



Welcome to Orientation!

Thank you for your interest in volunteering with Happy Tails Pet Therapy, Inc.! The need in our community is great and we welcome new members and their dogs, cats, and rabbits.

Happy Tails volunteers share the unconditional love of their pets with people of all ages with physical, emotional, and cognitive needs at healthcare facilities, social agencies and special-needs programs. We provide trained and experienced volunteers for pet assisted activity and therapy at different types of facilities throughout the metro Atlanta area including assisted living communities, adult and children's hospitals, psychiatric units, shelters, rehabilitation facilities and many others.

In order to ensure a quality experience for volunteers and for our clients, our selection and training program is thorough. All dogs must complete a basic obedience course, given in a group setting for a minimum of 6 classes, with their volunteer handler prior to application submission. All pets will be tested for temperament prior to becoming members and visiting facilities. An overview of the testing procedure is attached. In addition, volunteers are required to attend a training workshop and observe a therapy visit to prepare for the service of animal assisted activity and animal assisted therapy.

An application checklist is included to guide you through the process of joining Happy Tails. The initial application fee, \$50 for individuals and \$75 for families, helps to cover the cost of your Happy Tails ID badge, pet tag, logo pet bandana, tee-shirt, insurance coverage, website maintenance, e-mail newsletters and other expenses. The application fee is not required until you have completed all membership steps.

After your initial application, annual membership renewal includes dues, \$35 for individuals and \$45 for families, which are assessed in September for all members. Volunteers who become members in the two months (July and August) prior to dues assessment will be included in the new membership year. Happy Tails is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and, both the application fee and annual dues, are tax deductible. Additional donations are welcome, as the membership fee only covers 20% of our operating expenses.

We appreciate your interest and look forward to welcoming you to a unique volunteer experience to share with your pet. If you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to call our office or anyone on the Board.



Application Checklist Prior to Scheduling Pet-Handler Evaluation

Prerequisites for Scheduling Pet-Handler Evaluation

- Applicant must be the owner/ handler of the pet and must be at least 18 years old.
- The pet must have lived with the owner/ handler for at least 6 months and, if a dog, must be at least 1 year old at the time of testing.
- Canine candidates must have completed a basic obedience course of at least 6 weeks with the owner/handler (group class, not private instruction). Written proof/ certificate of completion is required.
- Applicant must review, sign and agree to uphold the Happy Tails Code of Conduct.
- Happy Tails must have a record of the applicant having attended a Happy Tails Orientation session.

Application Process

A complete Application Packet consists of:

- ✓ Completed Volunteer Profile – **family members are asked to complete one profile per person**
 - Each volunteer wishing to be tested with their pet must complete their individual profile. Each family member who wishes to be tested with a pet, must complete a volunteer profile.
- ✓ Completed Veterinary Health records, including signature of licensed veterinarian – one per animal.
- ✓ Proof of completing a 6 session, group obedience class, with certification for each handler with the pet to be tested – **one per person for each animal.**
 - The obedience certificate must have the name of the **handler** and the **pet**.
 - **Receipts for a class are NOT acceptable.** You must provide a certificate or a letter from the Trainer, naming the person and pet who participated in the class.

NO PAYMENT IS REQUIRED until all steps for membership have been completed.

Keep copies of materials and send information via:

Mail:

Happy Tails Pet Therapy
PO Box 767961
Roswell, GA 30076

Scan and e-mail to:

admin@happytails
[pets.org](http://happytails.org/pets.org)

OR

Fax to:

404-591-5964

OR



Pet-Handler Evaluation Procedure

- After your packet has been sent, please e-mail (admin@happytailspets.org) or call (770-740-8211) the Happy Tails administrator to schedule an appointment for the Pet-Handler Evaluation. Your call or e-mail will be returned within two business days of your application being received. E-mail is the preferred mode of communication.

If you Pass the Pet-Handler Evaluation

- A volunteer trainer will contact you regarding your volunteer training and one hour observation requirement.

