



HEALING PAWS ANIMAL THERAPY PROGRAM GUIDELINES AND AGREEMENT

Anderson Humane Healing Paws program offers you and your pet the opportunity to be tested as a *TEAM* for certification as a comfort therapy animal team. If you and your pet would like to be a part of this amazing program, these guidelines will help you prepare for the evaluation process. Anderson Humane will accept most domesticated animals into the program. It's not just dogs that can be evaluated. For more information, please contact the Program Coordinator.

Below are guidelines to help you be successful.

CANINE EVALUATIONS

First and foremost, the evaluation helps to assure that your dog is comfortable in the kinds of environments that they will likely experience. For the well-being of your canine companion, they must be comfortable during the evaluation and not show signs of fear, anxiety, or stress.

We purposefully put you and your pet into a noisy, active, and disruptive environment to test how well you both handle these types of everyday situations. The experience will include people with canes, crutches, wheelchairs, and other objects so that the evaluator can view reactions to the encounters. Other items may be dropped to create a noise during the evaluation.

Your pet will have to make physical contact with the evaluator and/or assistant in the form of handshakes, hugs, being nudged by a cane or walker, brushing, etc.

Your team will be asked to perform tasks such as:

- Walk through a crowd on a loose lead and completely under control.
- Accept friendly as well as overly gregarious strangers.
- Comfortably greet and engage in situations with other dogs.
- Sit or stay on command and then come when called. Treats are allowed, but the sit cannot be forced.
- Show minimal reaction to loud noises.
- Move past a tempting item without touching it. (Leave it)

Your team must also be able to work well with other teams. Your pet will have to remain calm as another team approaches. Your team must be under control, with the pet showing no signs of aggression or fear.

- The actual process will take about 20 minutes.
- If your team fails the evaluation, you can retest after a 3-month period to provide you time to work on training. You will have a total of 3 opportunities in a 12-month time frame to pass this evaluation.
- You will have the opportunity to review the test when completed. If you have failed the evaluation, pay attention to the areas on the test that resulted in the failing score. Those are the areas that will require further training.



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Important Notes For Canines

- A pet showing any signs of negative reactivity (growling, showing teeth, snapping) will be immediately dismissed and not allowed to test with Anderson Humane in the future.
- A dog showing signs of stress behaviors such as shaking, excessive panting, excessive shedding, etc. Will be given a Not Ready rating.
- Jumping up on people may cause someone to fall or get scratched and **is an immediate disqualification**. Sometimes this behavior can be reversed with positive reinforcement training.
- Teams that are unable to remain under control will be given a Not Appropriate rating.
- Your pet should be well-groomed and arrive at the training in the same way you would attend a Healing Paws therapy session. Any animal that arrives to the evaluation in an ungroomed way will be given a Not Appropriate rating.
- Treats and toys are allowed during the exam, verbal praise and petting are encouraged!
- Exercises may be performed with your dog on a leather or nylon flat buckle collar, a martingale collar, a harness, or a Gentle Leader/Halti collar. Prong collars and choke chains are NOT allowed under any circumstances. You must use a 6-8 feet nylon or leather leash. Leashes cannot be chain, flexi, or over 8 feet long.
- Encourage your dog eliminate before you enter the building. A PET THAT ELIMINATES DURING THE EVALUATION WILL BE GIVEN A NOT APPROPRIATE RATING.
- We encourage interaction between you and your pet! A handler should not stand back and allow their pet to feel scared or helpless or allow someone to touch their pet in a place that the handler knows is uncomfortable.

FELINE EVALUATIONS

First and foremost, you and your cat will be evaluated as a **TEAM**.

We purposefully hold our evaluations at the South Elgin shelter. You and your cat will be put into a noisy, active, and disruptive environment to test how well you both handle these types

of everyday situations. The experience will include people with canes, crutches, wheelchairs, and other objects so that the evaluator can view reactions to the encounters. Other items may be dropped to create a noise during the evaluation.

Your pet will be required to remain calm with the evaluator and/or assistant in the form of sitting on a lap, being handed from person to person, hugs, being nudged by a cane or walker, brushing, etc.

Your team will be asked to perform tasks such as:

- Sitting quietly on a lap
- Remaining calm while being handed from person to person



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Your team must also be able to work well with other teams. Your pet will have to remain calm as another team approaches. Your team must be under control, with the pet showing no signs of aggression or fear.

