

DoveLewis



»»» DLAATE

The DoveLewis Animal Assisted Therapy and Education (**DLAATE**) program strives to become personally familiar with every one of our human and animal volunteer teams to ensure that the team has a positive experience while participating in the **DLAATE** program. Teams represent DoveLewis while providing animal assisted therapy and/or education in the community.

Thanks to our Donors!

DLAATE, like all of our DoveLewis community service programs, is supported solely through donations enabling DoveLewis to provide free training to prospective teams. Facilities receive DLAATE services at no cost, also thanks to donor contributions. Program volunteers in the field represent DoveLewis and benefit others in need by sharing their gifted animals.

Who can be part of a DLAATE team?

The minimum age for an animal's participation in DLAATE is one year of age. (Many animals—dogs in particular—benefit by being allowed to mature to the age of two or three before being asked to do animal assisted therapy work.) DLAATE accepts only spayed and neutered animals into the program. If you have adopted an animal, you should live with that animal for at least six months before proceeding. The minimum age for a handler is twelve years old. Twelve to sixteen year olds may only become handlers with adult accompaniment.

Teams involving a dog must provide proof of completion of a minimum of one Basic or Beginning Obedience (or equivalent), training class. Successful completion of the American Kennel Club's Canine Good Citizen (CGC) class and test are highly recommended but not required.

What does it take to be a DLAATE Team?

All human-animal teams seeking certification with the DLAATE program complete the following process:

- Schedule and complete a personal interview with the program director
- Attend a skills review class, handler workshop, interaction/equipment lab and field trip to a local assisted living community
- Pass a final evaluation: Delta Society's Pet Partners® Skill & Aptitude Test (will be referred to as PPSAT)
- Obtain a thorough veterinary health examination by the animal's primary care veterinarian
- Agree to program criteria and requirements and to follow program guidelines

The Interview: The interview helps determine the appropriateness of the team for this type of work, while providing human applicants a chance to ask questions, express special interests, relevant experiences and assets.

Skills Review & Workshop: During the skills review class, teams demonstrate their handling skills and the behavior, temperament and abilities of the animal in a group class setting. During the handler workshop teams become familiar with the opportunities, general requirements, specific skills, demands and rewards of providing animal assisted therapy.

Lab & Field Trip: The interaction and equipment lab gives teams a chance to practice the material learned in the skills review class and handler workshop in a controlled environment, while picking up even more tips from other seasoned DLAATE volunteers. The field trip to a local health care setting gives teams real life experience under the watchful eyes of a field trip leader.

Final Assessment & Screening:

The final assessment, a standardized evaluation developed by Delta Society and referred to as **PPSAT** helps determine if the teams are ready to strike off on their own!

All teams are screened for the following:

*For more species specific information on animal skills

- Handler and animal skills
- Animal and handler communication levels
- Overall confidence levels
- Sociability and interest in meeting unfamiliar people
- Consistency and predictability of responses
- Ability to remain calm while being handled by unfamiliar people
- Distraction levels and ability to be controlled
- Response to other dogs as well as other animal species
- Ability to remain calm in stressful, startling and noisy environments
- Comfort level around equipment and medical apparatus
- Cleanliness and grooming
- Health and physical fitness

***DOGS** shall demonstrate these basic skills in distracting situations—remain calm and comfortable in unfamiliar and possibly hectic settings outside the home environment; walk on a loose or slack leash (aka: relaxed heel), sit, down, stay, come and leave it. They may not jump on people, bark or growl at other dogs/people or vocalize excessively.

***CATS** shall demonstrate these basic skills in distracting situations—remain calm in unfamiliar and possibly hectic settings outside the home environment; are comfortable being carried, picked up, and passed from person to person. They are willing to stay in one spot and are comfortable wearing a harness. Cats must not hiss at, scratch, or bite people or other animals.

Health Exam: The veterinary exam helps determine that the animal is in good health, current on relevant vaccinations and free of parasites or other conditions that may preclude participation in DLAATE.

Placement: Finally, the DLAATE program provides guidance for appropriate placement. New DLAATE volunteers may visit a variety of settings with designated volunteer mentors. All parties must be comfortable with the placement before it is considered permanent. Volunteer teams must also meet requirements of their assigned facility. Placed teams typically work autonomously from other DoveLewis teams at their chosen setting and are expected to maintain consistent schedules as agreed to by the respective team and the facility representative.

DLAATE Contracts, Agreements,

& Release Forms: All DLAATE volunteers agree to and sign a Program Policies and Guidelines Commitment Agreement, Patient and Client Confidentiality Agreement, a Photo release form and a DoveLewis Liability Release. DoveLewis provides \$2 million liability insurance coverage for DLAATE animals.

Annual Requirements for DLAATE volunteers include:

- A veterinary health screening exam
- Attendance at a minimum of one program event or educational workshop
- Submission of volunteer hours

Biennial requirements are the same as above with the addition that you must successfully repeat passage of Delta Society's PPSAT.

Photo Identification badges, issued to all DLAATE teams, are valid for two-years. At the end of two years, teams that want to continue and renew their certification must successfully complete the final assessment, Delta Society's PPSAT. The DLAATE program reserves the right to recall a DLAATE volunteer's certification and badges due to non-compliance and/or egregious breach of policy/procedures at any time.

Some program participants may be registered through another program, but this does not alter or preclude DLAATE standards and requirements.

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