If you do not pass the Pet-Handler Evaluation

- You will be counseled at the testing on what you and your pet need to work on before you return. Do not be discouraged if you do not pass the first time. Failure to pass the first time does not necessarily mean you and your pet cannot join at a future date. Sometimes additional age or training are all that are needed.

Additional Steps to Becoming a Member

- Schedule and attend Volunteer Training workshop (without your pet);
- Attend at least one observation visit with a Happy Tails team (without pet);
- Mail, e-mail or fax the observation visit form to the administrator; and
- Send payment for initial membership via check or PayPal.

Once you become a Member

Upon completion of all the above steps, you will be sent a Happy Tails T-shirt, bandana, Happy Tails ID tag for your pet and member ID badge for yourself. A welcome letter and a list of teams needing new members will be included in your packet. You may contact the Team Leader about joining a team. Sometimes it is helpful to visit a number of different facilities to learn what type of visit is better for you and your pet. If interested, you are encouraged to go to one or more of the "Special Visits" announced in the *Happy Times* newsletter. **Congratulations and welcome!!!**



Happy Tails Pet Therapy, Inc. Health Requirements for Cats

The Board of Directors has approved the following requirements as recommended by the Happy Tails Veterinary Advisory Board. These requirements offer preventive healthcare options for your cat, while continuing to protect our clients and other Happy Tails pets. At the time of the annual exam, your veterinarian is asked to complete and sign the **Happy Tails Veterinary Health Record**. **Receipts are NOT acceptable in lieu of the signed health form.** Members are encouraged to keep a copy of the health form and laboratory tests from your veterinarian as an important cross check and reference.

Annual Examination

An annual exam is an important component of a comprehensive, individualized health care program for your cat. You and your veterinarian will have the opportunity to discuss health care options that will help you make informed decisions on what is necessary to keep your pet healthy.

Vaccinations and Tests

Vaccination needs are based on your cat's risk of exposure, its environment (potential exposure to harmful agents), age, breed, lifestyle (contact with other animals), travel habits of your cat, health status and vaccine reactions it may have experienced in the past. For many years, a set of annual vaccinations was considered normal and necessary. Veterinarians have since learned more about diseases and pets' immune systems. There is increasing evidence that immunity triggered by some vaccines provides protection beyond one year. The decision to vaccinate your cat should be based on a thorough understanding of the benefits and the risks of the procedure. For this reason, it is extremely important that you discuss the procedure with your veterinarian.¹ Vaccines and tests not mentioned here are not required by Happy Tails.

Feline Immunodeficiency Virus: FIV infection reduces your cat's ability to fight infection. The primary mode of transmission is through bite wounds. The presence of FIV antibody in "positive" test results indicates a cat is infected with FIV, probably for its lifetime, and thus can transmit the virus to other cats. **A negative test result is required by Happy Tails.**

- **FIV Antibody Test is required annually.**

Fecal Exam: A negative result will confirm that your cat is free of intestinal parasites. **This simple test is required annually.**

Feline Leukemia: Feline leukemia virus (FeLV) is spread from cat to cat through bite wounds, through casual contact with infected cats, and from an infected mother cat to her kittens. Cats most at risk are those having some exposure to the outdoors. A blood test will reveal whether or not a cat is carrying the virus. The cat may be vaccinated **after** a negative blood test. Cats infected with this virus are not accepted in Happy Tails. **Happy Tails requires one of the following options:**

- **Option 1. Annual Blood test, (results must be negative) or**
- **Option 2. Vaccination every 2 years.**

Rabies Vaccine: Rabies is transmitted when the virus is introduced into bite wounds, open cuts in skin, or onto mucous membranes. State law requires the administration of a vaccine by a licensed veterinarian. **Antibody titers are not accepted as an alternative to vaccination. Annual or 3-year vaccine required.**

Parvovirus (Panleukopenia), Calicivirus, Herpesvirus: These serious diseases are transmitted from animal to animal in a variety of ways, but are not a threat to humans. Recent research has provided compelling evidence to suggest that panleukopenia, herpes virus, calicivirus vaccines provide adequate protection for several years.² ***You and your veterinarian should discuss which of the following options is best for your pet.***