- The actual process will take about 20 minutes.
- If your team fails the evaluation, you can retest after a 3-month period to provide you time to work on training. You will have a total of 3 opportunities in a 12-month time frame to pass this evaluation.
- You will have the opportunity to review the test when completed. If you have failed the evaluation, pay attention to the areas on the test that resulted in the failing score. Those are the areas that will require further training.

Important Notes for Felines

- A cat showing any signs of aggression (growling, showing teeth, snapping) will be immediately dismissed and not allowed to test with Anderson Humane in the future.
- A cat showing signs of stress behaviors such as shaking, excessive panting, excessive shedding, etc. Will be given a Not Ready rating.
- Teams that are unable to remain under control will fail the evaluation.
- Treats and toys are allowed during the exam, verbal praise and petting are encouraged!
- We encourage interaction between you and your pet! A handler should not stand back and allow their pet to feel scared or helpless or allow someone to touch their pet in a place that the handler knows is uncomfortable.
- Your pet should be well-groomed and arrive at the training in the same way you would attend a Healing Paws therapy session. Any animal that arrives to the evaluation in an ungroomed way will be given a Not Appropriate rating.

EVALUATIONS FOR ALL OTHER SPECIES

If your pet is a species other than a dog or cat, please contact the program coordinator for specific guidelines.

Annual Requirements for Certified Teams

Our partners are excited to have you and your pet spend time at their locations. The impact that your team will have on the people you encounter is immeasurable. In order to make that impact, your team is required to meet the following ongoing standards.

1. Annually provide documentation from your vet showing evidence of the following:

- Negative fecal test
- Annual exam
- Current rabies vaccination

NOTE: If any vaccines, tests, or exams are lapsed, you will not be able to conduct your visits until they are completed.



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2. Visit Requirements

- Only the animal that has been certified through the Healing Paws Animal Therapy Program is allowed to be present at visits.
- Your certified animal must be bathed, groomed, and in good health for your visits.
- Your certified animal will be kept on leash whenever and wherever you are representing Anderson Humane as a Healing Paws team.
- At least 24 visits are required from each team during the calendar year. Inability to complete 24 visits within a calendar year may result in a loss of your Therapy Dog status. The team will be asked to repeat the exam to be reinstated. We recognize that there can be outside circumstances that prevent the 24 visits from being completed (illness, etc.) and those will be assessed on an individual basis.
- You must keep track of all their visits through our software program, Volgistics. (Our team will train you on how to log your time.) This enables us to report Healing Paws hours and accomplishments!



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Healing Paws Animal Therapy Volunteer Agreement

Thank you for your interest in this program. Please complete and sign the form below. Once you have successfully passed the evaluation and when Anderson Humane has all of the information and veterinary documentation, you will be able to begin your Healing Paws volunteer service.

Date: _____

Owner Name: _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____

Emergency Contact: _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____

Animal Name: _____ Dog Cat Other: _____ Breed: _____ Color: _____

Rabies Tag #: _____ County _____ Proof of Records: Annual Rabies Fecal Test

Owner Birthday: _____ Animal Birthday: _____ T-Shirt Size: **XS S M L XL 2XL 3XL 4XL**

Evaluation Fee: \$40

- I agree to have my pet and I serve as a team without compensation as a volunteer to provide service to Anderson Humane.
- I agree that I will keep my pet on leash whenever and wherever we are representing Anderson Humane as a Healing Paws team.
- I agree that if my pet is having a bad day and not cooperating at a visit we will quit for the day.
- I agree to inform Anderson Humane if my pet has any concerning behaviors, such as negative reactivity around other dogs, not good with children, etc.
- As a volunteer team, I acknowledge that we will be acting entirely at our own risk. I am aware of the dangers inherent in handling animals and the hazards inherent in the normal course of volunteer work at Anderson Humane.
- In consideration of Anderson Humane allowing my pet and me to provide services on a volunteer basis for the charitable and not-for-profit purposes of Anderson Humane, I hereby release, discharge, and indemnify Anderson Humane and its agents, directors, officers, servants, employees, and other volunteer workers from any and all claims, present or future, whether known or unknown, on account of any personal or bodily injury, including death and/or on account of any damage to any of my property suffered and sustained by me from any cause incident to or arising out of, during or in connection with, any volunteer work for or on behalf of Anderson Humane. Anderson Humane has the right to terminate this Agreement upon its discretion. I understand and agree that the terms of this Agreement shall be binding upon heirs, my assigns, personal representatives, and myself. In the case of an emergency requiring medical care, I authorize Anderson Humane to act on my behalf.

I Agree

Print Full Name: _____ Signature _____ Date: _____