

Volunteer Handbook





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Who We Are

Paws for Purple Hearts (PPH)

Paws for Purple Hearts is a nonprofit organization committed to serving America's Warriors by providing a unique Canine-Assisted Therapeutic Program[®] that reduces the negative symptoms of these Warrior's Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and/or Military Sexual Trauma (MST). We also train and provide top-tier service dogs for Veterans and service members with mobility limitations and trauma related symptoms.

Mission Statement Paws for Purple Hearts improves the lives of America's Warriors facing mobility challenges and trauma-related conditions such as PTSD and TBI by providing the highest quality assistance dogs and canine-assisted therapeutic programs; and by building public awareness about the important role dogs play in helping Warriors along the road to recovery.

Co-Founder, Dr. Bergin

Dr. Bonita (Bonnie) Bergin invented the concept of the Service Dog to assist people with mobility limitations in 1975. At that time, she founded Canine Companions for Independence (CCI), the first nonprofit to train and place Service Dogs. After leaving CCI In 1991, Dr. Bergin founded the Assistance Dog Institute, which was formally designated a university in early 2004. Today, growing Bergin University of Canine Studies is the only university dedicated to teaching service dog trainers in the world.

History

Paws for Purple Hearts was founded as a pilot research program at Bergin University of Canine Studies in 2006. In 2008, PPH started a pilot program at the VA Palo Alto Health Care System in Menlo Park. In 2011, Paws for Purple Hearts officially incorporated as a 501c(3).



Programs and Services

Services

Canine-Assisted Warrior Therapy[®]

Our signature program is our Canine-Assisted Warrior Therapy[®]. In this program, Veterans and service members (Warriors) with trauma-related conditions are taught to train and handle PPH service dogs under the guidance of our Professional PPH Instructors. This therapy is then documented and tied to other therapeutic goals by the Warrior's mental health treatment provider. Warriors who participate report regaining that sense of purpose that comes with accomplishing an important mission – training a lifelong service companion for their comrades in need. This program has also helped Warriors to regain trust in others and rebuild relationships. We offer this program on site at partner locations such as VA or DOD sites, and also in our facilities.

Social Therapy

We also make social therapy visits to sites where Warriors would benefit from the presence of a dog and a more informal, therapeutic interaction with our service-dogs-in-training. We conduct social therapy visits at locations such as USOs, Polytrauma units, and Community Living Centers.

Warrior Pet Dog Training

We offer free basic obedience training classes for Warriors and their family members who are looking to strengthen the relationship with their pet dogs. These classes are held at our PPH sites. The focus of these classes is basic obedience and the human-canine relationship, not service dog training. Dogs who complete these classes are not considered PPH service dogs.



Assistance Dog Placements

Service Dogs

Mobility Service Dogs: for warriors with physical disabilities who would benefit from help with tasks such as: retrieving items, pushing buttons for elevators and doors, and turning lights on/off.

PTSD Service Dogs: for warriors who have been diagnosed with trauma related conditions such as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) who would benefit from tasks for panic prevention and behavior interruption, as well as tasks that encourage social interaction.

Facility Dogs spread love and joy throughout a health/human services care facility. Together with its handler, a highly trained PPH dog roams a Veterans Affairs (VA) medical center, a military hospital or a similar facility. Our dogs provide a friendly face to engage patients, families and staff. With a loving shake of a paw, they lift moods and boost morale. With a gentle snuggle, they build a welcoming atmosphere and promote healing. A PPH facility dog helps a home-like atmosphere. A PPH facility dog's caregiver is the prime contact person and handler at a host facility. The caregiver manages daily activities and routine dog care, while PPH staff provides support as needed.

Specialist Therapy Dogs are placed with individuals such as counselors, psychologists, physical therapists, psychiatrists, and teaching specialists of service members or veterans who wish to integrate a dog into their clients' treatment plans. PPH trains a specialist to care for and handle the dog and to maximize beneficial effectiveness. The specialist professional serves as the dog's caregiver and is the primary contact person and handler. The caregiver manages daily activities and routine dog care, while PPH staff provides support as needed.



