

# Do you own a well-mannered dog?



- Is your dog up to date with vaccinations?
- Do you reside in Australia?
- Are you able to volunteer up to 1 1/2 hours a week, fortnight, or monthly for facility visitations?
- Do you drive a car?
- Would you like to make a difference in someone's life by providing visitations with your dog to make someone's day?
- Are you empathetic toward the public or those whom live with acute illness, ageing, disability and mental health population?
- Would you like to volunteer with a reputable Not-For-Profit organisation? Registered Australian Charity?

**If you answered yes to all the above questions, we would love to hear from you.**

## What does a community visiting dog do?

Community visiting dogs bring companionship, comfort and motivation in service delivery throughout various Australian facility sites. Community visiting dogs are there to be petted and enjoyed.

### **Animal Assisted Activity: AAA Community Dog and Handler Visitations:**

- The therapeutic purpose of using dogs is considered complementary therapy.
- AAA involves using animals for recreation, motivation, education and other life improvement activities.

### **Community visiting dog and handler role**

Is to provide affection and comfort to people in hospitals, retirement homes, nursing homes, disability services, schools, hospices, and disaster areas. Their specific role is providing affection and comfort (simply making someone's day) this promotes improvement in human physical, social, emotional and cognitive functioning.

## **What about me as a handler? Do I need any special training?**

- As a handler, you are not required to have prior training or experience.
- Mandatory information and specific training sessions are provided prior to commencement, professional development courses are also provided throughout your employment by Therapeutic Dog Services Incorporated.
- Your placement process will involve orientation/induction along with shadowing an experienced team in the field and being mentored.
- A national police check is also required and depending on the facility, a more in-depth police records check may be needed.
- Partner external facilities require handlers to complete an orientation process.
- You will also be required to meet Therapeutic Dog Services and partner site-specific requirements such as infection control, dress code, and policy & procedure guidelines.

## **What kind of dog can be a community visiting dog?**

Community Visiting dogs come in all breeds, shapes and sizes. One thing they all must have in common is temperament – community visiting dogs must be confident, friendly, patient and gentle in all situations.

While not every dog is made for this kind of work, there are certain characteristics that set some dogs apart.

### **YOUR DOG HAS GOOD MANNERS**

- Basic obedience such as sit, down, stay and come are important but even more so, are calm manners.
- Be able to sit calmly for petting as well as not lick or paw strangers.

### **YOUR DOG LOVES HUMAN CONTACT**

- it is also important your dog likes to be touched by strangers. Children can be rough or fast moving with their hands, while the elderly may move slowly, or pet with arthritic hands. A community visiting dog should also be tolerant of hugs. Not all dogs like hugs, (in fact most do not) especially from strangers.

### **YOUR DOG IGNORES OTHER DOGS**

- Be able to ignore other dogs and save canine socializing for another day.

## **YOUR DOG IS COMFORTABLE AROUND LOCATIONS AND EQUIPMENT**

- Locations that many community visiting dogs visit include, nursing homes and hospitals. To visit these locations, a working community visiting dog must be comfortable and have calm manners around walkers, wheelchairs, canes, bandages, and tubing.

## **Community Visiting dogs are well behaved dogs, everyday pet dogs from the Australian community whom have basic obedience training.**

These dogs are owned by the public: Community members. These dogs and handlers reside in states of Australia. Members own these dogs.

- Owner and dog must attend mandatory information and specific training sessions.
- Dogs must be between 2 and 11 years old to become a Therapeutic Dog Services Incorporated Community Visiting Dog.
- Owner and Dog must attend temperament testing assessment
- Owner must provide veterinarian health check clearance for dog
- Provide proof of dog Vaccination (C5)

## **What kind of training is required?**

- No special training is required for the dog. However, basic obedience skills are required.
- Owner and dog must attend mandatory information and specific training sessions provided by Therapeutic Dog Services Incorporated.

## **How do my dog and I become a community visiting team with Therapeutic Dog Services Incorporated?**

### **How to find out more?**

Please call Phone: Landline (08) 7226 0994 / Skype 7200 4066 / Mobile 0481 293 370

or email: [therapydogs@tdsinc.com.au](mailto:therapydogs@tdsinc.com.au) for more details.

Thank you for your interest in supporting Therapeutic Dog Services Incorporated as a Volunteer.