



Canine Partners for Life Volunteer Opportunities

Help Raise a Canine Partners for Life Service Dog in Training



Community Puppy Homes are a key element of CPL's program, and they devote a huge amount of time, patience, and dedication in their role of first year puppy parents. Puppy homes typically care for a puppy-in-training starting at eight weeks and ending at fourteen months. During that one-year period, they are responsible for raising the puppy in accordance with all CPL policies and procedures, including housebreaking, crate training, vet visits, reinforcing good manners, teaching basic obedience commands, and socializing the puppy in public locations every day. Puppy homes are required to attend at least two puppy training classes a month (held at CPL). Serving as a puppy home is a full time commitment that could be considered similar to raising or providing foster care for a child. The time investment is

significant, but the rewards are amazing!

Qualifications: Prior dog handling/obedience training experience is a plus, but not required. Must have the physical ability to handle puppies as well as large, strong dogs safely.

Training Required: One Basic Dog Handling Class (*held twice a month*)

One Advanced Dog Handling Class (*held once a month*)

Orientation Session with Puppy Program Coordinator (*individually scheduled*)

Two Puppy Classes (*held every Thursday evening and every other Monday morning*)



Temporary Puppy Homes provide back-up support for our full-time puppy homes. At various times during the year, a puppy home may need someone else to care for their puppy due to a travel commitment, illness, or other conflict with providing 24-hour care for the puppy. In addition, we sometimes need homes to provide short term care for CPL puppies being raised in our Prison Puppy Raising Program who need some community home experience. That's where Temporary Puppy Homes step in and help. The time frame can be as short as overnight or as long as several weeks, depending on the individual situation. Temporary puppy homes are

expected to continue the puppy's training and socialization schedule while caring for the puppy in their home and to attend puppy classes in the event of a longer stay. It is a great way to experience the rewards of puppy raising and make a significant contribution to CPL without making the one-year commitment required of full time puppy raisers.

Qualifications: (same as for Puppy Homes) Prior dog handling/obedience training experience is a plus, but not required. Must have the physical ability to handle puppies and large, strong dogs safely.

Training Required: One Basic Dog Handling Class (*held twice a month*)

One Advanced Dog Handling Class (*held once a month*)

Orientation Session with Puppy Program Coordinator (*individually scheduled*)

Two Puppy Classes (*held every Thursday evening and every other Monday morning*)



Home Companion Training Homes are essential to the success of our Home Companion program. These dogs serve as well-trained companions for people with a wide range of physical and/or cognitive challenges, often autistic children or senior adults. While their training protocol is not as extensive as it is for full service dogs, it is critical that Home Companion dogs have excellent house manners and basic obedience skills. To ensure that goal is reached, the dogs typically spend two to five months in a Home Companion Training Home, where their behavior can be “fine-tuned” and any potential issues assessed and modified. They do not have public access rights like full service dogs so public socialization practice is not required.

Volunteers caring for Home Companion dogs in training must attend two CPL puppy classes per month and two individual training sessions per month with a CPL trainer. Home Companion dogs are often those with very sweet, patient, laid back personalities and make most enjoyable houseguests!

Qualifications: Prior dog handling/obedience training experience is a plus, but not required. Must have the physical ability to handle large, strong dogs safely.

Training Required: One Basic Dog Handling Class (*held twice a month*)
One Advanced Dog Handling Class (*held once a month*)
Two Puppy Classes (*held every Thursday evening and every other Monday morning*)

Provide Enrichment for Kennel Dogs



Cuddle Time Volunteers spend time in our comfortably furnished “cuddle room” with one or two dogs at a time that are currently residing in the CPL kennel while undergoing the second half of their service dog training. Volunteers pet, brush, and massage the dogs, read to them, watch DVDs, sit outside in nice weather, and generally ensure one-on-one personal attention for our kennel residents.

Qualifications: Age 13 or older, enjoy interacting with dogs and have the physical ability to handle large dogs safely, including transfer in and out of kennel runs.

