



Are you interested in volunteering with us?

As you have seen, there is a lot of information on our website about the PAWS Pet Therapy course, and our volunteering opportunities. Here is a brief summary, to help you decide if you would like to proceed with the course, and become part of our team:

- PAWS Pet Therapy has a head office in Orangeville, NSW. We have volunteer teams all around the state including in regional and rural NSW. We are also now recruiting interstate teams.
- To become a PAWS volunteer, you need to complete the PAWS course.
- The 2 components of the training course are: the PAWS training manual, with associated questions that you complete in your own time at home and attendance (with your dog) at a practical training/assessment day near Thirlmere for NSW teams within travel distance and via 'zoom' or other online technology for remote or interstate teams. We ask that the PAWS course, paperwork and attendance at a practical training/assessment day be completed within 6 months from receiving the PAWS course.
- Due to the nature of our visits PAWS requires availability on a weekly or fortnightly basis with most visits occurring Monday to Friday between the hours of 9am to 5pm. Unfortunately, we are unable to accept applications from individuals who only have evening or weekend availability.
- All PAWS dogs must be 18 months old and no older than 8 years at the commencement of their volunteering time with PAWS.
- Training/assessment days are held regularly throughout the year. To assist you in your forward planning these are the proposed dates for 2024 training and assessment days: 15th of June, 10th August, 21st September and 16th of November. New dates will be released towards the end of the year.
- Regardless of your location your dog will need a health assessment from your vet, must be up to date with a parasite control regime, and needs to be vaccinated for C7 in New South Wales, ACT and Queensland, C5 in other states.
- We require a copy of your dogs renewed Vaccination Certificate annually.
- Volunteers need to provide a current Police Check (for all visits) with a copy of your renewal provided every 3 years and have a Working with Children Check which is valid for 5 years for some visits.
- All volunteers must be double vaccinated for COVID.
- 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