- **Option 1. 3-year vaccines (2); one for herpesvirus and calicivirus and one for parvovirus/panleukopenia.³**
- **Option 2. Antibody titers for herpesvirus, calicivirus and panleukopenia.**

Antibody titers are measured by a simple blood test. This test determines the amount of antibody that exists from previous vaccination. The laboratory results may indicate whether or not the level of antibody is "adequate" or "inadequate" in protecting your cat from these diseases. Studies suggest that booster vaccination is unnecessary when the antibody titer is "adequate." **Members choosing to titer their cats must submit a copy of the laboratory results along with the Veterinary Health Record. Titers are required annually unless the cat is**



vaccinated.

¹ American Veterinary Medical Association; Vaccine-Associated Feline Sarcoma Task Force,
<http://www.avma.org>.

² AJVR, May 1999; JAVMA, January 1, 2002.

³ American Association of Feline Practitioners and Academy of Feline Medicine, Feline Vaccine Panel,
recommended guidelines for vaccination of cats, 2000.



Happy Tails Pet Therapy, Inc. Health Requirements for Dogs

The Board of Directors has approved the following requirements as recommended by the Happy Tails Veterinary Advisory Board. These requirements offer preventive healthcare options for your dog, while continuing to protect our clients and other Happy Tails pets. At the time of the annual exam, your veterinarian is asked to complete and sign the **Happy Tails Veterinary Health Record**. **Receipts are NOT acceptable in lieu of the signed health form.** Members are encouraged to keep a copy of the health form and laboratory tests from your veterinarian as an important cross check and reference.

Annual Examination

An annual exam is an important component of a comprehensive, individualized health care program for your dog. You and your veterinarian will have the opportunity to discuss health care options that will help you make informed decisions on what is necessary to keep your pet healthy.

Vaccinations and Tests

Vaccination needs are based on the age, breed, health status, environment (potential exposure to harmful agents), lifestyle (contact with other animals), travel habits of your dog and vaccine reactions it may have experienced in the past.⁴ For many years, a set of annual vaccinations was considered normal and necessary. Veterinarians have since learned more about diseases and pets' immune systems, and there is increasing evidence that immunity triggered by some vaccines provides protection beyond one year.⁵ Vaccine program goals include providing optimal immunity against clinically relevant diseases your animal is at risk to contract, while minimizing the potential for adverse events. Information about the benefits and risks of vaccination is important when making decisions about individual vaccine selection and vaccination program choices.⁶ Vaccines and tests not mentioned here are not required by Happy Tails.

Bordetella: Bordetella (kennel cough) is a highly contagious infection that causes a dry, hacking cough and nasal discharge. It is transmitted from animal to animal by direct contact and airborne transmission, often in settings where animals come in close contact with one another such as boarding kennels. Since the vaccine is a modified live virus, it is suggested that dogs not visit for three days following administration. **Vaccine is required annually.**

Fecal Exam: A negative result will confirm that your dog is free of intestinal parasites. **This simple test is required annually.**

Rabies Vaccine: Rabies is transmitted when the virus is introduced into bite wounds, open cuts in skin, or onto mucous membranes. State law requires the administration of a vaccine by a licensed veterinarian. **Antibody titers are not accepted as an alternative to vaccination. Annual or 3-year vaccine is required.**

Distemper, Parvovirus, Adenovirus 2 (Hepatitis), Parainfluenza: These serious diseases are transmitted from animal to animal in a variety of ways but are not a threat to humans. Studies have revealed that after the initial puppy series and 1 year booster, an animal may be protected from these diseases for up to 7 years or, in some cases, a lifetime. Protective immunity depends on many factors, including but not limited to, the type of vaccine given and the health status of the animal.⁷

You and your veterinarian should discuss which of the following options is best for your pet.

