

WCHS
and
The West Bend
Community Memorial Library

Reading with Rover



Volunteer Information

Washington County Humane Society
262-677-4388
3650 State Road 60, Slinger, WI 53086
Volunteer Coordinator
volunteer@wchspets.org
262-677-0731

The West Bend Community Memorial Library
630 Poplar Street, West Bend, WI 53095
262-335-5151
Hannah Kane
hkane@westbendlibrary.org
262-335-5151 x 5246

WHAT IS READING WITH ROVER?

The Washington County Humane Society partners with the West Bend Community Memorial Library to offer this program to children: a weekly opportunity for kids who can read independently, to practice reading aloud to certified therapy dogs. The dogs are a patient, non-judgmental listening ear for the kids to help them gain confidence and become better readers.

Volunteers from the Washington County Humane Society visit the library with their personal pet. Volunteers in this program must be registered WCHS volunteers and must have a certified therapy dog.

If you are interested in volunteering for this program, the first step is to fill out a Washington County Humane Society volunteer application. Please visit wchspets.org

WHAT IF MY DOG IS NOT A CERTIFIED THERAPY ANIMAL?

If your animal is not certified, WCHS requires that you complete the certification process prior to participating in this program. Please note that prior to starting a workshop and being evaluated, your animal must have basic behavior training.

HOW CAN I GET CERTIFIED?

WCHS recommends the following option for the certification process:

Alliance of Therapy Dogs

<https://www.therapydogs.com/>

Costs involved: Registration ----- \$30/year, \$10 new member fee
*This cost includes liability insurance

Background check ----- \$20

Testing/Observation ----- No Cost

Tester/Observer: Kathleen Platt - Mequon, WI

k.s.platt12345@gmail.com 262-242-5060

Evening and weekend availability

WCHS recommends ATD because we feel that it allows certified therapy teams the most independence and freedom in regards to who the team can work with and where the team can go. This allows the therapy team to volunteer with WCHS and work in facilities that WCHS coordinates and partners with.

There are several other organizations and groups through which you can get certified, but many of those organizations have strict policies that would not allow a therapy team to utilize their certification to participate as a volunteer with WCHS.

WHAT DOES THE CERTIFICATION PROCESS LOOK LIKE?

With ATD, certification starts with completing a background check. This can be done under the “Join -> Be a Member” tab on the ATD website. You will receive notification of the approval or denial of your background check and when you can start testing. Then you will download the paperwork and membership forms from the ATD website. Please read through the information thoroughly. The next step is to schedule 3-4 appointments with a tester/observer. Your completed background check and dog health forms must be presented to the tester/observer before sessions can begin. If the tester/observer listed above is not located in your area, additional observers can be found by searching for your zip code on the ATD website. Once you have completed those appointments, you will then complete all the necessary paperwork and mail it to the address listed on that paperwork.

WHY DOES WCHS REQUIRE CERTIFICATION?

Certification is required to ensure the quality and safety of the visits for the facilities/individuals that WCHS partners with. The specific evaluation/observation your dog receives also helps ensure your dog’s comfort in the program. In addition, many certification providers come with insurance policies that offer coverage if incidents occur at a facility.

WHAT DO I DO ONCE MY DOG IS CERTIFIED?

Once your dog is certified, please contact the WCHS Volunteer Coordinator to set up an in-person meeting. You, your dog, and the volunteer coordinator will be present at this meeting. The Volunteer Coordinator will review the program, complete any necessary paperwork, and get to know you both! You will also discuss your schedule and the days/times R.W.R volunteers are needed at the library. You and your dog will be photographed for WCHS’s records since we do not see you in person that often, and also to share with the library so they know who to look for.

HOW DO I LOG MY R.W.R VOLUNTEER HOURS?

In order to keep track of your volunteer hours in this program, you will need to log in and out of Volgistics on your mobile device or communicate your hours via email with the Volunteer Coordinator. You can send an email after each shift, or you can send an email with all your hours for the month at the end of each month.

WHAT WILL A TYPICAL R.W.R SHIFT LOOK LIKE?

Once you are on the schedule and ready to visit with children at the library, the program is fairly independent. Volunteers will go to the library at their scheduled time, check in with the front desk, and start visiting with children that are signed up to read with the dog. Always make sure a child is comfortable with your animal and wants to engage with them before beginning. You will also check out with the front desk when you are ready to leave.

Please always have your WCHS nametag on along with your dog's "I am a Therapy Dog" tag from ATD. If your dog is not wearing this tag, you are not covered by ATD's liability insurance while you are volunteering. In addition, ATD requires that you carry your current membership card on visits and also have proof of your dog's vaccinations with you (on you, or in your vehicle). If you are certified through another organization and you do not have a certification badge, please make sure to carry a copy of your proof of certification with you or whatever else that organization might require for coverage to apply.

WHAT WILL COMMUNICATION WITH WCHS LOOK LIKE?

The Volunteer Coordinator will check in with volunteers during the last week of the month. This will be every month at the start, but will move to every other month as the volunteer gets comfortable with the program. The Volunteer Coordinator will review the hours you spent volunteering and check in to see how things are going. If any questions or concerns come up throughout the month, please reach out to the Volunteer Coordinator right away so that those questions or concerns can be addressed in a timely manner.

If you need to cancel a shift for any reason, please let the WCHS Volunteer Coordinator know as soon as possible and as far ahead of time as possible. The Volunteer Coordinator will communicate with the library and also reach out to other R.W.R volunteers to see if anyone is able to fill in for you. Please refer to the WCHS Volunteer Handbook for our "No-call, no-show" policy.

If the WCHS Volunteer Coordinator is unavailable and you need to communicate a schedule change, your last resort would be to call the library directly and let them know. You can ask for Hannah Kane or you can tell the person at the information desk.

CAN I BRING SOMEONE ALONG WITH ME FOR A R.W.R SHIFT?

No. Any person who is not signed up to volunteer with WCHS will not have an application on file with WCHS. Therefore, they will not have a signed liability waiver and we cannot have non-approved people visiting the facilities we partner with while you are there volunteering. In addition, you would be covered by the insurance your therapy accreditation offers but your guest would not.

If someone comes to the library with you and does unrelated activities elsewhere in the library, that would be permitted as long as they are not involved in your volunteer work in any capacity.



THANK YOU FOR OFFERING YOUR TIME TO WCHS AND BEING A PART OF EVERYTHING
THIS PROGRAM HAS TO OFFER OUR COMMUNITY!

