



Are you interested in volunteering with us?

As you may have noticed, there's lots of information on our website about the Paws Pet Therapy course and our volunteering opportunities. To make things a bit easier, here's a quick summary to help you decide if you'd like to become part of our wonderful team!

- Paws Pet Therapy is based in Orangeville, NSW, and we're proud to have volunteer teams across the state, including in regional and rural areas. We're also excited to be expanding and recruiting teams from interstate!
- To become a PAWS volunteer, you must complete the PAWS course, which consists of two components: the PAWS training manual with associated questions (to be completed at home) and attendance at a practical training/assessment day. For NSW teams within travel distance, this takes place near Thirlmere, while remote or interstate teams can attend via Zoom or other online platforms. We ask that the course, paperwork, and practical training be completed within six months of receiving the PAWS course materials.
- Our clients look forward to regular visits and truly love spending time with our dogs, which is why we require consistent availability. Due to the nature of our visits, PAWS needs availability on a weekly or bi-weekly basis, with most visits occurring Monday through Friday between 9am and 5pm. Unfortunately, we are unable to accept applications from individuals who are only available during evenings or weekends.
- All PAWS dogs need to be at least 18 months old, and no older than 8 years, when they begin their volunteering journey with us. Just like people, dogs need time to grow up and gain life experience before they're ready to join our team!
- Face to face training/assessment days are held regularly throughout the year. To assist you in your forward planning these are the proposed dates for 2025 training and assessment days: 22nd February, 12th April, 14th June, 2nd August, 20th September and 15th November. Dates for remote assessment are set as needed.
- No matter where you're located, your dog will need a health assessment from your vet, must be up to date on their parasite control regime, and be vaccinated with C7 in New South Wales, ACT, and Queensland, or C5 in other states. We also require an annual copy of your dog's updated vaccination certificate.
- For the safety of everyone involved, volunteers must provide a current Police Check, with a copy of their renewal submitted every 3 years. Additionally, a Working with Children Check is required and is valid for 5 years.
- We require volunteers to be double vaccinated for COVID, as most of the facilities we visit have this as a requirement. If you're not vaccinated, visit opportunities may be more limited. We invite you to discuss this with us prior to committing to joining the team.
- Some facilities such as Aged Care may require annual Influenza vaccination.
- PAWS follows a combination of NSW Health Guidelines, facility requirements and our own policies to ensure the ongoing safety of everyone involved in a PAWS visit. These requirements may change at any time based on current laws and recommendations.
- Volunteers are required to uphold the high standards of PAWS Pet Therapy and represent PAWS Pet Therapy in a positive manner.

- The cost of the PAWS Pet Therapy course is \$275 including GST, which contributes to the cost of: training/assessment; uniforms for volunteer and dog; all equipment; insurances; ongoing training, support, and social events; administration costs related to recruiting, supporting, training, and managing volunteer teams. This can be paid in installments.
- A minimum non-refundable deposit of \$150.00 is required to receive the written PAWS course with the balance paid prior to attending a training and assessment day. A refund of \$125 will be offered in the unlikely case that you and your dog do not pass assessment.
- It is at the discretion of the PAWS team to assess the suitability of a team, a dog and their handler for therapy visits.
- For the safety of everyone involved it is the responsibility of the handler to inform the PAWS office immediately if their dog's behaviour or suitability changes at any time in their volunteering time with PAWS.
- PAWS dogs must be freshly washed (within 24 hours), and beautifully presented for all visits.
- After training & assessment, you will be supported to start your visits, and be placed at a facility near you, that matches you and your dog's suitability along with your availability. For remote teams additional online and phone support will be provided.
- Ongoing support will be provided for you and dog, for however long you are with us.
- All rostering is done through the office. Volunteers are not required to roster visits, handle cash or carry out administration tasks. You will be required to sign in and out of facilities using an application on your smart phone.
- There is plenty of opportunity for volunteers to be involved in promotion and advancement of the PAWS service, should they wish. We welcome new ideas from our teams.
- Volunteer achievements are regularly acknowledged and celebrated on social media, print and TV media and via our annual "Zep Award for Volunteering Excellence".
- As of July 2021, all general visits to facilities are charged at \$77 including GST, contributing to the cost of supplying a professional service.
- We offer some visits free of charge based on client circumstances.

If you are interested in moving forward with the course, and are comfortable with all of the above, the first step is to complete the online "Volunteer Enquiry Form" by clicking on the 'COMPLETE' button reached from the 'Volunteer' tab on the website.

After this we will be in touch to discuss how you and your 4-legged-friend can become part of our wonderful team and make a huge difference through the magic of pet therapy.

We hope you decide to join us

From Sharon and the team at PAWS

