

# MHS General Policies

## Section I. Organization

### **1.0 Aims and Goals:**

- 1.1 To promote the conservation and preservation of reptiles and amphibians.
- 1.2 To educate the public to the value of reptiles and amphibians.
- 1.3 To educate its members as to the proper care of reptiles and amphibians.
- 1.4 To educate its members as to the importance of maintaining natural populations of reptiles and amphibians.
- 1.5 To promote an atmosphere for open discussion of reptiles and amphibians among its members.

### **2.0 Code of Ethics:**

- 2.1 Members of MHS shall foster and promote an appreciation of reptiles and amphibians.
- 2.2 Members are expected to respect the aims and goals of MHS and shall not diminish these goals or discredit or embarrass MHS or its members.
- 2.3 Members are expected to discourage illegal or unethical conduct of the members or non-members of MHS.
- 2.4 Members are expected to treat reptiles and amphibians in a humane and ethical manner, whether the animals are in the wild or captivity.
- 2.5 Disregarding this code of ethics may result in the loss of membership.
  - 2.5.1 A two-thirds (2/3)-majority vote of a quorum board of directors is necessary to revoke a membership.
  - 2.5.2 Any individual whose membership has been previously revoked can be reinstated with a two-thirds (2/3)-majority vote of a quorum board of directors.

### **3.0 Non-Profit Status, Tax-Exempt Status, Insurance Policy**

- 3.1 The Board of Directors will be responsible for maintaining a current copy of the non-profit, tax exempt and insurance requirements. To ensure the continuation of these statuses a summary of the requirements and limitations shall be given to each board member.

### **4.0 Maintenance of Policy**

- 4.1 The Board of Directors, Committee Chairpersons, and other appointed representatives shall uphold the Bylaws and policies of MHS.
- 4.2 Committee chairpersons are responsible for enforcing the general policies of MHS. Further policies or detailed procedures regarding that committee are at the discretion of that chairperson subject to the approval of the board.
- 4.3 Chairpersons are responsible for reporting their activities to the board in a timely manner and preparing a final report of the committee's yearly activity.
- 4.4 The President shall reconfirm all chair positions annually. Chair positions which are active monthly (adoption, education, newsletter folding, etc) will be assumed confirmed until either the chair wishes to resign or is removed from duty.

### **5.0 General Meetings**

- 5.1 MHS, through its formulation of a student chapter with the University of Minnesota, will abide by the rules and regulations governing the use of University rooms. The board is responsible for maintaining a current copy of these rules and taking necessary actions to ensure the policies are conformed with.
- 5.2 Nametags are to be worn by the membership to provide identification for privileges. Board members will wear colored nametag at the general meeting to be visible to the membership.
- 5.3 When possible the refreshments will be served in environmentally friendly containers (coffee cups, etc.).
- 5.4 General meeting audio or videotapes: first copy to the librarian, second copy to the Historian for storage.
- 5.5 A welcome handout will be given to new attendees of the general meeting.
- 5.6 An updated active member phone list is to be provided to necessary board members and chairs monthly.

### **6.0 Elections**

- 6.1 Members must be present to vote. No absentee ballots.
- 6.2 Only active members wearing MHS nametag may obtain ballots.
- 6.3 Ballots shall not be counted by anyone on the ballot.
- 6.4 Only one person can occupy a board position (no co-sharing positions). Board members may delegate any job function(s), except voting, to another member, but the Board member is ultimately responsible for completion of all duties.

### **7.0 Educational Events**

- 7.1 Hands-On Policy - see attached
- 7.2 Hands-On(s) at a pet store or similar retail location shall be allowed only with board approval.

## **Section II. Financial**

### **1.0 Dues**

- 1.1 Active Members: Sustaining \$60.00, Contributing \$30.00, and Basic \$15.00.
  - 1.1.1 Sustaining, contributing or basic membership includes all individuals residing at the same address.
- 1.2 Corresponding Members: Non-Commercial (Exchanges, Museums) \$0.00, Commercial \$25.00.
- 1.3 Membership dues must be paid on an annual basis (minimum).
- 1.4 MHS will accept MHS Bucks, cash or checks as payment for membership. Checks must have name, address, phone number, and date of birth or driver license number.

### **2.0 Budget**

- 2.1 The Budget Committee will present a budget plan no later than the November Board Meeting.
- 2.2 The Annual Audit Committee will be selected no later than the March Board Meeting and will present their written report no later than the May Board Meeting.

### **3.0 Reimbursements**

- 3.1 Reimbursements of expenses require pre-approval subject to the following schedule: Up to \$50.00 each for the Treasurer and highest-ranking officer; over \$100.00 requires Board approval.
- 3.2 Reimbursement will not be made without proof of purchase or board approval.
- 3.3 Mileage will be reimbursed at the rate of \$.25 per mile.

