



“PAWS FOR A CAUSE”

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**INFORMATION PACKAGE**



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### TEMPERAMENT ASSESSMENT FEE \$30.00 (Once Only fee)

### MEMBERSHIP FEE \$80.00 (Annual Membership Fee)

### Requirement criteria

- Dog Veterinarian Health Clearance
- Dog Vaccination (C5) & Human Vaccination
- Dog Temperament Evaluation
- Police Clearance

### Commitment:

**Online Training:** 10 hours online or handbook training

**Mentor Training:** 2 hours

**Industry Placement:** (1½ hr per week/fortnight/month)  
Minimum: 18 hours x 12 Visits over 6 months.

## INTRODUCTION

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**"Paws for a *cause*" program is for people who would like to benefit from spending quality time with their pet dog by sharing their pet with others.**

The “Paws for a cause” program, is beneficial to both parties, dog/owner, and community.

The program where many begin with giving back to the community by volunteering with their well-mannered dog.

Volunteering can give you the opportunity to try something new, gain experience, develop skills, improve your career prospects, build confidence, and meet new people. Through volunteering you can: Take on a challenge - Getting involved in something new can be a challenge.

### **Introduction**

Our Pet Therapy Dog Program proves that positive human-animal interactions improve the physical, emotional, and psychological lives of those we help. Our small group of participants volunteer, sharing their time and the unconditional love of their dog with others.

Animal-assisted activities provide social interactions for, the elderly in retirement homes, those recuperating in the hospital or even students trying to cope with the stress of exams on university campuses.

#### **Learn about what makes us so unique.**

You get highly prepared, enthusiastic, and professional delivery. We know we are privileged to be in one of the most rewarding professions there is, so... this is a huge responsibility, and we take it seriously.

#### **Our “Paws for a cause “Pet Therapy Dog Program, sets the benchmark for safe and enriching pet therapy visits through an ongoing commitment to rigor, education, and advocacy.**

- Established in 2001, we have the only dedicated Animal Assisted Interventions AAI Care Farm and Training Centre, in Australia. Therapy dog training recognition program and community work within industry as placement
- Our program is so rigorous that our Pet Therapy dogs are re-evaluated annually.
- We credential dogs to collaborate with professionals such as counsellors, psychologists, rehabilitation therapists, lifestyle coordinators and teachers.

## **“Paws for A Cause”**

### **Therapy Dog Training Services**

- Handlers complete comprehensive education on safety, infection control, client confidentiality and dog handling.
- We are the ONLY national program that renews their teams based on, the job evaluations, updated screenings for health & team skills.
- We base our organisational values, policies, and education on the belief that we must advocate for our animals first.
- All our Pet Therapy dogs and handlers bring substantive professionalism to the settings they visit.
- Our dogs and handlers are covered by Therapeutic Dog Services comprehensive 20 million liability and volunteer’s insurance coverage.

## **"Paws for a cause" Program Description**

"Paws for a cause" program is for people who would like to benefit from spending quality time with their pet dog by sharing their pet with others.

The program where many begin with giving back to the community by volunteering with their well-mannered dog.

## **Volunteering benefits both parties**

There are many opportunities at Therapeutic Dog Service for individuals to use their talents to help others, either directly or through the provided services and assistance to people in specific areas. Volunteering benefits not only the organisation or individual getting the assistance, but also the volunteer.

**“It’s like therapy,” “It can give you a sense of purpose.”**

Volunteering provides many benefits to both mental and physical health.

- increases self-confidence.
- provides a sense of purpose.
- combats depression.
- helps you stay physically healthy.

If the volunteer has a pet that can be credentialed by the organisation, they can be sent to visit facilities or homes.

If your pet is not suitable for our "Paws for a Cause" community program, we have several areas where you can volunteer with Therapeutic Dog Services and help make a difference.

## **What You Will Learn**

"Paws for a cause" program, is the perfect place to discover whether volunteering collaborating with your dog is for you. It covers all the basics and provides a pathway into more advanced studies [www.therapydogregistry.online](http://www.therapydogregistry.online) such as Entry Level, Therapy Dog Novice, or work through our more advanced programs such as Therapy Dog or Therapy Dog Advanced.

