

Therapy Dogs for Everyone!



Animal Companion Therapy (ACT) Volunteer, Patrice Mock, with Therapy Dog, Bean, offering therapy.

A Therapy Dog brings comfort and affection to those who are ill or in need of emotional support. These dogs travel with their owners to offer free therapeutic services as volunteers. You might see them visiting patients at hospitals, people

at retirement homes, nursing homes, schools, or at disaster areas.

Therapy dogs are discovered and trained by their owners. Once the dog is 1yr old they can start training for certification. Therapy dogs are tested for temperament and must pass obedience training and earn their AKC Canine Good Citizen (CGC) certification.

Although therapy dogs must be certified to offer services to the public, they are not service dogs. Therapy dogs are considered pets. Nonetheless, these dogs help many people. They even provide support to special needs students as well as children struggling with reading.

Visit the **American Kennel Club** for more information.



**AMERICAN
KENNEL CLUB**

Think you have a potential therapy dog at home?

Although any animal can be a therapy animal, dogs are more common in the program. The breed is irrelevant; any dog who has good manners, is well trained, loves to socialize with people and other dogs, and is unshaken by loud and sudden noises is a potential therapy dog.

Start training your dog as soon as possible. Socialize your pet to new people, new dogs and new places as often as you can. Make sure your dog seeks attention from strangers and that you are not forcing it. Find your local therapy program and ask about their requirements.

Why should I volunteer my time and my pet?

In 2007, a study conducted by UCLA proved the benefits of human-animal interaction by exposing adult patients with heart failure to a 12-minute hospital visit with a therapy dog. The patients visited by a therapy dog improved their cardiopulmonary pressures, neurohormone levels, and anxiety significantly more compared to those who were only visited by a human volunteer.

While your time will not be compensated with money, you and your therapy dog will be rewarded with gratitude.

To join **Animal Samaritans ACT** program, go to animalsamaritans.org/animal-companion-therapy/. Serving the Coachella Valley only.



Animal Companion Therapy
ANIMAL SAMARITANS



**Animal
Samaritans**

Service Dogs, Guide Dogs, and Therapy Dogs



ACT Dog, Hannah

Veterinary Clinics

72120 Pet Land Place
Thousand Palms, CA 92276
760.343.3477

42150 Jackson Street
Suite B106
Indio, CA 92203
760.343.3477

No-Kill Animal Shelter/Adoption Center

72307 Ramon Road
Thousand Palms, CA 92276
760.601.3918

To Donate Visit
www.animalsamaritans.org

Health Benefits of Human-Animal Interaction

It is becoming more evident that human interaction with animals promotes good health. It is as simple as owning a pet and caring for it. As a pet owner, you will experience unconditional love, allowing you to develop a strong relationship with your pet, sometimes as strong as your strongest human relationship. Your pet also benefits from your affection. Of course, human-animal bonding is not exclusive to dogs. Still, dogs have been one of man's best friend for over 15,000 years.

Interacting with your Pet and its Benefits:

- Relieves Stress
- Encourages Physical Activity
- Boosts Heart Health
- Fights Allergies
- Promotes Social Interaction
- Improves Emotional Health

It is extremely important to understand the value of human-animal interaction. Service Dogs, Guide Dogs, and Therapy Dogs can provide so much emotional and physical support to an individual or a group. In some situations, these dogs help their owners function on a daily basis.



Children laughing with joy when Animal Companion Therapy dog, Zane, interacts with them.

Service Dogs for the Disabled and for Emotional Support

Service Dogs are trained to assist one person with their individual needs and unique disability. They are often trained to help veterans and children with autism, but can be trained to assist with any form of disability from physical to emotional.

Service dogs are protected by federal law under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). A certified service dog is not considered a pet, therefore, building managers or landlords may not refuse a tenant's right to have a service dog or ask for a pet deposit or other pet related fees.

Emotional Support Dogs do not require training to be registered support animals. In order to qualify to have an **emotional support** animal, one must be prescribed an emotional support animal by a licensed mental health professional.

Conditions which may Qualify for an Emotional (ESA) Letter:

- Anxiety / Social Anxiety Disorder
- Depression
- Fear/Phobias
- Post-Traumatic Disorder
- Stress
- Panic Disorder
- Separation Anxiety
- Personality Disorders
- Mood Disorder

Visit [USA Service Dog Registry](http://USAServiceDogRegistry.com) for more information.



**USA SERVICE DOG
REGISTRATION**

Guide Dogs for the Visually Impaired

Guide dogs are trained to guide a blind/visually impaired person through streets to arrive safely to their destination. These working dogs are trained on their own, then paired with a person. There is an additional team training to ensure the trust in both, the person and the new furry companion.

How a Guide Dog Helps Their Human:

- Avoids Obstacles when Walking
- Stops at Changes in Elevation to Avoid Falling, Tripping
- Stops for All Incoming Traffic
- Remembers Common Routes to Reach a Destination

How People Qualify for Guide Dog Program:

- Be Legally Blind
- Be 18yrs of Age or Older
- Be Able to Care for a Guide Dog Financially
- Be Able to Provide Exercise for a Young and Active Dog
- Be Confident in their Orientation and Mobility Skills
- Be Able to Navigate Three or More Routes Independently
- Apply to the Program

For additional information contact **Guide Dogs of the Desert.**

www.gddca.org

GuideDogs
OF THE Desert 
760.329.6257