Volunteer Opportunities

Our volunteers play a crucial role in our ability to provide Warrior Canine Therapy® and service dogs for Warriors. Here are some of the important and fun roles our volunteers have:

Puppy Petter - a volunteer trained to handle our very special service dog puppies beginning the very day the puppies are whelped, utilizing a precise handling protocol.

Puppy Parent - take a puppy or dog in training home so the pup is socialized to new situations, new people, and the home environment. The pup-in-training lives at the Puppy Parent's home on weekends or during the evenings and weekends, and accompanies the Puppy Parent on outings. Puppy Parents receive ongoing training from PPH Instructors and are expected to do some basic training with the dog, as well as adhere to certain standards for the dog's behavior in the home.

General Volunteer - our sites need various types of help to run. Volunteers can help with important jobs such as: kennel cleaning, walking dogs, grooming or bathing dogs, gardening or construction, helping with special events and outreach, fundraising, clerical/administrative help, and baking or cooking food for events. If you have a special skill or idea for how you can help us, let us know and we will find a way to get you involved!



Volunteer Information

Benefits: Volunteers are not eligible for any benefits including Health Insurance or Worker's Compensation Benefits.

Training: All Volunteers are required to complete an orientation prior to beginning general volunteer work with Paws for Purple Hearts. Puppy Petters are required to complete a one-hour orientation prior to participation in Puppy Petting. Puppy Parents are required to participate consistently in regular Puppy Parent meetings with PPH instructors.

Confidentiality: Each Volunteer is responsible for safeguarding confidential information obtained during the course of your work. If you have access to confidential information, you have a responsibility to prevent revealing or divulging any such information unless it is necessary for you to do so in the performance of your duties. Any breach of this policy will not be tolerated and is subject to disciplinary action.

Conflicts of Interest: All Volunteers must avoid situations involving actual or potential conflict of interest. You are not to engage in any conduct that is disruptive or damaging to PPH. Refer all questions and concerns about potential conflicts to PPH staff.

Timekeeping Requirements: Volunteers are required to accurately record time worked for Paws for Purple Hearts on the sign-in form in the reception office.



Safety

General Safety Rules

- Walk, never run.
- Use a cover on hot beverages.
- Keep desk drawers and file drawers closed when not in use.
- Report any accident or incident to PPH staff at once.
- Smoking on the premises is prohibited at all times.
- Know where the location of the human and canine First Aid Kits.
- Know where Fire Extinguishers are and how to use them.
- If you must lift something as part of your volunteer responsibilities, lift it right! Lift with your legs, not with your back.
- Follow proper safety precautions in the operation of any equipment.
- Take caution when around dogs that you don't trip over them or their toys or get knocked down by them.
- Clean up all spills on the floor to prevent slipping.
- Turn off all appliances, including coffee pots and copy machines before leaving at night.

Age Requirement: To volunteer with Paws for Purple Hearts, you must be at least 18 years old. Minors who wish to volunteer must be accompanied by a parent or guardian over the age of 18 at all times.

Smoking Policy: A policy of no smoking nor vaping is enforced in all Paws for Purple Hearts buildings or around any PPH dogs. Please be considerate of others and refrain from smoking near any PPH facilities.

Drug-Free Workplace: PPH maintains a strong commitment to provide a safe, efficient, and productive work environment. PPH's policy recognizes that volunteer involvement with controlled substances can be extremely disruptive and harmful in the workplace. PPH prohibits the use, sale, possession, manufacture, purchase, or transfer of any controlled substance in the PPH facility.

Vehicles: Due to insurance policy restrictions, volunteers may only ride in PPH vehicles if they are doing so for the express purpose of carrying out PPH tasks. Under no circumstances are volunteers to drive PPH vehicles.



Kennel Safety Procedures

Please refer to the dog board for specific information regarding dog handling and structured play sessions. Dog handling direction is given exclusively from the PPH program instructors.