Training Required: One Basic Dog Handling Class (*held twice a month*)
One Cuddle Time Class (*held once a month*)



Walking Volunteers take dogs from the kennel out individually for leisurely walks around the CPL campus. Dogs are expected to maintain good leash manners but do not have to be in formal heel position. As with cuddle time, walks provide a break for the dogs during the day and help accustom them to working with different handlers. Walking takes place year round so our volunteers learn to dress for the weather and enjoy the changing seasons while exercising our dogs!

Qualifications: Must have the physical ability to get large dogs in and out of kennel runs and maintain leash control while walking. Must complete the training requirements for Cuddle Time Volunteer, successfully complete at least four Cuddle Time sessions, and demonstrate capability for walking dogs safely. Additional training (one-on-one or group) may be required.



Grooming/Bathing Assistants help us maintain our dogs in good condition by thoroughly brushing kennel dogs and assisting with giving baths. (All dogs are bathed at least once a month.) Volunteers help get dogs into the tub, apply shampoo and rinse, towel dry as needed, and clean the grooming area post bath time. Coat care varies with breed of the dog and instruction is provided by kennel staff as needed.

Qualifications: Physical ability to safely handle large dogs, including getting them in and out of the tub and maintaining control while dog is in the tub. Must complete the training requirements for Cuddle Time/Walking volunteers and successfully complete at least four Cuddle Time sessions and four Walking sessions. Additional training may be provided by the Kennel staff.



Weekend Dog Sitters work in conjunction with our training staff to give kennel dogs a weekend off, just as we humans get a weekend off! When volunteers have an available weekend, they contact their assigned trainer, who decides what dog would benefit from a weekend visit. Volunteers generally pick up their selected dog on a Friday afternoon and bring them back Monday morning. No public socialization is involved; just hosting the dogs at home, taking them for walks, enjoying their company! Reports completed after the visit help our trainers see how each dog handles time out of the kennel in a home environment.

Qualifications: Prior experience as a pet dog owner is helpful, but not required. Must have the physical ability to handle large, strong dogs safely. Note that only family members who have completed the required CPL training may handle the dog while he or she is in residence for the weekend.

Training Required: One Basic Dog Handling Class (*held twice a month*)
One Weekend Dog Sitter Class (*held once a month*)



Socialization Handlers accompany the CPL training staff on weekly socialization outings to public locations such as shopping malls, country fairs, outdoor markets, etc. The trips are scheduled for Thursday afternoons and volunteers sign up to participate as their time permits. Each volunteer is assigned a dog in training from the kennel and handles that dog for the duration of the trip, ensuring appropriate reinforcement of obedience commands and positive exposure to new sights, sounds, and experiences. Training staff are always available to assist with questions and provide guidance.

Qualifications: Prior dog handling/obedience training experience is a plus, but not required. Must have the physical ability to handle large strong dogs safely in various public environments. On some outings, handlers may be asked to use adaptive equipment such as canes, wheelchairs, or scooters in order to help acclimate a dog to that type of equipment.

Training Required: One Basic Dog Handling Class (*held twice a month*)
One Advanced Dog Handling Class (*held once a month*)

Assist at CPL Events and Community Activities



Hospitality Volunteers support CPL by helping at activities such as fundraising events, Graduation, and other special events throughout the year. Assistance is generally needed with setting up and cleaning up, decorating the venue, greeting guests, serving refreshments, etc. No special experience is necessary; just a desire to help and an outgoing personality!



Public Relations Assistants represent CPL at community events and other activities by staffing a table or booth and/or demonstrating how service dogs can assist disabled individuals. Responsibilities may include picking up supplies and equipment in advance, displaying relevant literature, answering questions about service dogs and CPL's programs, generating names for our mailing list, promoting upcoming fundraisers, etc. Public Relations Assistants are nearly always accompanied by one of the CPL demo dogs or possibly a dog in training, which of course draws visitors to the table! This is a great way to help spread the word about our work and increase public knowledge about service dogs.

Qualifications: Public Relations Assistants must be comfortable interacting professionally with the public and must have a thorough knowledge of CPL's programs in order to effectively answer questions.

