

Humane Society of Sonoma County

Animal Assisted Therapy/Activity Volunteer Certification Process



Requirements for Animal Assisted Therapy/Activity, AAT, teams volunteering in the field, at adult and/or youth sites, such as, but not limited to, convalescent homes, senior centers, hospice, community groups, public and private schools, public libraries, or any center where they are representing the Humane Society of Sonoma County, HSSC, and offer animal assisted activities on behalf of the HSSC.

Program Coordinator, Beth Karzes, bkarzes@humanesocietysoco.org 707-577-1902

Steps to Complete

- Complete a HSSC volunteer application and release form
- Attend a HSSC volunteer orientation
- Successful completion of HSSC AAT Dog Training course with your dog – [SHS Behavior & Training Classes](#) (20% discount to current HSSC volunteers of 3 months or more)
- Successful completion of Animal Assisted Therapy prerequisite courses
- Successful passing of Canine Good Citizen exam, CGC certified
- Introduction orientation with AAT Program Coordinator, Beth Karzes, to review steps listed on this sheet and general program structure.
- Post HSSC AAT training course: Read with a Dog school and library youth programs, **orientation** training for working with schools, libraries, children and reading program with HSSC Humane Education Coordinator.
- Shadow an experienced participating volunteer dog team before assigned to a site. [Youth Programs](#)
- Post HSSC AAT training: For senior site locations, **orientation** training for working with seniors with various medical conditions that will review how best provide service in convalescent homes, hospice, Alzheimer's and dementia wings and short and long term rehabilitation facilities.
- Shadow an experienced participating volunteer dog team before assigned to site.

Paperwork Needed on File to turn in during orientation appointment with Program Coordinator, Beth Karzes

- Animal Assisted Therapy Volunteer Application on file
- Current copies of canine vaccinations on file with HSSC
- Annual AAT animal health exam including fecal test on file with HSSC
- Participating dog cannot be on a raw food diet
- Required fingerprint background check clearance
- Copy of current driver's license on file with HSSC
- Copy of current automobile insurance on file with HSSC
- Copy of Liability Insurance; either Home Owners or Rental Insurance on file with SHS
- Current copies of AAT course completion certification that you received when you successfully completed the class
- Copy of Canine Good Citizen Certificate or Passing Exam
- Purchase of canine HSSC bandana for wearing when visiting sites

Program Volunteer Requirements

- Wear SHS volunteer name tag when visiting sites
- Every 2 years retest you and your dog's skills with HSSC program coordinator
- Submit your monthly volunteer hours to Program Coordinator
- Canine well groomed when visiting sites
- Coordinate yearly site visits with HSSC Program Coordinator
- Represent HSSC professionally and accurately
- Become familiar with HSSC services and programs to be prepared for questions while working in the field

If you have previous experience, with letter of reference and current AAT & CGC certification from elsewhere, you may have the option to exam out of the HSSC AAT class on an individual basis.