Any dog may bite if threatened, cornered, scared, or defending food or territory. Even the best trained dogs will exhibit antisocial behavior in a stressful situation such as kennel life.

- If a dog fight breaks out, don't panic! Usually, dog fights are mostly noise!! A firm "NO!" should stop it. If not, distract them by making pleasant sounds that are socially appealing interventions. If this does not work, shout "NO" firmly to let them know you mean business. Avoid the use of your hands or arms as a fighting dog has a reduced sense of self-restraint, even related to humans. If possible, and as safety permits, separate the dogs and check for injuries. Immediately let the kennel staff know what happened.
- Dogs are to be handled as per PPH dog handling techniques. Please refer to the dog board for specific information regarding dog handling and structured play sessions.
- Dogs are to be fed according to the posted feeding schedule. If possible, separate dogs for feeding. Someone should always be present to monitor dogs during feeding.
- Your safety is always the first priority, followed by the dog's safety. Check that all electrical cords and appliances are clean, not frayed, dirty, or covered with hair. Appliances should never be left unattended when on.
- Watch for swinging doors, latches, overhead cabinet doors, and the like. Any sharp or broken items should be repaired immediately. Lock or securely close all doors and gates.
- Use extreme caution when working on slippery or wet floors, especially when using an electrical appliance such as a ShopVac.
- Please follow cleaning procedures as posted for kennels and kennel areas.



Disability Training

The following trainings are provided to you for informational purposes to increase your understanding of conditions and symptoms you may encounter while working with Warriors.

The following training is provided by Paws for Purple Hearts' Clinical Director. Any questions or concerns regarding the training below can be directed to your local facility.

Military Culture - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UK1NoAuUJ6k>

PTSD - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9e1EyG_Wc7U

PTSD Treatment - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P1EdMhFYHAI&t=1s>

Bias Training - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RFdvQrIUqB0>

Unconditional Positive Regard - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Bz9wvIN5O4>



Additional Resources

Veteran's Crisis Line

<https://www.veteranscrisisline.net/>

1-800-273-8255, press 1

Text 838255

VA Resources

<https://www.va.gov/>

844-698-2311

Vet Centers

<https://www.vetcenter.va.gov/>

1-877-WAR-VETS



Policies

Harassment Policy

Paws for Purple Hearts (PPH) has a strict policy against all types of workplace harassment, including sexual harassment and other forms of workplace harassment. This policy protects all applicants, employees (including managers and supervisors) and volunteers from unlawful harassment and discrimination. This includes harassment by employees, managers, supervisors, contractors, interns, volunteers, vendors, suppliers, and customers. In addition, this policy extends to conduct connected with an individual's work, even when the conduct takes place away from the workplace, such as a business trip or business-related social function.

Harassment means disrespectful or unprofessional conduct, including disrespectful or unprofessional conduct based on an individual's race (including, but not limited to, hair texture and protective hairstyles such as braids, locks, and twists), color, religion, religious creed (including religious dress and grooming practices), national origin, ancestry, citizenship, physical or mental disability, medical condition (including cancer and genetic characteristics), genetic information, marital status, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding, or related medical conditions), gender (including gender identity and gender expression), age (40 years and over), sexual orientation, veteran and/or military status, protected medical leaves (requesting or approved for leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act or the California Family Rights Act), domestic violence victim status, political affiliation, or any other status protected by federal, state, or local laws.

While it is not possible to list all the circumstances that may constitute other forms of workplace harassment, some examples of conduct that may constitute workplace harassment include:

- The use of disparaging or abusive words or phrases, slurs, negative stereotyping, or threatening, intimidating, or hostile acts that relate to the above protected categories;
- Written or graphic material that insults, stereotypes, or shows aversion or hostility toward an individual or group because of one of the above protected categories and that is placed on walls, bulletin boards, email, voicemail, or elsewhere on PPH premises, or circulated in the workplace; and
- A display of symbols, slogans, or items associated with hate or intolerance toward any select group.