### **4.0 Expenditures**

- 4.1 Budgeted routine expenditures are deemed approved upon approval of the budget (newsletter printing and postage, etc.).
- 4.2 Budgeted non-routine expenditures may only be made by persons previously authorized by the board subject to the same limits as reimbursements.
- 4.3 All unbudgeted expenditures require prior board approval.
- 4.4 Expenditures shall be designated routine or non-routine within the annual budget.

### **5.0 Sales**

- 5.1 Non-MHS Sales
  - 5.1.1 MHS accepts no responsibility for any private sales that may take place within the proximity of the monthly meeting place.
  - 5.1.2 Selling shall take place outside of the monthly meeting room.
  - 5.1.3 Selling shall not conflict with the official meeting or rules of the University of Minnesota.
  - 5.1.4 The general announcement of private sales within the meeting room is prohibited except under special circumstances and with pre-approval of the highest ranking board member.
  - 5.1.5 'Critic of the Month' is the only time an animal may be advertised for sale during the meeting.
- 5.2 MHS Sales
  - 5.2.1 MHS will accept MHS Bucks, cash or checks as payment. Checks must have name, address, phone number, and date of birth or driver license number and will only be accepted from members in good standing.
  - 5.2.2 Only active or corresponding members may purchase rodents. Dry good items or raffle tickets may be purchased by anyone attending the event or if offered by mail.
  - 5.2.3 Rules of special sale events may be determined by the person(s) in charge of the event subject to approval by the Board prior to the event.

### **6.0 Inventory**

- 6.1 All marketable items are to be tracked monthly. Written tracking reports with monthly activity and balance will be recorded. Remaining balance must be physically counted at least quarterly. Notes are required on any discrepancies.
- 6.2 Inventory tracking report must be turned into the Treasurer each July and January for the prior six month period.

## **Section III. Animals**

### **1.0 Animals**

- 1.1 MHS will not sell or auction live animals.

### **2.0 Venomous**

- 2.1 MHS does not encourage, recommend, nor promote the keeping of any species of venomous reptiles by private individuals.
- 2.2 MHS strongly encourages person(s) who feel a need to keep venomous reptiles to consider the following suggestions prior to obtaining any venomous reptiles.
  - 2.2.1 Learn about the care and husbandry techniques needed to provide a healthy and secure environment for the animals.
  - 2.2.2 Establish a protocol for feeding and cleaning the animals; so as to reduce risks of bites to the keeper and others. Never work with venomous animals while you are alone.
  - 2.2.3 Establish a protocol for first aid in case of a bite from the venomous reptile.
  - 2.2.4 Never keep a reptile that does not have a local source of antivenin.
  - 2.2.5 Never provide untrained persons or minors with venomous reptiles.
  - 2.2.6 Never allow minors to keep venomous reptiles.
  - 2.2.7 Always remember that there is a risk of serious injury or death from working with venomous reptiles.

### **3.0 Critter of the Month**

- 3.1 Clear all potentially dangerous animals with the vice-president before bringing them to the meeting.
- 3.2 Bring animals in appropriate carriers for the weather conditions.
- 3.3 Bring a proper container to display the animal.
- 3.4 Animals may be removed from their containers in the meeting room only during critter of the month.

### **4.0 Adoption Committee**

- 4.1 Adoption Policy - see attached
- 4.2 The Board of Directors shall determine which species will be classified as over abundant based upon the reports of the adoption committee.
- 4.3 The adoption committee will present an annual report by the March board meeting, including a full accounting of all animals processed, whether they were adopted, placed outside the society or euthanized.
- 4.4 Euthanasia
  - 4.4.1 Animals will be euthanized only in a humane veterinarian approved method for the species.
  - 4.4.2 Unhealthy or over abundant animals may be euthanized at the discretion of the Adoption Committee Chair with the approval from the presiding or highest ranking officer available.
  - 4.4.3 The board will make euthanasia decisions for healthy and not over abundant animals only after three (3) months of placement attempts.

## **Section IV. Publications**

### **1.0 Printing**

- 1.1 All MHS publications will be printed on recycled paper.
- 1.2 When possible MHS publications will be sent by bulk mail.
- 1.3 Special publications must have the approval of the board in advance before printing or mailing costs are incurred.