## **“Paws for A Cause” Therapy Dog Training Services**

Wanting to give back and to make a difference in our community by volunteering, this program is designed for you.

### **Training Calendar**

Our “Paws for a cause” Training: start in February through to December of each year.

- Autumn - March, April, and May
- Winter - June, July, August
- Spring - September, October, and November

We offer training times during the working week, day, evening, and weekends.

### **Industry Work Placement**

Our “Paws for a cause” program offer community work in a volunteer placement which they can learn applied techniques as well as opportunities to take their good - natured dogs to our industry partner, community facilities, hospitals, rehabilitation centres, disability, and service the public. The aim of the program is to help improve the wellbeing of patients, residents, and their families through positive contact with visiting volunteers and their dogs.



## “Paws for A Cause”

### Therapy Dog Training Services

# Benefits to you and your dog

#### **Benefits:**

- Industry experience
- Structured Learning
- Community Work

#### **Documentation:**

- Dog evaluation and temperament test
- 4 x DHS Police clearances

#### **Training:**

- 5 hours online or handbook manual training
- 5 hours in house classroom training
- 18-hour x 12 visits, industry placement. (6 months) 1 ½ hour visitation weekly/fortnightly/monthly
- Course materials
- Access to the staff portal

#### **Uniform**

- t-shirt (optional) you can purchase to keep.
- Identification badge (included)
- dog bandanna (you can purchase)

#### **Award Titles**

Therapeutic Dog Services Incorporated awards official titles to dogs and their owners who have worked to improve the lives of the people they have visited. Pet Therapy Dog titles can be earned by dogs who have qualified with Therapeutic Dog Services Incorporated and have performed the required number of visits.

#### **Industry Experience**

- Industry partner experience, community work and placement
- Insurance Inclusion, commercial liability insurance (accreditation requirements must be upheld)
- Receive pet therapy volunteering, employment training and industry placement.
- Receive mentor, supervision, and support.

#### **Certification:**

- Receive access to online professional development training and certification.
- Certificate of appreciation and completion (on completion on your 6 months industry placement)

#### **Opportunities**

- Networking opportunities
- Chances for recognition
- May be identified as a contact for local or national media.
- May have opportunities to take part in research studies.

#### **Other**

- Therapeutic Dog Services publications
- Remain in the organisations data base.
- Invited to Therapeutic Dog Services social group activities.
- Invite to Annual General Meeting



## **1. BEFORE GETTING STARTED**

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### **YOU SHOULD KNOW WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN A COMMUNITY (PET) THERAPY DOG**

A Therapy Dog is born, not made. Yes, one can train a dog mannerly behaviour, but one cannot change a dog's inherent temperament. When a dog is put under stress, poor or marginal temperament will surface.

**So, what to look for?** A Therapy Dog must have an outstanding temperament. This means that the dog should be outgoing and friendly to all people, men, women, and children. The dog should be tolerant of other dogs (of both genders) and non-aggressive toward other pets. Before you consider your dog for community (Pet) therapy dog work and evaluated, you should ask yourself if your dog has these qualities. The dogs used for therapy work vary in size and type. They may not all be “pure-bred,” but they all have a love of people.

Community (Pet) Therapy dog owners have one thing in common; they have discovered the unselfish desire to help others. The use of canines to help humankind is known throughout the world. They have been used for guarding flocks, tracking, hunting, search, and rescue, leading the blind, and in assisting the deaf and physically challenged. The bond between dog and man dates to early history, but it has taken some time to acknowledged between this bond and the emotional health of humans. Studies show that a person holding or petting an animal will cause a lowering of blood pressure, the release of strain and tension, and can draw out a person from loneliness and depression.

The goal for dogs in this program is to bring joy and comfort to those in need, and to make more community (Pet) therapy dogs available by striving to improve and expand the relationship between individuals in need.