- **Option 1. 3-year vaccine (usually a combination of two or more different agents).**
- **Option 2. Annual antibody titers for Distemper and Parvovirus.**

Antibody titers are measured by a simple blood test. This test determines the amount of antibody that exists from previous vaccination for distemper and parvovirus. The laboratory results indicate whether or not the level of antibody is "adequate" or "inadequate" in protecting your dog from these diseases. Studies suggest that booster vaccination is unnecessary when the antibody titer is "adequate." Therefore, an adequate antibody titer for distemper and parvovirus means vaccination for all four diseases is not required by Happy Tails. **A copy of the laboratory results must be submitted with the Happy Tails Veterinary Health Record. Titers are required annually unless the animal is re-vaccinated.**

Leptospirosis: This disease is spread through the urine of infected (often wild) animals, which can get into water or soil and survive there for weeks to months. If infection occurs, your pet may have been drinking, swimming, or walking through contaminated water.⁸ Humans can be infected by coming into contact with the urine of infected animals. There are many different strains and not all vaccines protect against all types. Vaccination depends on your dog's risk of exposure and the prevalence and type of leptospirosis disease seen in your area. **Optional if**



animal is determined to be at risk.

⁴ Report of the American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA) Canine Vaccine Task Force: 2003 Canine Vaccine Guidelines, Recommendations, and Supporting Literature.

⁵ American Veterinary Medical Association; What you should know about vaccination, October 2002.

⁶ American Veterinary Medical Association; Vaccine Policy Statement 2003.

⁷ Same as #3

⁸ Centers for Disease Control, Healthy Pets-Healthy People, <https://www.cdc.gov/healthypets/pets/dogs.html> 2003.



HAPPY TAILS PET THERAPY, INC. VETERINARY HEALTH RECORD

Name:
Address:
City, State, Zip:
Phone (H):
Phone (C):
E-mail:

Pet Name:
Species: () Dog () Cat () Rabbit
Breed:
Color:
Age:
Weight:
Sex: () Male () Female
Altered: () Yes () No

CANINE

FELINE

Annual Requirements Date Result
Bordetella Vaccination
Fecal Exam

Annual Requirements Date Result
FIV Test
Fecal Exam

Rabies Requirement (select ONE option)
() 3 Year Vaccination OR () Annual Vaccination
Date of last vaccination:

Rabies Requirement (select ONE option)
() 3 Year Vaccination OR () Annual Vaccination
Date of last vaccination:

Core Vaccine Requirements (select ONE option)
() Annual antibody titers for Distemper and Parvovirus
with Adequate results for each.

Core Vaccine Requirements (select ONE option)
() Annual antibody titers for Parvovirus and Herpes
Virus/Calicivirus with Adequate results for each.

Submit copy of laboratory results with this form.

Submit copy of laboratory results with this form.

Date of titer:
Results: () Adequate () Inadequate

Date of titer:
Results: () Adequate () Inadequate

OR

OR

() The following four vaccinations at least every 3 years
Date of last vaccination
Distemper
Parvovirus
Adenovirus2/Hepatitis
Para Influenza

() The following two vaccinations at least every 3 years
Date of last vaccination
Parvovirus
Herpes virus/Calicivirus

RABBIT

Annual Requirement Date Result
Fecal Exam

Feline Leukemia Requirement (select ONE option)
() Annual Blood Test OR () Vaccination
with negative result at least every 2 years

Date:
Date:
Result:

TEMPERAMENT - ALL ANIMALS

In your opinion, does this pet have the temperament and health to be a good candidate for use in an animal assisted therapy program?
() Yes () No

Veterinarian Signature: Date:
Veterinarian Name: Telephone:
Practice Name & Address:



OVERVIEW OF PET- HANDLER EVALUATION

The Happy Tails Pet Testing process combines elements of basic obedience, temperament, and stability in five stations as outlined below. The following equipment may be used during the exam: a 4 to 6 foot leash and a standard (buckle), or martingale (Greyhound, half check) collar, or harnesses, e.g., SENSE-ation® or Easy Walk® harness. Use of prong collars, head halters, or retractable leashes is prohibited. Handlers should use the same type of equipment during pet evaluation as they expect to use when making visits. No treats are allowed during evaluation.