Sexual harassment means harassment based on sex or conduct of a sexual nature, and includes harassment based on sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding, or related medical conditions), gender, gender identity, or gender expression. It may include all of the actions described above as harassment, as well as other unwelcome sex-based conduct, such as unwelcome or unsolicited sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, conversations regarding sexual activities, or other verbal or



physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexually harassing conduct need not be motivated by sexual desire and may include situations that began as reciprocal relationships, but that later cease to be reciprocal. Sexual harassment is generally categorized into the following two types:

1. Quid pro quo sexual harassment ("this for that"), which includes:
 - a. Submission to sexual conduct when made explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment.
 - b. Submission to or rejection of the conduct by an employee when used as the basis for employment decisions affecting the employee.
2. Hostile work environment sexual harassment is conduct of a sexual nature or on the basis of sex by any person in the workplace that unreasonably interferes with an employee's work performance and/or creates an intimidating, hostile, or otherwise offensive working environment. Examples include:
 - a. Unwelcome sexual advances, flirtation, teasing, sexually suggestive or obscene letters, invitations, notes, emails, voicemails, or gifts.
 - b. Sex, gender, or sexual orientation-related comments, slurs, jokes, remarks, or epithets.
 - c. Leering, obscene or vulgar gestures, or sexual gestures.
 - d. Displaying or distributing sexually suggestive or derogatory objects, pictures, cartoons, or posters or any such items.
 - e. Impeding or blocking movement, unwelcome touching, or assaulting others.
 - f. Any sexual advances that are unwelcome as well as reprisals or threats after a negative response to sexual advances.
 - g. Conduct or comments consistently targeted at one gender, even if the content is not sexual.



Reporting Discrimination, Harassment, and/or Retaliation

PPH will promptly and thoroughly investigate any claim and take appropriate corrective and/or remedial action where we find a claim has merit. If PPH begins an investigation, we will endeavor to conduct the investigation in a timely manner and will keep the investigation confidential to the extent possible. In the same way, anyone involved in an investigation of harassment has an obligation to keep all information about the investigation confidential. That is why PPH will only share information about a complaint of harassment with those who need to know about it. Failure to keep information about an investigation confidential may result in disciplinary action. Investigations will be documented and tracked for timely resolution.

When the investigation has been completed, PPH will normally communicate the results of the investigation to the complaining individual, to the alleged harasser and, if appropriate, to others who are directly involved. If our policy against harassment is found to have been violated, appropriate corrective action, up to and including termination, will be taken against the harasser so that further harassment will be prevented. Both the rights of the alleged harasser and the complainant will be considered in any investigation and subsequent action.

Discipline for violation of this policy may include, but is not limited to, reprimand, suspension, demotion, transfer, and discharge. If PPH determines that harassment or discrimination occurred, corrective action will be taken to effectively end the harassment. As necessary, PPH may monitor any incident of harassment or discrimination to assure the inappropriate behavior has stopped. In all cases, PPH will follow up as necessary to ensure that no individual is retaliated against for making a complaint or cooperating with an investigation.

In addition to our internal complaint procedure, PPH may also contact either the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) to report unlawful harassment. California-based employees may also contact the California Department of Fair Employment and Housing (DFEH). Please note: you must file a complaint with the DFEH within three years of the alleged unlawful action. The EEOC and the DFEH serve as neutral fact-finders and will attempt to assist the parties to voluntarily resolve their disputes. For more information, contact your supervisor or the nearest EEOC or DFEH office.



Filing of Complaints Outside Company

PPH encourages all volunteers to report any incidents of harassment immediately, so that complaints can be resolved. If you think you have been harassed or that you have been retaliated against for resisting or complaining, you may file a complaint with the appropriate agency.

You may file formal complaints of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation with the agencies listed below. Contact these agencies directly for more information about filing processes.