## **2. PROSPECTIVE HANDLERS**

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### **Criteria for Prospective Handlers**

- Must be empathetic, kind, personable and relaxed. (Must not be nervous, irritable, depressed, or aloof.)
- Must display impeccable hygiene and be well-dressed covering shoulders and knees. Wear low-heeled shoes covering toes/heels. Hands, fingernails, and hair must be clean.
- A handler under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or who smells of alcohol, will not be evaluated and may not re-test for certification.
- Multiple handlers may evaluate for certification with written permission from the owner.
- Handlers with Service Dogs or Service-Dogs-in-Training must bring written permission from their certifying agency giving approval for participation in a therapy dog program.
- Handlers younger than 16 years of age must be accompanied by a parent or guardian.
- Complete 5 hours online or handbook training and attend 5 hours in classroom training.
- Participate in 18 hours of AAI community work over 6 months.
- DHS Police clearance will be required, at no charge to you.

### **Successful handlers will be able to**

- Read their animal's body language and recognise when their animal is stressed, anxious, concerned, overstimulated, or fatigued.
- Demonstrate positive interactions with their animal by praising, cueing, encouraging, and reassuring the animal as needed.
- Be able to cue or redirect their animal without raising their voice, forcefully jerking on the leash, or offering the animal food or toys.
- Make casual conversation with those they meet on visits while still being attentive to their animal.
- Guide the interactions of others with the animal in a professional and polite manner.
- Advocate for the safety and well-being of their animal always.

### **Volunteers Who Are Minors**

- Therapeutic Dog Services welcomes handlers as young as 10 years old. If you are under the age of 16, you must be accompanied on all visits by a parent/guardian who must always be in control of the dog's leash.

### **Do You Inspire Confidence as a Team?**

- Therapy dogs must inspire confidence in those they meet, and their behaviour must be dependable, predictable, and controllable.
- When you can predict your dog's reactions, you can take action to ensure a reliable response and maintain control of your dog in any situation. When clients and facility staff perceive that you're in control of your dog, they'll have confidence in you both when you come for visits.



### **3. PROSPECTIVE DOGS**

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Our registered community (Pet) therapy dogs are rigorously trained for 6 months to 1 year and evaluated to display temperament that shows confidence, good manners and sociability with other dogs and people.

#### **Places community (Pet) therapy dogs may visit include:**

- Assisted Living/ Nursing Homes
- Children Reading to Dogs Program
- Detention Centres
- Hospitals/ Hospice
- Community Centres/ Day Programs

#### **Criteria for Prospective Community (Pet) Therapy Dogs**

- Must be at least 1 year old at the time of registration into a program.
- Have lived in the owner’s home for at least 6 months and reliably house trained.
- Must have updated vaccines (C5) (Parvovirus, Distemper, Canine Infectious Hepatitis, Bordetella, and Canine parainfluenza virus)
- Have no history of aggression or biting.
- Must demonstrate good basic obedience skills, i.e. walking on a loose leash, and responding reliably to common commands such as Sit, Down, Stay, Come, Leave It.
- Welcome, not just tolerate, interactions with strangers.
- Pass the complex **13 step screening evaluation** test.

#### **Animals with an Illness**

Animal welfare and infection control are key principles in the Therapeutic Dog Services, Community (Pet) Therapy Dog Program.

Forcing dogs to make therapeutic visits when they are not healthy increases stress and can lead to a worsened condition. Additionally, you may visit clients with compromised immune systems who would be at risk for transmission of zoonotic diseases. If your dog is taking antibiotics, antifungals or immunosuppressants they must refrain from testing or visiting until they have finished treatment.

#### **Animals with a Disability**

Therapeutic Dog Services does register animals with disabilities if visiting does not aggravate the medical condition. If your animal’s disability requires changes to our evaluation, please contact us and we’d be happy to discuss the specifics of your situation.

## **4. CONTACT**

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**Therapeutic Dog Services Incorporated**

Email: [therapydogs@tdsinc.com.au](mailto:therapydogs@tdsinc.com.au)

Administration: 0481 293 370

Coordinator: 0452 671 425