

CAAA Social Pet Therapy Volunteer Job Description

Essential Functions:

Volunteers are needed to: take their qualifying pets to visit residents in designated health care facilities; and represent CAAA at certain events (with or without their pets). Volunteers interact with facility residents and staff:

- while continuously interpreting situations to gauge the appropriateness of their pet's participation and interaction
- by carefully monitoring and managing the pet's participation/interaction to ensure the safety and well-being of both humans and animals.

Interactions are usually spontaneous and last only a few minutes per resident and may occur in the residents' rooms and/or among groups of residents.

The primary goal of social pet therapy visits (*also known as animal-assisted interactions or animal-assisted activities*) is to enhance the quality of life for facility residents by promoting the human/ Companion Animal Bond and to provide support when the bond is broken.

Generally CAAA host facilities are health care or day care facilities which serve senior citizens and/or adults who are disabled or ill.

Qualifications:

- Ability and willingness to deal tactfully, courteously and patiently with a diverse target audience:
 - enjoys interacting with individuals who may be: elderly; disabled; physically and/or mentally ill or impaired; and/or socially disadvantaged
- Verbal communication skills
- Ability to control animal through verbal commands and/or hand signals and to physically restrain animal, if necessary
- Provides own transportation
- Meets and follows all other requirements of the CAAA social pet therapy program (*e.g., insurance qualifications, code of conduct, rules and regulations for pet therapy, etc.*)
- Has a pet that currently meets all requirements to qualify for CAAA certification *<while the animal doesn't have to be owned by the volunteer, it must be covered by the volunteer's liability insurance>*
- Able to participate independently as a CAAA Pet Therapy Volunteer without supervision and/or monitoring and/or minimal other support

Physical requirements: Essential functions involve manual dexterity, strength and physical reflexes to control pet and manage the pet's visits and interactions with target audience. Could involve bending, twisting, walking, stooping and turning; and in some cases to lifting the pet.

Sensory Requirements: Essential functions require sound and visual perception and discrimination to:

- interpret animal's behavior, disposition and warning signals
- avoid medical equipment, tubing, hazardous situations and materials
- interpret people's reactions to the pet

Environmental requirements: Essential functions require regularly traveling to assigned facility at scheduled times; being in places housing mentally and physically ill people; and being around sights and smells that occasionally may be offensive

Minimum age: 18 years. *<The minimum age for children accompanying a Pet Therapy Volunteer is 13.>*