Station One – Grooming/Initial Evaluation

Pets are examined for cleanliness, proper grooming, acceptable length of nails, and are assessed for any noticeable odors of the body, ears, or mouth. Equipment is checked to ensure it meets Happy Tails requirements and extra collars are removed. The examiner pets the animal and brushes their hair. The examiner assesses the pets' ability to accept a stranger who walks with a cane as well as their overall attitude toward being handled by a stranger.

Station Two – Obedience

Handlers demonstrate loose leash walking and also allow the examiner to loose leash walk with their pets. Loose leash walking is walking in relaxed position with the dog keeping no more than 1/2 stride ahead or 1/2 stride behind the handler, and no more than one dog's body width to the side of the handler, maintaining this position with slack in the leash. The dog may maintain this position to the right or the left side of the handler. Dogs must be attentive to their handler's cues when walking, and should not lunge to the end of the leash. The dog must be capable of walking on a leash with its body balanced normally, standing on all four paws, and not leaning into the leash, pulling, or walking up on its hind legs. In this Station, dogs also do a "Sit-Stay" while their handler walks 10 feet away, a "Down-Stay" while their handler walks 20 feet away, and "Come" to their handler from a distance of 20 feet. Handlers are asked to excite their dogs and then demonstrate their ability to calm them.

Station Three – Reaction To Another Dog

A polite greeting takes place from a distance as the handler and dog team loose leash



walk past an examiner and dog team as if passing in a hallway. The two teams turn around, approach head on, and exchange a hearty greeting. The dog being tested sits or stands politely beside its handler, showing only mild interest in the other dog. The dog's overall response and reaction to the situation are evaluated.

Station Four – Crowd Scene

Pets are evaluated on their reaction to loud stimuli, converging people, and crowded areas. Pets are exposed to a wheelchair and a walker, a bell, a dropped book, and an opening umbrella. Examiners converge on the pets, giving clumsy petting and restraining hugs and speaking in loud, animated voices. Pets are exposed to hat-wearing and to running examiners. They also walk in a tight figure eight with evaluators and other dogs. Handlers may reassure their pets during this period. Pets are evaluated on their level of confidence and attentiveness to their handler. The dog and handler are also evaluated for their ability to work through stressful situations as a team, especially the handler's ability to help the dog recover if it does become frightened or startled. Examiners assess whether the handler exhibits the ability to read their dog's body language and empathize with what their dog experiences in this station.

Station Five – Supervised Isolation

The handler and dog are separated for about 3 minutes of supervised isolation. The dog should display only mild stress during this time.



VOLUNTEER PROFILE

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address _____ Cell # _____

City, State _____ Home # _____

Zip _____ Work # _____

Preferred Email _____

Secondary Email _____

Employer (If you work) _____

Availability to visit: Weekdays () Weekends () Weeknights () Flexible ()

Emergency Contact Name: _____

Emergency Contact Phone: _____

How long has this pet lived with you? _____

How long have you owned this pet? _____



PET PROFILE

Pet Information

Pet Name: _____

Species: () Dog () Cat () Rabbit Sex: () Male () Female

Altered? () Yes () No

Breed: _____

Color: _____ Date of Birth (or approximate age): _____ Weight: _____

Is your pet a rescue? () Yes () No Rescue organization: _____

Other information about your pet: _____

Date you attended Orientation _____

I agree to uphold the Happy Tails Code of Ethics, and have completed this Volunteer Profile completely and accurately.

Signature _____ Date _____

Application Packet consists of:

- ✓ Completed Volunteer Profile,
✓ Completed Pet Profile
✓ Signed Code of Conduct
✓ Completed Veterinary Health Record (Signed by licensed veterinarian)
✓ Proof of obedience for dogs (Certificate of Completion, letter or email from certified trainer)

Keep copies of materials and send information via:

Mail to:

Happy Tails Pet Therapy
PO Box 767961
Roswell, GA 30076

Scan and e-mail to:

admin@happytails
pets.org

Fax to:

404-591-5964

OR

OR