



## Blue Ribbon Therapy Dogs

### Registration Process

Becoming a member of Blue Ribbon Therapy Dogs begins with supplying a completed application form. We are available to answer any questions about the form, and about the process of becoming a working therapy dog team.

The fee for each team evaluated is \$25. This fee is non-refundable and is submitted with the application form, along with two pieces of valid identification and a copy of a current rabies certificate or rabies titer test. After receiving the application, BRTD will contact the applicant with the next available date for their evaluation.

After a successful evaluation, all required documentation must be submitted to BRTD for approval, which includes a completed and signed BRTD registration form and a completed and signed BRTD vet form. The registration must be received within three months of the evaluation. After reception of the above documents, the candidate must also undergo a Criminal Record Check.

Once the above required steps are completed, the applicant must attend an orientation session before receiving certification.

After receiving BRTD certification, we will assist the new team in selecting locations for therapy work, with the aim of finding a rewarding experience for dog, handler and client. Some facilities require therapy dog handlers to attend an institutional volunteer seminar. For the initial visit, the handler accompanies an experienced therapy team, without bringing his/her own dog. Next, the new team is accompanied by an experienced handler for three visits. This mentoring arrangement helps to support the new team in gaining skill and confidence in their work.

After the visits have begun, we are available to answer questions, help solve problems that may come up, or arrange for a change of location or an expansion of duties, as needed.

Blue Ribbon Therapy Dogs meets during the year for orientation, evaluation, fundraisers or meetings. Members are invited to volunteer their time to BRTD in any area of our work which may be of interest, as well as attend meetings and help out at events.

We look forward to welcoming you and your dog to Blue Ribbon Therapy Dogs, and your contribution to our community with this wonderful form of volunteering.

- I verify that all information submitted is truthful and complete.
- I have read and agree to abide by the terms of the registration process as described above.
- I have submitted the non-refundable \$25 evaluation fee payable to Blue Ribbon Therapy Dogs
- I have submitted two valid pieces of identification
- I have submitted a current rabies vaccine or titre certificate for my dog.

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**Signature**

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**Date**



## *Blue Ribbon Therapy Dogs*

### **Could Your Dog be a Blue Ribbon Therapy Dog?**

#### **What does a therapy dog do?**

Therapy dogs bring companionship and comfort in home and facility visits and in school programs. Unlike guide dogs or assistance dogs, therapy dogs are there to be petted and enjoyed.

Please note that therapy dogs are \*not\* service dogs. If you want to learn more about service dogs, including psychiatric service dogs, please visit **The Canadian Service Dog Foundation**.

#### **What kind of dog can be a therapy dog?**

Therapy dogs come in all breeds, shapes and sizes. One thing they all must have in common is temperament – therapy dogs must be confident, friendly, patient and gentle in all situations.

Dogs must be 18 months old to be certified for solo visits. Dogs as young as 6 months may be eligible to attend group or community events.

#### **What kind of training is required?**

Each BRTD handler & dog team is required to pass a rigorous evaluation. We therefore recommend that applicant dogs have successfully completed the Companion Pro training level at **Blue Ribbon Canine Centre** or an equivalent level from another school. See the **BRTD Evaluation Checklist** for a detailed list of the test requirements.

#### **What about me as a handler? Do I need any special training?**

As an BRTD handler, you are not required to have prior training or experience. Your placement process will involve shadowing an experienced team in the field and being mentored. A criminal records check is also required. As well, some facilities require handlers to complete an orientation and volunteer training process. You may also be required to meet facility-specific requirements such as immunization (TB, for example) and dress code.

#### **How do my dog and I become a therapy team with BRTD?**

The first step is to attend an information session to see if BRTD is a good fit for you and your dog, and to understand the level of commitment that is required.

The next step is to submit a membership application for consideration. Note: If you are familiar with BRTD and what is involved in being a therapy dog team, your application can be submitted before you attend the information session.

The evaluation for you and your dog is next, followed by a mandatory orientation session. See the **BRTD Evaluation Checklist** for an explanation of what is required.

If you pass the evaluation, the final step in the membership process is a criminal records check. In addition, the **BRTD Health Records Form** must be completed by your veterinarian at this stage.

The placement process then begins, starting with shadowing and receiving mentoring with an experienced team.

#### **How do I find out more?**

You can attend an BRTD information session for more details.

#### **How do I apply?**

You can start your application process by completing the **BRTD Application Form**.



## *Blue Ribbon Therapy Dogs*

### **Volunteering with Blue Ribbon Therapy Dogs**

Blue Ribbon Therapy Dogs is a not-for-profit organization that relies on the strength and commitment of its volunteers, who lend their time, talents and skills in many different ways.

**BRTD members** (handlers) are active in the field with their therapy dogs. Members deliver therapy services and take part in speaking engagements and special events.

**BRTD associate members** do not have therapy dogs active in the field. Associate members participate on committees, lead campaigns and initiatives, advocate for BRTD, or manage a program or project.

#### **Want to participate in non-dog-related activities?**

Welcome aboard! You can contribute your time and skills by helping with:

- Public relations/communications
- New member evaluation and orientation
- Committee and project work
- Community outreach and fundraising
- Special events

#### **What's in it for you?**

- The joy of sharing a wonderful companion animal with others
- The satisfaction of seeing clients connect emotionally with a dog
- The pride of watching good dogs doing great work
- The opportunity to lead initiatives and see them to completion
- The knowledge that you're doing something important and meaningful

If you are ready to volunteer we look forward to hearing from you.

#### **Contact us:**

Email: [blueribbontherapydogs@gmail.com](mailto:blueribbontherapydogs@gmail.com)  
Telephone: 514-778-2783  
Address: 2070 Chartier Ave.  
Dorval, QC H9P 1H2

Visit our **Facebook page** at <https://www.facebook.com/blueribbontherapydogs>