



JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title:	Research Assistant	Department:	Contract Based Research
Training and/or Education:	Professional or volunteer experience in public health or human healthcare	FLSA Status:	Temporary – 3 years Non-Exempt, Full-time
Licenses or Certificates:	Valid Driver’s License	Reports To:	Executive Director, IHAC Research Associate
Experience:	2-3 years of research experience	Supervises:	None
Salary & Benefits:	\$16.00 - \$18.00 per hour; DOE Dental, Vision and life insurance, seven paid holidays, sick pay and a generous paid time off plan. We also offer automatic payroll deposits, training opportunities, employee discounts on merchandise and limited veterinary services.		

Summary

Yakima Humane Society (YHS), in partnership with The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) Pets for Life Program (PFL) and the University of Denver (DU) Institute for Human-Animal Connection (IHAC), is seeking a detail-oriented, flexible and strategic professional to join our team during a four-year study. Our organization is committed to ending animal suffering, reducing animal overpopulation, and educating the public regarding responsible pet ownership while promoting community kindness to their welfare. We are dedicated to providing comprehensive services that positively impact the lives of community members and their pets, while becoming the model animal welfare organization for Central Washington. This is a unique opportunity for an individual with interest in advancing issues of cultural competences and working with underserved communities.

The One Health framework, collaboratively proposed by the American Veterinary Medical Association and the American Medical Association, recognizes that human, non-human animal, and ecosystem health (henceforth referred to as the One Health triad) are interconnected. While individual correlations have been drawn between the components of the One Health triad, there have been no studies specifically documenting how effective companion animal welfare programming might drive improvements in both human and ecosystem health. HSUS PFL program offers a unique opportunity to rigorously study the One Health framework from an animal welfare perspective. PFL removes barriers to accessing companion animal-care services (e.g., spay/neuter, vaccinations, wellness exams, and behavioral training), supplies, and information in underserved communities through a person-centered approach. The focus of the PFL intervention on a single component of the One Health triad – companion animals – provides a unique opportunity to test the broader concept by measuring the secondary effects on the other two components.

The Institute for Human-Animal Connection (IHAC), located in the Graduate School of Social Work at the University of Denver, is a leading academic center with an innovative research agenda aimed at advancing the understanding of the role of the human-animal bond across the lifespan at the individual, organizational, and community level. IHAC and PFL are collaborating on this study to measure the broad impacts of PFL programming on communities.

The study will consist of two urban and two rural communities that will receive the PFL intervention. Each study community will have a dedicated full-time Research Assistant (RA) to collect both quantitative and qualitative data from their community over the four-year study period. The RA will operate out of Yakima Humane Society and will be supervised by IHAC’s Research Associate. Data will be collected in the four study communities by the RAs using DU Institutional Review Board-approved protocols. Each RA will be responsible for collecting data from their community using a combination of survey of individual community members, desktop analysis of secondary data sources, and public information requests. All quantitative data will be collected using Research Electronic Data Capture (REDCap) survey software using dedicated electronic tablets. The RAs will not, however, be responsible for delivering PFL programming. Standard PFL programming carried out by the local animal welfare partner organization under the supervision of the



HSUS PFL leadership team will ensure generalizability of any findings to other PFL communities. The RA will work with graduate students at the University of Denver's Institute for Human-Animal Connection who will be available to support the process of identifying data sources, cleaning and analyzing data, and writing reports (with particular emphasis on conducting the literature reviews to frame the study findings within current practices in the field).

The community-based RA role is critical to the success of the study. The RAs will be skilled in interpersonal communication, including community-specific language (e.g. fluency in Spanish). All community RAs will participate in a 2-day remote training with the Institute for Human-Animal Connection team where they will receive detailed instruction on the data collection protocol.

Working Relationships

Works closely with Yakima Humane Society, Pets for Life staff, and the Institute for Human-Animal Connection's Research Team.

Essential Job Functions

1. Conduct door-to-door surveys in the study community.
2. Conduct database analyses (e.g. internet searches, public record requests) to obtain secondary source data on human, animal, and ecosystem health in the study community.
3. Manage the One Health data set in the study community.
4. Work collaboratively with Yakima Humane Society, Pets for Life staff, and the Institute for Human-Animal Connection's Research Team to implement the study.
5. Other duties as assigned.

Education, Experience, Knowledge, Skills, Abilities

1. Interest in advancing issues of cultural competence and working with underserved communities
2. Excellent interpersonal communications skills, including community-specific language, with preference for bilingual (Spanish speaking) candidates
3. Excellent time management, with ability to work independently and adhere to a standard protocol
4. Capability to work with remote team members
5. Excellent organizational skills with a strong attention to detail
6. Proficiency in Microsoft Office programs, especially Microsoft Excel
7. Commitment to the Yakima Humane Society's mission and values; a genuine passion for the welfare of animals

Preferred

Professional or volunteer experience in public health or human healthcare; 2-years of research experience including data collection, management and database analysis, and proficiency in REDCap software for managing online surveys and databases or other data management software. Candidate should be a highly motivated, enthusiastic self-starter with a professional attitude.

Other Requirements

1. Valid Washington State Drivers License, access to a vehicle during work hours, and car insurance
2. Must pass a Washington State Patrol Background Check and a drug screening

The Yakima Humane Society is an equal opportunity employer. This position description reflects the assignment of essential functions; it does not prescribe or restrict the tasks that may be assigned. It in no way states or implies that these are the only duties to be performed by the employee occupying this position. The Yakima Humane Society reserves the right to revise or change job duties and responsibilities as the need arises and as organization requires. This document does not create an employment contract implied or otherwise, other than an "at-will" relationship.