



## **Therapy Dog Program**

*Applicant information – August 2025*

As we move into our 30th year, we're incredibly proud to launch our new **Therapy Dog Program** – created with human/animal bonds in mind. These incredible dogs are trained to offer care and comfort in places of business, therapy and wellness offices, and schools, simply by being themselves. While Therapy Dogs are highly trained dogs, it's important to know they are not vested Service Dogs and should not have any expectations on them to work for a purpose. Looking for connection and warm addition in your day? A Therapy Dog may be the perfect addition to your team.

This is the first time we have opened applications to this program, and we expect a high volume of interest. While there are basic criteria, we strongly encourage you to clearly articulate **why** a DWW Therapy Dog is the right fit for you and how you believe it will positively impact you and your workplace. Let us hear your story!

We understand the application process can feel extensive. As an ADI accredited school, as a member of Humane Canada, and one of few approved Government of Alberta Service Dog Schools, we are held to incredibly high standards that ask us to thoroughly review applicants to ensure the right client/dog fit. This exhaustive review is crucial because our dogs' well-being is paramount. We've dedicated ourselves to breeding, training, and supporting them to ensure they're perfectly matched with the right client in the right situation. We also deeply care about your story and want to learn more- to ensure success in this program for all.

If you're placed on a waiting list, we'll keep you updated on your status in the queue. We know waiting is difficult, but training and placing these incredible dogs is significant work, and good things often take time. (Please note, applying does not guarantee acceptance.)

From all of us at DWW, thank you for your interest. Be well.

Amanda Dubé, MPCC, CT  
CEO, Dogs with Wings



## Application criteria

To be eligible for our **Therapy Dog program**, we require that you:

- Have a profound love of dogs, backed by a **wholesome understanding** of dog behavior, needs, and communication.
- Work in an organization that provides services to the public where **a Therapy Dog will add comfort, joy, and relaxation**. Examples of this might include offices, doctor's offices, therapy spaces, and schools. **\*Please remember the goal of this program is to have a Therapy Dog available for support but not vested to work for a purpose.**
- Eager to partner with DWW and willing to stay **committed to showcasing the success of the Therapy Dog**. This might include social media posts, invitations to events, or providing highlights and impact statements as requested.
- Are able to **fully care for a Therapy Dog**, including providing food, vet care, enrichment, and all necessary supplies.
- Pay an **annual fee of \$5000.00 to DWW**.
- Identify a primary and secondary handler and have plans in case you or the secondary handler become unavailable to care for the Therapy Dog. **Please know DWW enters agreements with organizations rather than handlers**. Should a handler leave the organization, the Therapy Dog will remain in the custody of the organization and new handlers.
- Are committed to maintaining a **positive and respectful working relationship with DWW**. Please note that the dogs we breed, train, and place remain the property of DWW for the duration of the Therapy Dog agreement. **A strong partnership is vital for everyone's success**. It's important that DWW employees, volunteers, and partners receive respectful communication from you and your team on a regular and timely basis. Hostile, aggressive, disrespectful, dismissive behavior and attitudes may result in a Therapy Dog being removed from your care at any time. Removal is at the sole discretion of DWW CEO and/or COO.
- Have a safe home and office space **visited and approved** by DWW staff.
- There will be no more than 2 additional pets/animals in the home/office.
- DWW staff must have access to the Therapy Dog for monitoring and supervision as requested.



## Application process

- Application submitted for review. Should you meet the requirements:
- A discussion with our Client Services Coordinator and/or members of the training team.
- Criminal Record Check and Vulnerable Sector Check for a primary and secondary handler completed within 3 months of application and completed yearly thereafter at applicant expense.
- An in-person meeting with the entire team.
- 3 reference checks. Additional details will be provided.
- A home and office visit to ensure safety, security, and proper placement.
- Attend Team Training—our in-person training where you learn to care for and partner with a Therapy Dog which may last up to 7 days. \*It is mandatory that you and the secondary handler be present for the **entire** duration of the training.
- Year one payment and contract signing to make it official.
- Ongoing check-ins and visits as needed / yearly.
- Signed documents and an ongoing up to date client file.

## Preventative considerations

- You are looking for a vested Service Dog that provides task trained work. This is not that
- You or the secondary handler have a criminal record and are not able to pass a vulnerable sector check
- You don't view this as a partnership with DWW
- You cannot pay for the dog's living costs or the yearly fee
- You demonstrate disrespectful behavior, utter threats, or have an avoidant or aggressive nature that causes concern or non-compliance.
- Your references disclose details that are not in alignment with DWW policies and procedures.

## How to apply

- Send us your application and we will follow-up



## Therapy Dog Application

A successful application includes the following:

- Place of business/Name of organization
- Names of a primary and secondary handler
- Birthdates
- Addresses
- Copies of your ID's
- A summary of your situation (Up to 2 pages max.)
- How will a Therapy Dog support your organization?
- Do you have the permission of your landlord/employer for a large breed Therapy Dog?
- Preventative concerns or worries, if you are approved
- Are you able and willing to obtain personal insurance (if needed) for the Therapy Dog?
- A signed release form (provided to you if your application advances)
- Do you have any other animals in the homes/office?
- Is there a history of violence in your home or have you experienced violent tendencies?
- Where would the Therapy Dog sleep and where is the Therapy Dog's resting space in the office?
- Do you have the financial means to pay the \$5000.00 yearly fee?
- Are you able to provide water, food, vet care and physical activity and enrichment for the Therapy Dog?
- We'd love to hear what a day in the life of a Therapy Dog will be!
- Are there any home safety concerns?
- Details on how you will communicate with DWW if there are issues or concerns with the Service Dog or transitional worries. Please outline steps you will take to rectify any concerns.
- Due to a Therapy Dog being a large breed dog, some people in the public are not comfortable around them. What is your plan in situations where clients express worry or concern. Do you plan to let people know about the dog before entering the office/organization and if so, how?



Please submit your completed application to [apply@dogswithwings.ca](mailto:apply@dogswithwings.ca)

Please keep in mind **this process will take time**. DWW is not able to answer specific application questions or provide timeline information. This is due to ensuring we create the right client to Therapy Dog matches. If you apply, we will verify we received your application and will be in touch when and if we are able to move forward with your application. If you are not successful in your application, we encourage you to research other options that may be available for your circumstance. For urgent concerns or to remove your application please send an email to [apply@dogswithwings.ca](mailto:apply@dogswithwings.ca)

We wish you all the best and thank you for considering DWW in your journey.