourselves as an employee or volunteer of PHSGA. If you are uncertain consult your supervisor, the Assistant Executive Director or the Executive Director before posting on-line.

To reduce the likelihood that your blogging or posting will have an adverse affect on PHSGA and the animals under our care, we require that you observe the following terms of use:

1. Your blogging/posting is subject to all of the policies in our Employee Handbook, including “Confidential Matters,” “Conflicts of Interests” and “Disciplinary Action, Dismissal and Rules of Conduct” and Volunteer Handbook.

2. Do not create or share internet media communication that negatively impacts the *Pawsibilities* brand or reputation.

3. Do not discredit, disparage, challenge or defame the mission, services, public policy positions, operational or animal status decisions of PHSGA. Do not reveal any confidential or proprietary information about PHSGA.

4. Do not criticize individual staff or volunteer performance (by name, title or role.) Do not disclose the name or any personal identifying information of any staff or volunteer without his/her permission.
5. Do not discuss the behavior, history or medical records of animals in our care and custody that are involved in criminal proceedings (per the Employee Handbook.)

6. Do not discuss the behavior, medical condition, behavioral status, adoption or euthanasia status of animals in our care which could negatively impact the adoptability of that animal or of other animals in our care. Do not “lobby” for specific animals in our care in this public forum.

7. Do not post information that adversely reinforces negative breed-specific stereotypes.

8. Do obtain permission from the AED prior to posting the PHSGA logo, trademark, proprietary graphics, and photographs of the shelter, events, employees, volunteers, staff or animals.

9. Do create content or forward positive compelling content about animal rescue that builds support for the adoption of animals in our care with permission of the AED. Obtain permission before naming or referencing any animal in our care or before soliciting material of financial support for PHSGA.

10. When commenting on policy issues for which there is no official PHSGA position statement, make it clear that you are speaking for yourself and not on behalf of the organization. Write in the first person and do not use your work e-mail account.

11. Support PHSGA position statements on issues and public policy/legislation, but do not represent the organization as a spokesperson in the traditional media or on-line media without permission of the Executive Director.

12. Do not use social media for internal workplace communications, including but not limited to any disagreements or differences in the workplace.

13. Do not create or share Internet media communication that violates any local, state, federal or international laws and regulation. This includes uploading, posting or e-mails that: impersonate/misrepresent, infringe on copyright laws, and contain obscene or defamatory content, forward unsolicited/unauthorized (spam, junk mail, chain letters), and knowingly create of transmit software viruses, works or other disabling codes.

14. This Policy pertains to external communication and does not negate nor limit employee protection under PHSGA’s internal “Open Door” policy.

**Procedure:**

PHSGA will regularly monitor the content of all of its social media sites. *Pawsibilities*, at its sole discretion may restrict, block, suspend, terminate, delete or discontinue any employee’s or volunteers access to PHSGA-sponsored Internet media sites at any time, without notices and delete postings.
Policy Administration and Interpretation:

The Assistant Executive Director will be responsible for administering and interpreting the guidelines and provisions of this policy. Any questions regarding the appropriate use of PHSGA-sponsored social media sites or your personal social media (Facebook, etc.) should be directed to the Assistant Executive Director.

By accessing, viewing and/or posting any content related directly or indirectly to PHSGA on any Internet media site, you accept, without limitation or qualification, the above terms of use. If you do not agree to the terms of this policy, you may not view or post any contact to any Internet media site on behalf of PHSGA, as an employee of Pawsibilities, the Humane Society of Greater Akron.

This is a mandatory policy for staff and volunteers. Sign-off and compliance is a condition of employment by PHSGA and violation will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. Volunteer compliance is expected as part of the PHSGA Volunteer Agreement.

________________________________________  ______________________________
Printed Name                                      Date

______________________________________________
Signature