California Department of Fair Employment and Housing 2218 Kausen Drive, Suite 100 Elk Grove, CA 95758 800-884-1684 (voice), 800-700-2320 (TTY) or California's Relay Service at 711
contact.center@dfeh.ca.gov <https://www.dfeh.ca.gov>

U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission 450 Golden Gate Avenue 5 West P.O. Box 36025 San Francisco, CA 94102-3661 800-669-4000 or 510-735-8909 (deaf/hard-of-hearing callers only)
<http://www.eeoc.gov/employees>



Copyright Policy

It is the intent of Paws for Purple Hearts that all PPH volunteers adhere to the provisions of the United States copyright law. Volunteers of PPH who willfully disregard the copyright policy do so at their own risk and assume all liability.

Overview of Copyright

Copyright is an important form of legal protection designed to promote the progress of science and the arts by securing for an author the benefits of his or her original work of authorship for a limited time. Publication is not essential for copyright protection.

Copyright Act of 1976

Section 106 of the Copyright Act of 1976 generally gives the owner of copyright the exclusive right to do and to authorize any of the following:

- reproduce copies of the work;
- prepare derivative works based on the copyrighted work;
- distribute copies of the work by sale, rental, lease, or lending;
- publicly perform the work (in the case of literary, musical, dramatic, choreographic, pantomime, motion picture, or audiovisual work); and
- publicly display the work (in the case of literary, musical, dramatic, choreographic, pantomime, pictorial, graphic, sculptural, motion picture (including individual images), or other audiovisual work).

Works that have never been, or are no longer, protected by copyright are in the “public domain, and can be copied, republished, or otherwise used. Works that are protected by copyright may often be legally used in a limited way by educators under exemptions (§ 107-120) commonly referred to as “fair use.”



Open Door & Complaint Policy

It is PPH's policy to maintain an open door so our employees, volunteers, clients and assistance dog applicants can discuss any business-related issues. Suggestions for improving PPH are always welcome. At some time you may have a complaint, suggestion, concern or question about your job, your working conditions, situation, or the treatment you are receiving. Your good-faith complaints, questions, concerns and suggestions are of interest to PPH. You may provide your complaint, suggestion or question in any format desired (e.g., verbal, written, electronically).

Feel free to discuss your ideas, concerns or complaints with your PPH contact person, so PPH can give due consideration to them.



Waivers

Liability

I understand that working with dogs involves risks, including possible injury, illness, death, damage to or destruction of property, and I choose to volunteer with Paws for Purple Hearts of my own free will with full knowledge and acceptance of those risks.

I indemnify and hold harmless Paws For Purple Hearts from and against any and all claims, losses, liabilities and damage to persons or property, expenses, costs and/or attorneys' fees arising out of the acts or omissions of Paws For Purple Hearts, its directors, officers, agents or employees, and I agree that anything whatsoever that happens relating to the dogs, their training, or my volunteer work with dogs will not result in any claims against Paws For Purple Hearts, its directors, officers, agents or employees by me or anyone acting on my behalf for personal injuries or property damages.

If I volunteer through the Department of Veterans Affairs ("VA"), Department of Defense ("DOD"), a state Veterans services department, or similar host organization, I understand and agree that any claims I may have that are related to the program will be referred to the host organization and that the host organization may, at its own discretion, pursue those claims further.

Volunteer Name

Volunteer Signature

Date



Confidentiality

As a volunteer with Paws for Purple Hearts, you are obligated by this policy to prevent certain information from being shared in any form with anyone who is not an employee of PPH without proper authorization.

I recognize that I may come into contact with information or materials at Paws for Purple Hearts (PPH) that is confidential and should not be shared with anyone outside of Paws for Purple Hearts. Such protected information includes:

- All PPH client information
- All PPH therapy/intervention participant information
- All PPH donor information (including all data in the PPH Salesforce database & the DonorSearch database)
- All PPH officer, employee, board member, and volunteer information
- All PPH dog training methods and practices
- All PPH therapeutic methods and practices
- All PPH staff training methods and practices
- All PPH administrative, technical, planning, strategy, financial, operational and other organizational practices or related documents.

