

## How To Become a Therapy Dog Team

The content below describes how to become a therapy dog team with Alliance of Therapy Dogs (ATD).

To review therapy dog requirements, visit

<https://therapydogs.com/TherapyDogRequirements.html>

To review member guidelines, visit

<https://therapydogs.com/Resources/PDFs/2016/2016%20Alliance%20of%20Therapy%20Dogs%20Governing%20Member%20Guidelines%20%20jeh%20black.pdf>

For specifics about therapy dog testing and relevant therapy dog team information, visit <https://therapydogs.com/resources/PDFs/FAQS.pdf>

To review the therapy dog test, visit

[https://therapydogs.com/Resources/PDFs/2016/2016ATD%20Test%20w%20black\\_Print.pdf](https://therapydogs.com/Resources/PDFs/2016/2016ATD%20Test%20w%20black_Print.pdf). Please note 3 dates are scheduled by the Tester/Observer. 2 of these dates must be at a medical facility. #1-9 is the test portion. #10, #11 and #12 are considered an “observation”. The first observation, #10, takes place following the test on the first scheduled date. The remaining 2 observations are scheduled on separate dates.

To locate an ATD Tester/Observer in your area, visit

<https://therapydogs.com/Public/FindATO.aspx>. Please note, that there is no charge for testing. After successful completion of the test, a registration/processing fee is sent with your paperwork to ATD. Membership is renewed annually.

Interested in a therapy dog training class to prepare for testing? Or, do you just need to work on some behaviors? If you don't have a trainer that you already work with, the names listed below are respected, affirmative trainers used by several K-9 Reading Buddy teams. Additionally, they each offer a therapy dog training class based on the requirements of ATD.

Two Paws Up Training  
Brenda Belamonte  
28846 Nagel Court, Suite C  
Lake Bluff IL  
(847) 235-2263

Paws for Companions  
Deana Noonan  
Lake Forest, IL  
(224) 730-0605

Root Dog Training  
Sara McLoudrey  
Highwood, IL  
(847) 235-6290

### **How to Become a K-9 Reading Buddy Team**

1. If you are a new therapy dog team, after receiving your therapy dog packet and tags, schedule some therapy visits at local assisted living facilities, nursing homes., or any other place you think is a good fit for a visit by you and your dog to get some therapy visit time under your belt. Call the activities director or volunteer coordinator to introduce yourself and inquire whether they accept therapy dog visits.
2. Email [carole@k9readingbuddies.org](mailto:carole@k9readingbuddies.org) . In return, you'll receive a standard email with attachments that will guide you through the process of becoming a K-9 Reading Buddy Team. We will support and assist you in every way we can. K-9 Reading Buddy teams currently volunteer October thru April, with some exceptions, at:
  - Green Bay Early Childhood Center/District 112 Building
  - Little Giants preschool/Highland Park High School
  - Oak Terrace Elementary School
  - Elm Place Middle School
  - Nuestro Center (after school program)
  - Glenbrook North High School – Stress Relief during Finals
  - Highland Park High School – Stress Relief during Finals
  - Schuler Program/Highland Park High School – Stress Relief
  - Deerfield, Highwood, Glencoe, Northbrook and Wilmette Libraries
  - Naval Station Great Lakes
3. The general rule of thumb is that from first point of contact with K9RBNS, if you are not already a therapy dog team, it is a 3 month life cycle to your first volunteer opportunity. Of course, if the contact happens in the spring, this would mean the first volunteer opportunity would be in the fall.

### K-9 Reading Buddies Mentor Process

K-9 Reading Buddies of the North Shore is based on the Intermountain Therapy Animals R.E.A.D. literacy program. View more about the R.E.A.D.® program on-line at <http://www.therapyanimals.org/R.E.A.D.html>. All therapy dogs must have current therapy dog registration by either Alliance of Therapy Dogs, or another approved registry organization, and be in good standing.

Please use this sheet to track your progress. You can place an x or note to yourself when each item is completed.

Our mentor process, while subject to change, is as follows:

	<p>1. An email will be sent to you (Prospective Member) with the following documents attached:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•K-9 Reading Buddies Mentor Process</li> <li>•contact info if needed regarding a dog trainer or ATD testing</li> <li>•Standards and Dismissal Policy</li> <li>•Mentor Biography</li> </ul>
	<p>2. The Mentor Biography must be completed and returned by email to <a href="mailto:carole@k9readingbuddies.org">carole@k9readingbuddies.org</a> prior to the first scheduled meeting with the K-9 Reading Buddies representative.</p>
	<p>3. An Orientation Meeting will be scheduled to share how the program works, impart information, and answer questions. You will receive a K-9 Reading Buddies Training Manual that includes information on how to become a K-9 Reading Buddy Team.</p>
	<p>4. A membership fee of \$30 will be accepted at the Orientation Meeting that covers the cost of materials and processing. An additional \$5 is required for each additional dog. For associate members without a dog, the cost is \$20. Each are annual fees. Checks are made payable to K9RBNS.</p>
	<p>5. Please bring 2 signed copies of the signed Standards and Dismissal Policy to your Orientation Meeting</p>
	<p>6. You will need to bring a photocopy of your dog's current registered therapy dog tag and/or member identification card to the Orientation Meeting.</p>
	<p>7. At the Orientation Meeting you will be asked to sign a Photo Consent Form.</p>
	<p>8. Soon after the Orientation Meeting, you will attend an interactive Training Class <u>without</u> your dog. You will receive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•your K-9 Reading Buddies t-shirt which is to be worn at K-9 Reading Buddies events.</li> <li>•your dog's K-9 Reading Buddies bandana which may only be worn while representing K-9 Reading Buddies.</li> </ul>
	<p>9. You are expected to make 3 shadow visits where you will observe and meet current K-9 Reading Teams in an actual reading setting <u>without</u> your dog.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Shadow Visit #1 Location:</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Shadow Visit #2 Location:</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Shadow Visit #3 Location:</li> </ul>
	<p>10. An appointment will be set up for your dog to be photographed wearing his/her "Reading Buddy" bandana.</p>
	<p>11. You will receive a K-9 Reading Buddies badge that identifies you to others as a K-9 Reading Buddy Reading Team.</p>
	<p>12. You will receive custom bookmarks with your dog's picture to distribute to children who read to your dog.</p>
	<p>13. You will receive an emailed copy of a sticker that you can print at home to distribute to children who read</p>

	to your dog. You can print these using Avery sticker number # 8163.
	14. You will receive available dates, times and locations to begin working as a team with your dog.
	15. Before visiting any location for the first time, you are required to schedule a "Hello" visit to introduce yourself and your dog to the facility as well as the person in charge.

As a K-9 Reading Buddy team member we expect that when attending a K9 Reading Buddies event you will:

- wear your K-9 Reading Buddies of the North Shore(K9RBNS) t-shirt or other approved clothing.
- wear your K9RBNS badge
- your dog will wear his/her K9RBNS bandana
- your dog will wear his/her therapy dog tag
- provide a mat for your dog to sit on when being read to
- bring your K9RBNS activity bag

K9 Reading Buddies of the North Shore will provide you with:

- opportunities to volunteer at local schools, preschools, after school programs and libraries
- opportunities to participate in community outreach that include, but are not limited to:
  - De-stress clinics at area high schools
  - Great Lakes Navy Base visits
  - Holiday parades
  - Festivals