



SOCAL Reptile Rescue & Foster Center

Volunteer Application

Orientation will be scheduled upon receipt of completed application. Please mail the completed application to:
SOCAL Reptile Rescue & Foster Center, ATTN: Mr. LaPointe, 7450 Linda Vista Rd., San Diego, CA, 92111

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cellular Phone: _____

Driver's License: _____ State: _____

Occupation: _____ Employer: _____

Business Phone: _____ Primary Email: _____

Emergency Contact:

Name: _____ Phone (home): _____ (work): _____

Address: _____

In order for this volunteer program to be successful you must be available a minimum of five hours a month. Please indicate below the number of hours below the days that you will be available to volunteer:

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

Please add any comments about your schedule or any medical, physical or other limitations that may limit your volunteer work:



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Volunteer's Agreement

Volunteers must be at least 18 years of age. All volunteers must sign the following waiver. While working with reptiles is a rewarding and wonderful experience, there the possibility still remains that an injury may occur.

******RELEASE OF LIABILITY AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT******

For and in consideration of a volunteer being allowed to work with reptiles at **SOCAL Reptile Rescue & Foster Center**, I, the named volunteer hereby fully and forever release, discharge, acquit and exonerate **SOCAL Reptile Rescue & Foster Center**, its volunteers, affiliates and all others acting on its behalf, as the contact permits, from any and all claims, actions, causes of action, remedies and complaints of any kind which I have or may in the future have, whether known or unknown, arising out of or relating to the reptiles or my volunteer work for **SOCAL Reptile Rescue & Foster Center**, including specifically all claims for personal injury, paralysis, wrongful death, property damage and all claims resulting from any injury inflicted by the reptiles.

I recognize and accept all risks associated with unpredictable reptile behavior on behalf of myself. I specifically assume all risks arising out of or relating to the care and handling of the reptiles. I recognize that **SOCAL Reptile Rescue & Foster Center** and/or its agents, volunteers, or affiliates make no representations whatsoever as to the past history of the reptiles and whether or not they are safe reptiles.

I agree to defend, indemnify and hold harmless **SOCAL Reptile Rescue & Foster Center** from any and all claims and costs, including attorney fees arising out of or relating to the reptiles or my volunteer work with **SOCAL Reptile Rescue & Foster Center**.

In signing this application I understand and agree to the preceding and the following:

1. I am at least 18 years of age.
2. I read and agree to the terms of the above waiver statements.
3. I authorize SOCAL Reptile Rescue & Foster Center to seek emergency medical treatment for me in case of an accident, injury or illness.
4. I agree to abide by the policies and procedures presented to me during the volunteer training and as updated thereafter.
5. I agree not to provide information to (or about) former owners of animals, adopters of animals, donors, employees, or volunteers to anyone. Direct any and all questions pertaining to the above to the Head Curator.
6. I understand that my volunteer assignment may be terminated at any time at the discretion of the Head Curator.

As a condition of being accepted as a volunteer with SOCAL Reptile Rescue & Foster Center I agree to maintain a high degree of ethical standards and be law abiding in all respects. I further agree to a background check to determine my driving record (only if assigned to transport animals) and any history of animal abuse. Should any unethical or illegal behavior or history be discovered, this could jeopardize my position as a volunteer.

I have read the foregoing and voluntarily agree to the terms set out above and so indicate by signing below.

Signature of Volunteer

Printed Name of Volunteer

Today's Date



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VOLUNTEER EDUCATIONAL HANDOUT ON THE *Salmonella* BACTERIA

Most, if not all, reptiles carry *Salmonella* bacteria in their intestinal tract and intermittently or continuously shed these bacteria in their feces. *Salmonella* bacteria usually do not cause any illness in reptiles, but can cause serious illness in people.

Salmonella bacteria are easily spread from reptiles to humans. Humans may become infected when they place their hands on objects, including food items, that have been in contact with the stool of reptiles, in their mouths. For example, infants have become infected after drinking from bottles of infant formula that became contaminated during preparation. Individuals who prepared the formula had not washed their hands after touching a reptile or because reptiles were allowed to walk on kitchen counters. For *Salmonella* bacteria to spread from reptiles to humans, the bacteria must be ingested. Therefore, simply touching or holding a reptiles will not result in spread of bacteria unless something contaminated with reptiles feces or the reptile itself is placed in the mouth.

Most *Salmonella* infections in humans result in a mild, self-limiting illness characterized by diarrhea, fever, and abdominal cramps. However, the infection can spread to the bloodstream, bone marrow or nervous system, leading to severe, and sometimes fatal, illness. Such severe infections are more likely to occur in infants and in individuals whose immune system is compromised (for instance, bone marrow transplant recipients, persons with diabetes mellitus, persons infected with the human immunodeficiency virus, and chemotherapy patients).

Unfortunately, *Salmonella* bacteria cannot be eliminated from the intestinal tract of reptiles. Administration of antibiotics to eliminate these bacteria has been unsuccessful and may result in emergence of *Salmonella* bacteria that are resistant to antibiotics. Attempt to raise or identify reptiles that do not carry *Salmonella* bacteria have also been unsuccessful; therefore, bacterial culture of stool samples in an attempt to identify reptiles that are not carrying *Salmonella* bacteria is not recommended.

Fortunately the spread of *Salmonella* bacteria from reptiles to humans can be easily prevented by using the following routine precautions:

- Always wash your hands with hot, soapy water after handling reptiles, reptile cages and equipment, and the stool of reptiles.
- Do not allow reptiles to have access to the kitchen, dining room, or any other area in which food is prepared. Also, do not allow reptiles to have access to bathroom sinks and tubs or to any area where infants are bathed. Consider keeping your reptiles caged or limiting the parts of the house where reptiles are allowed to roam free. Always wash your hands after coming into contact with any area where reptiles are allowed to roam free.
- Do not eat, drink, or smoke while handling reptiles, reptile cages, or reptile equipment. Do not kiss reptiles or share food or drink with them.
- Do not use the kitchen sink, kitchen counters, bathroom sinks or bathtubs to bathe reptiles or to wash reptile cages, dishes or aquariums. Reptile owners may wish to purchase a plastic



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basin or tub in which to bathe or swim their reptiles. Waste water and fecal material should be disposed of in the toilet instead of the bathtub or household sink.

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that children less than five years of age avoid contact with reptiles and that households with children less than one year of age not own reptiles. The Association of Reptilian and Amphibian Veterinarians encourages reptile owners with young children to discuss steps to minimize risks associated with owning reptiles with their reptiles' veterinarian and their physician. Children should be supervised when they are handling reptiles to ensure that they do not place their hands or objects that a reptile has contacted in their mouths. Reptiles should not be kept in childcare centers.
- Immunocompromised persons should avoid contact with reptiles.
- Follow instructions from your reptile's veterinarian concerning proper diet and environment for your reptile. Healthy reptiles living in proper environments are less likely to shed *Salmonella* bacteria.

Information in this handout is not meant to discourage reptile ownership. With a few exceptions (for example, infants or immunocompromised individuals), most people have a low risk of acquiring salmonellosis from reptiles, but following simple precautions can reduce this risk even further. Reptiles can be safely kept as pets, but reptile owners should be aware of the methods for reducing their risk of acquiring *Salmonella* bacteria from their reptiles.

This handout was developed by the Association of Reptilian and Amphibian Veterinarians in collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and is intended for informational purposes only; please seek advice from your physician and your reptile's veterinarian if questions or problems occur.