I recognize the need to keep all protected information absolutely confidential and prevent its release to anyone other than those authorized. I agree to use the material only for the permitted application and not for any other purpose, including any actions that could be detrimental to the organization.

I agree not to remove the confidential information from its place of business. I understand that I have an obligation to maintain confidentiality for all written and oral information and materials regardless of how the information was communicated whether it was provided before or after this agreement was enacted. Confidential information also extends to any information provided by a third party.

I will not disclose any information regarding donors, staff, volunteers, therapeutic intervention participants, or service dog clients/applicants to anyone including said friends, family or employer and/or interested third parties.

The Paws for Purple Hearts training methods and canine assisted therapeutic intervention curriculum are proprietary and are shared with clients, volunteers, and therapeutic intervention participants solely for educational purposes.

These materials may not be copied or distributed without written permission from Paws for Purple Hearts.



Volunteer Code of Conduct

- a. I will conduct myself in a professional manner at all times.
- b. I will refrain from using inappropriate language.
- c. I will not use Paws for Purple Hearts emblem, endorsement, services, or property of Paws for Purple Hearts unless authorized.
- d. I will not publicly utilize any Paws for Purple Hearts affiliation in connection with the promotion of partisan politics, religious matters, or positions on any issue.
- e. I will not disclose any confidential Paws for Purple Hearts information
- f. I will consider information as privileged and not for public knowledge.
- g. I will not operate or act in any manner that is contrary to the best interest of Paws for Purple Hearts.
- h. I will not make false statements against Paws for Purple Hearts.

Print Name

Volunteer Signature

Date

Witness (PPH Employee)

Date



Emergency Contact List

Name: _____ Date _____

In the event of an emergency, the staff at Paws for Purple Hearts may need to contact a designated person on your behalf. Completion of this form is optional and in addition to emergency contacts listed on the required medical authorization form.

Please list emergency contacts in the order you would like us to attempt to contact them.

Contact 1 Name: _____

Relationship: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Home Phone: _____ Email address: _____

Address: _____

Contact 2 Name: _____

Relationship: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Home Phone: _____ Email address: _____

Address: _____

Contact 3 Name: _____

Relationship: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Home Phone: _____ Email address: _____

Address: _____



Media Authorization and Release - (Optional)

Subject to the terms and conditions set forth herein this Agreement, I, _____, do hereby irrevocably authorize Paws For Purple Hearts, its successors and assignees and those acting under its permission and on its authority to copyright, use, and publish for art, sales materials, advertising, promotion, packaging, trade or any other lawful purpose whatsoever, articles written or comments made by me as well as photographs, pictures, portraits or images, of me and/or my dog(s) or other animal(s), or in which I/we may be included, in whole or in part, or composite or distorted in character of form in conjunction with my/our own fictitious name, or reproductions thereof in color or otherwise, made through any medium. Any and all comments made by me are provided to Paws For Purple Hearts without receipt of any promise of consideration.

The undersigned warrants that he/she has the full power and authority to grant all of the rights conveyed hereunder and hereby waives any right that he/she may have to inspect or approve the finished product or the advertising or other copy that may be used in connection therewith or the use to which it may be applied.

The undersigned further agrees that this authorization and release shall be binding upon his/her heirs, executors, administrators, successors and assignees. The undersigned warrants that all comments made by me will accurately reflect the opinions and experiences of the undersigned and that the comments are true and correct to the best of the undersigned's knowledge and belief.

The undersigned further warrants that he/she is of full age and has every right to contract in his/her name in the above regard and further that he/she has read the above authorization and release, prior to its execution, and that he/she is fully familiar with the contents thereof.

Volunteer Signature

Date



Contact Us

10201 Old Redwood Highway
Penngrove, CA 94951

Phone: (844) 700-7297

Email: Info@PawsforPurpleHearts.org

www.PawsforPurpleHearts.org

www.Facebook.com/Paws4PH