### **2.0 Editors**

- 2.1 Editors are responsible for enforcing the general policies of MHS. Further policies or details regarding their special publications are at the discretion of that editor subject to the approval of the board.
- 2.2 The newsletter editor is responsible for editing and producing the newsletter. The deadlines, procedures and formats are at the discretion of the newsletter editor.
  - 2.2.1 MHS business shall be reported in the newsletter as requested by the board.
  - 2.2.2 The newsletter editor will follow the policies established by the MHS board.
  - 2.2.3 Any donations made by the MHS shall be published in the newsletter.
- 2.3 The White Pages shall be published annually after March and before May.

### **3.0 Library**

- 3.1 Only MHS members may check out or renew library items.
- 3.2 A member may check out up to three items.
- 3.3 The Librarian will make the decision on exchanging newsletters with other societies.
- 3.4 Exchanged newsletter will be held a full year than offered for sale at the annual auction (White Snake Sale).
- 3.5 Overdue fine is \$1.00 per month. Renewals by telephone circumvent the fine. Items may only be renewed twice.
- 3.6 Overdue Library Items
  - 3.6.1 The Librarian will call the person with the overdue item(s) after the first month it is not returned.
  - 3.6.2 The Librarian will send a postcard reminder to the person after the second month the item(s) are overdue.
  - 3.6.3 After the third month the item(s) are overdue, the board will receive the name, the name will be published in the newsletter, and a bill will be sent to the person for the price of replacement cost of the item(s).

### **4.0 Multimedia/Releases**

- 4.1 Multimedia or other new technology forms of communications are subject to the same policies as special publications and need the approval of the board before exposure to the general public.

### **5.0 Ads Policy**

- 5.1 The newsletter editor reserves the right to edit all submissions, and MHS reserves the right to refuse any ads.
- 5.2 No ads will be run for venomous species.
- 5.3 Corresponding Members are allowed per paid membership year: Commercial - 4 business card ads.
- 5.4 Published Ad Policy: MHS assumes NO RESPONSIBILITY regarding the health or legality of any animals, or the quality or legality of any product or service advertised in the MHS Newsletter. Any ad may be rejected at the discretion of the Newsletter Editor. Due to space limitations, unpaid and complimentary advertising is subject to occasional omission.

Classified Ads: All active members are allowed a classified ad, run free of charge as space permits. Ads may be run 3 consecutive months, after which time they may be resubmitted. Corresponding member are allowed a complimentary business card advertisement monthly as space permits.

Display Ad Rates:	Ad Size	per Month	per Year
	Bus Card	\$5.00	\$55.00
	1/4 page	\$10.00	\$110.00
	1/2 page	\$20.00	\$220.00
	Full page	\$40.00	\$440.00

### **6.0 White Pages**

- 6.1 The white pages shall be published annually within 3 months of a newly elected board.
- 6.2 A letter requesting address corrections should be sent out in a timely manner to ensure the information in the directory is accurate as possible.
- 6.3 Members receiving the white pages need to respect the privacy of those listed by refraining from providing the list for any request.
- 6.4 Membership list in electronic or mailing label form will not be available to any commercial request without board approval.

### **7.0 New Member Packet**

- 7.1 New members (or renewing members whose membership lapsed more than 3 years ago) will receive a new member packet within 3 months of paying dues.
- 7.2 New member packets include MHS Bylaws, general policies, descriptions of activities, descriptions of board and chair duties, and other available information regarding MHS.

# MHS Hands-On Policy

MHS provides a public service by exposing the public to various reptiles and amphibians for the purpose of educating them about the natural history, the characteristics, and the biological value of reptiles and amphibians. This should be an enjoyable experience for the animal handler as well as the public. The following policy will ensure safety for the public, the handler and the animal(s). For purposes of definition, a Hands-On Event is any event in which MHS members participate in the public eye with live animals that is sanctioned by the MHS Education Chair (otherwise known as follows as Public Education Coordinator).

## **1.0 General**

- 1.1 The Public Education Coordinator will oversee Hands-On Events. The Public Education Coordinator reports to the MHS Board of Directors.
- 1.2 A copy of the current MHS insurance policy shall be at all Hands-On Events.
- 1.3 All events shall be supervised by the Public Education Coordinator or an experienced MHS member approved by the Public Education Coordinator and/or the MHS President.
- 1.4 A copy of this policy will be signed and dated by every participating MHS member no less than one time per year. Participants under 18 years of age will also have this policy signed by their parent or legal guardian.

## **2.0 Participant of MHS Hands-On Events**

- 2.1 All participants must be current members of MHS in good standing.
- 2.2 All participants will be in compliance with 1.4
- 2.3 Participants 14 years of age and under will be under direct supervision of a parent or guardian.
- 2.4 Participants 15 to 18 years of age may participate as individuals only when adult MHS members are present and must have a written permission slip on file signed by a parent or guardian.

