

## More St. John Ambulance Therapy Dog Facts

### Volunteer Screening

Before entering the Therapy Dog Program, potential volunteers complete an application form and go through a screening process that includes a background check.

### Health Check Records

The health of the Therapy Dog is very important. Volunteers are required to provide copies of the dog's current vaccination certificates including Rabies. It is expected that Therapy Dogs will be clean and well-groomed while visiting.

### Uniforms for Identification

Volunteers are provided with a grey golf shirt, which they wear with black or grey pants while visiting. The Therapy Dog is supplied with a neckerchief, and Volunteers may use red collars and leashes for their dogs as well. Both Therapy Dog and Volunteer will be in uniform while "on duty".

### Temperament and Suitability

All St. John Ambulance Therapy Dogs pass a temperament and suitability assessment to ensure he/she responds well to situations that may occur during visitations.



**"We are  
there to  
care."**

Therapy Dog visits are provided on a volunteer basis at no cost to the residents or care facilities in which they live. Your donation will help St. John Ambulance continue to provide this much-needed Community Service. Tax receipts for donations are issued upon request. Please mark your donation "Therapy Dogs" and mail to:

St. John Ambulance  
#201-6111 Cambie Street  
Vancouver, BC V5Z 3B2

Charitable Registration Number: 108022500RR0009

### Our Contact Information

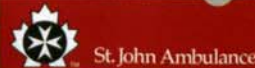
**Lower Mainland & Fraser Valley**  
604-953-1616

**Okanagan**  
250-542-1093

**Vancouver Island**  
250-729-8851

**Other Areas in British Columbia and Yukon**  
1-866-321-2651 ext 242

Or your local St. John Ambulance branch



## Therapy Dog Program



**St. John Ambulance**

**SAVING LIVES**  
at work, home and play

[www.sja.ca/bc](http://www.sja.ca/bc)  
[csd@bc.sja.ca](mailto:csd@bc.sja.ca)

**British Columbia and Yukon**

## What are Therapy Dogs?

Therapy Dogs are certified to visit people who will benefit from regular contact with a dog.

The St. John Ambulance Therapy Dog Program builds on our proud tradition of community service by bringing the benefits of pet companionship to those who are hospitalized, or residing in long term care facilities.

### How does a person benefit from the visit of a Therapy Dog

Therapy Dogs can help meet the need for physical touch.

Stroking and touching a dog have proven to lower blood pressure, to calm people who are agitated and

to refresh the minds of those who are confused. Therapy Dogs are completely accepting of people. They do not make judgment about a person's looks, nor are they offended by what people might say to them. They offer unconditional affection.



### How does my dog become a St. John Ambulance Therapy Dog?

Any dog over the age of one year and of sound temperament can qualify. Before entering the St. John Ambulance Therapy Dog Program, all dogs are assessed for their suitability for therapy dog work. The evaluation is NOT an obedience test. It is a series of exercises, closely replicating situations that may be encountered while visiting in a facility. The dog's reactions to these simulations are observed and evaluated against St. John Ambulance Therapy Dog criteria. The dog and handler are evaluated as a team.

While being evaluated (and while on duty as a Therapy Dog), your dog must wear a flat buckle collar and be on a leather or webbed fabric leash. No choke or chain collars or head halters of any kind are permitted; neither are retractable or extendable leads.



### What kind of commitment am I expected to make?

At first, you will be asked to participate in an Orientation Seminar. Once this is completed, you and your dog will be scheduled for evaluation as a team.

Once your team has successfully completed all the required steps, you will become a St. John Ambulance Therapy Dog Volunteer. Your local facilitator will put you in touch with a facility and will normally accompany you on initial visits. You may also be required to attend a facility orientation before visiting with your dog.

We ask our volunteers to commit to visit at least once a week. We encourage visits to be regularly scheduled. The regular contact gives continuity to the people with whom you visit. The beneficial effects will soon be enhanced if your visits are regular.