Training Required: One Basic Dog Handling Class (*held twice a month*)
One Advanced Dog Handling Class (*held once a month*)



Therapy Dog Handlers participate in regular visits to a local retirement/skilled nursing facility where CPL dogs interact with the residents to bring smiles, joy, and a chance to stroke some soft canine fur. The visits take place on Wednesday mornings and volunteers are generally scheduled to cover between one and three visits per month. Dogs attending may be CPL demo dogs, home companion dogs in training, breeding program dogs, or kennel dogs. The program is operated in conjunction with the Activities Director at the nursing facility and is very much appreciated by the residents, many of whom miss their own former dogs very much.

Qualifications: Prior dog handling/obedience training experience is a plus, but not required. Therapy Dog Handlers must be comfortable in a health care setting and must have the physical ability to handle large strong dogs safely.

Training Required: One Basic Dog Handling Class (*held twice a month*)
One Advanced Dog Handling Class (*held once a month*)

Provide Operational Support “Behind the Scenes”



Office Assistants help CPL staff with ongoing clerical functions such as filing, photocopying, and data entry, as well as with one-time projects that may benefit from additional support. Often, the need for office assistance is very high and volunteers may find themselves quite in demand upon arrival at the CPL campus! While this volunteer position does not involve hand-on work with dogs, our Office Assistants certainly get to see and observe both dogs and puppies as the canine trainees spend time in the office or pass through with a staff member.

Qualifications: Good organizational skills and attention to detail. Background in computer programs such as Excel or Word is desirable but certainly not necessary. The primary qualification for this position is simply the desire and willingness to be a “behind the scenes” hero by helping with the always present office tasks!



Facility Maintenance Assistants are called upon to assist with maintenance and minor repair projects within the CPL buildings or on the CPL grounds. Tasks may include fence or kennel maintenance, painting, moving furniture or equipment, garden/lawn work, seasonal decoration, window cleaning, and other handyman type jobs. Keeping our campus in good condition enhances our image to visitors and ensures safety for staff, volunteers, dogs, and recipients.

Qualifications: No specific experience is necessary, other than the ability to perform the tasks in a safe, responsible, and quality manner. Some projects may require the ability to utilize small hand tools.



Short Term Volunteers / On Call Volunteers are both positions that we call upon from time to time for all the “everything else” type jobs. Short term volunteers are usually those that help us just for a onetime event, while on call volunteers typically carry another volunteer responsibility but jump in to help with needs such as transporting dogs, help with mailings, donating a lunch for Team Training, preparing for special events, etc. You just might find yourself laying out squares for cow bingo!



Thank you in the form of puppy kisses comes with volunteering at Canine Partners for Life. We are very grateful for your help and support!

For more information, contact Donna Baker, dbaker@k94life.org or 610-869-4902, ext. 229

Volunteer Training Classes - What's Covered

Basic Dog Handling Class

- Equipment used with CPL dogs
- Tone of voice as a communication tool with dogs
- Positive reinforcement basics
- Learn and practice eight basic obedience cues
- General dog handling tips

Advanced Dog Handling Class

- Review and practice cues learned in Basic Dog Handling Class
- Overview of clicker training / practice with clicker exercises
- Learn and practice ten additional obedience cues
- Appropriate behavior for entering and exiting the crate
- CPL feeding protocol
- Car safety and tethering
- Handling dogs in public

Cuddle Time/Walking Class

- Orientation to kennel layout and staff
- Sign in procedures for Cuddle Time
- Getting dogs in and out of kennel runs
- Review and practice of cues learned in Basic Dog Handling Class
- Cuddle Room activities and Do's/Don'ts
- Volunteer comments on dogs

Weekend Dog Sitter Class

- Review and practice cues learned in Basic Dog Handling Class
- Learn and practice four additional cues
- Appropriate behavior for entering and exiting the crate
- CPL feeding protocol
- Car safety and tethering
- Introducing dog to other family pets
- Acclimating dog to home and expectations for good house manners
- Weekend Dog Sitter policies and procedures