## **3.0 Animal Handling and Personal contact at MHS Hands-On Events**

- 3.1 No venomous animal will be used at a Hands-On Event. These include venomoid and de-fanged animal(s). Special case exceptions to this only with approval of the Public Education Coordinator and the MHS President.
- 3.2 Animals known to secrete toxic skin substances must be displayed in an enclosed container.
- 3.3 Public safety is of utmost importance. Animals used at events where public contact is involved must be under full control at all times. Animals exhibiting aggressive behavior shall not come in contact with the public.
- 3.4 Participants will never allow the public to touch or come into contact with the head of a display animal(s).
- 3.5 Participants will never allow the public to take control of a display animal.
- 3.6 Participants will always demonstrate safe handling practices when in public even if these practices do not necessarily apply to this particular animal(s). Example, handler shall not allow a snake to complete a full loop around the handler's neck.
- 3.7 All lizards capable of fast movement will be harnessed while in public so as to eliminate the possibility of escape into a crowd.
- 3.8 Participants will always handle animals with respect and dignity.
- 3.9 The public will be treated respectfully at all times.
- 3.10 Participants must recognize that some people are extremely fearful of reptiles and/or amphibians. At no time will a participant attempt to force their animal on a member of the public.
- 3.11 Animals will be on display only at the display site of the event. Participants are not to enter or leave the area without first concealing their animal(s). Preferred methods would be by bagging and/or boxing.
- 3.12 Display cages, if used, must be of sturdy design and capable of being securely locked if not attended.

## **4.0 Failure to Comply**

- 4.1 Failure to comply with sections 2 and/or 3 may result in suspension of participation privileges at MHS Hands-On Events.
- 4.2 Repeated violations per 4.1 may result in permanent loss of participation privileges at MHS Hands-On Events.
- 4.3 Suspension for failure to comply with this policy will be enforced by the event supervisor of the Public Education Coordinator.
- 4.4 Participation suspension may be appealed to the MHS Board of Directors.

Adopted October 5, 1996

Amended April 4, 1998

# MHS ADOPTION POLICY

The purpose of the MHS Adoption Committee is to provide adequate housing and care for an animal, which would otherwise be given away, sold, or inhumanely destroyed.

## **1.0 Receipt of animal**

- 1.1 A statement of surrender must be completed by everyone placing an animal with MHS for adoption. Exceptions are Humane Societies, Animal Control and similar re-placement agencies.
- 1.2 Placement of an iguana or Burmese python requires a \$25.00 placement fee. Exceptions as above noted.
- 1.3 All individuals placing an animal are to be notified of possible euthanasia.
- 1.4 Animals should not be brought to a meeting for adoption without prior permission of the adoption chair.

## **2.0 Placement of animals**

- 2.1 Guidelines for the adoption of animals:
  - 2.1.1 To have and provide adequate food and housing for the animal.
  - 2.1.2 To have experience with the species up for adoption or a related species.
  - 2.1.3 To have the same species of the opposite sex.
  - 2.1.4 To have previously bred this species or a related species.
- 2.2 Policies of Adoption:
  - 2.2.1 Consider the best interest of the animal.
  - 2.2.2 All adoptions are at the sole discretion of the adoption committee.
  - 2.2.3 Only current MHS members are eligible to adopt animals. Exceptions may be established by the Board, Currently Iguanas and Burmese are excepted.
  - 2.2.4 Adopted animals remain the property of MHS for one (1) year. Animals may not be sold or otherwise disposed of during this time without the permission of the adoption committee.
  - 2.2.5 Adopters leaving MHS within one (1) year of adopting an animal must offer to return the animal to MHS for re-adoption.
  - 2.2.6 If an animal dies within the one (1) year period, the adoption committee must be notified. The committee may request the return of the animal or a necropsy.
- 2.3 Adoption Procedures
  - 2.3.1 Adoption request forms should be filled out as completely as possible, including name and membership number. A parent must sign for a member under 18 years.
  - 2.3.2 Adoption committee members must abstain from the decision regarding an animal that they or their family member has applied for.
  - 2.3.3 A \$5 donation is requested for each animal adopted. Exceptions may be made by the committee.
  - 2.3.4 Animals available for adoption will be on display at the rear of the room. Do Not Remove them from their cages. Turn in adoption request forms as soon as possible to an adoption committee member.
  - 2.3.5 Unplaced animals will be listed in the newsletter and will return the next month. The board will make euthanasia decision for healthy animals only after three (3) months of placement attempts.

## **3.0 Unhealthy animals**

- 3.1 Any unhealthy or over abundant animals received for adoption may be dealt with at the discretion of the adoption committee chair with approval from the presiding or highest ranking officer available.

Adopted January 4, 1997  
Amended September 6, 1997