Animal Assisted Therapy

Animal Assisted Therapy (AAT) is a rewarding experience for you and your companion animal. Through this program, our AAT teams visit various facilities with their pets. Below are some of the types of facilities we visit:

Senior Assisted Living Facilities, Pediatric Care Units and Hospitals, Libraries, Private and Public Schools, Mental Health Facilities, Hospice, and many more!

These are places where children, adults and seniors are in need of the unconditional love and affection a pet can offer. We have over 100 facilities in our program and many facilities that are waiting for an AAT team to visit. As the list of facilities grows, so does our need for qualified AAT teams and their pets.

BASELINE PROGRAM CRITERIA:

You and your companion animal must meet the following minimum requirements in order to be considered for this program:

Handlers must be at least 18 years old
Handlers must have owned their pet for a minimum of one year
Pets must be one year or older to participate
Pets must be spayed or neutered
Pets must be current on vaccinations
Pets must be non-aggressive in all situations towards humans and other animals
Pets must be interested in people
Pets must be well-behaved (i.e.: walks well on a leash without pulling, doesn't jump up, adheres to basic obedience commands such as sit, down, stay, come and heel)
HOW TO GET STARTED IN ANIMAL ASSISTED THERAPY (AAT):

First you will need to attend the Humane Society of Broward County’s Volunteer Orientation. Volunteer Orientation is scheduled through our Volunteer Services Department at 954.266.6814.

Once you have completed the Volunteer Orientation, you will be required to attend a 2 1/2 hour AAT class without your pet. This class will teach you all about our Animal Assisted Therapy Program and what skill requirements both you and your pet must possess in order to be considered for our program.

After the AAT course is completed, you and your pet might require further training. Training is determined by the type of program you and your pet will be participating in, and what skill sets you and your pet have or need to have in order to participate. AAT Advanced Obedience Training classes are held at the Humane Society and are scheduled once a week for 6 weeks. The Manager of the AAT program will decide if you and your pet require further training before being evaluated for the program.

If further training is not required, you will be scheduled for your evaluation. The meeting, inclusive of the evaluation will take approximately 1 1/2 hours.

Evaluations are conducted at various locations. Volunteers will need to provide a copy of their pets updated veterinarian records showing all vaccinations were administered at the time of the training class and/or the evaluation.

If you have multiple pets the requirement is one pet per handler. You may have multiple pets evaluated and if they pass you will be required to only bring one pet per visit. You may rotate your pets as necessary. If you have multiple pets and more than one handler, each pet and handler may be evaluated separately for the program.

If you are interested in joining our AAT program, please contact the Humane Society directly at 954.266.6877 or email us at therapy@hsbroward.com.