



Intervention Transfer TrainingSM Seminar – Step One in Our Client Training Process

In 2013, paws4people added “seminars” as the first step in the **Intervention Transfer TrainingSM** (ITT) process.

ITT Seminar is an intensive introduction to ITT where Conditional Clients spend one (1) day in the classroom learning paws4people academics, handling protocols, and safety protocols required for Conditional Client success. Conditional Clients then spend two (2) to three (3) days training (in retail establishments, indoor and outdoor attractions, restaurants, in professional settings, etc.) for about ten (10) hours per day. This intensive “bootcamp” introduction leaves Conditional Clients feeling very experienced (and tired!) after their first ITT Session with their Assistance (Service) Dogs. We have found that by immersing everyone intensely during their first ITT Session, the rest of ITT progresses much more successfully.

Each Conditional Client must attend a Seminar with paws4people in Wilmington, North Carolina

Intervention Transfer TrainingSM Sessions

ITT Sessions are the second step in the ITT process. ITT Sessions are where each Conditional Client learns to utilize his/her Assistance (Service) Dog to **control, regulate, and mitigate**[®] his/her disability symptom set. ITT is conducted by highly experienced and specially trained staff and trainers, as well as peer mentors. Peer mentors are paws4vets Certified Clients who have successfully completed ITT and are now working full-time with their Assistance (Service) Dogs to improve and enhance their daily living.

ITT is conducted using the mutual aid model, wherein group members are the providers as well as the recipients of the benefits of the services¹. During ITT, we recognize that the experiences, strengths, and perspectives of each group member should be drawn upon to help other members of the group. We also draw heavily on the helper-theory principle, similar to Alcoholics Anonymous, wherein helping others helps the helper². ITT is a peer-to-peer activity led by Assistance (Service) Dog experts, not a medical treatment by medical providers or a therapeutic intervention led by mental health practitioners. We have found that this offers directness and authenticity that often affords our Conditional Clients progress they have not been able to find within medical settings, traditional therapy, or other mental health intervention.

The ITT process promote resilience and growth in Conditional Clients who are living with life-altering disabilities and who have experienced traumatic events. For each Conditional Client, the ITT process helps him/her to build a fuller, more independent life. Each Conditional Client is learning to **control, regulate, and mitigate**[®] his/her symptom set in new environments and while interacting with new people. Each Conditional Client is building bonds and deepening connections, decreasing isolation, becoming more social, and increasing self-esteem, confidence, and feelings of self-worth. Each Conditional Client inspires and motivates others to find a way forward and to deal with life-altering disabilities.

The ITT process includes family integration programming via the PAWS Family Support Network because it is crucial for the Conditional Client's family members to take care of his/her own health and well-being. Family integration programming helps the Conditional Client and each family member to be better able to contribute to the overall family functioning.

¹ Gitterman, Alex and Robert Salmon. *Encyclopedia of Social Work with Groups*. New York: Routledge, 2009.

² Reissman, Frank. (1965). The "helper" therapy principle. *Social Work*, 10(2), 27-32. ISSN 0037-8046.

Staff leaders work with the paws4people Medical Evaluation Team (pMET), a volunteer group of consulting licensed medical/mental health professionals, to facilitate communication with each Conditional Client's medical treatment team, mental health care providers, and ancillary health care providers (e.g., occupational therapist, physical therapist, speech therapist, audiologist, pain management, prosthetics and orthotics provider), and to create and refine training plans. This communication system creates continuity and likeness of goals with the Conditional Client's medical treatment team and mental health care providers, ensuring the highest level of safety for all Conditional Clients, while also pushing past existing boundaries to realize real success to **control, regulate, and mitigate®** of symptom sets.

Staff does not act as medical providers or mental health practitioners, rather as experts in the utilization of Assistance (Service) Dogs as assistive medical/behavioral devices/tools to control, regulate, and mitigate® life-altering disabilities, including PTSD, TBI, MST, Moral Injury, and other physical and psychiatric conditions.

For Conditional Clients who are receiving an Assistance (Service) Dog to mitigate a physical or non-psychiatric diagnosis: The organization shall provide the Conditional Client with ITT which will enable the Conditional Client and his/her Dog to perform as an effective working Assistance (Service) Dog Team. ITT shall include, but not be limited to, the following: the proper care and maintenance of the Dog, the Dog's Command Set, how to command and work the Dog in public, the laws concerning Assistance (Service) Dogs and the Team's rights and limitations as such, and umbilical training. ITT shall be conducted over no less than a 10-calendar day period of time. [Note: These "ten (10)" days of ITT may be accomplished over an extended period of time, in order to provide the Conditional Client with the best opportunity for success.]

For Conditional Clients who are receiving an Assistance (Service) Dog for mitigation of psychiatric diagnosis: The organization shall provide the Conditional Client with ITT which will enable the Conditional Client and his/her Dog to perform as an effective working Assistance (Service) Dog Team. ITT shall include, but not be limited to, the following: the proper care and maintenance of the Dog, the Dog's Command Set, how to command and work the Dog in public, the laws concerning Assistance (Service) Dogs and the Team's rights and limitations as such, and umbilical training. ITT shall be conducted over no less than a 15-calendar day period of time. [Note: These "fifteen (15)" days of ITT may be accomplished over an extended period of time, in order to provide the Conditional Client with the best opportunity to **control, regulate, and mitigate®** their symptom sets.]

paws4people believes that this individualized approach to transferring the Assistance (Service) Dogs to their Conditional Clients leads to much more successful team performance for their working careers than a standardized one (1) or two (2) week team training approach. As always, paws4people continues to focus on quality over quantity in our Teams

Each Assistance (Service) Dog Conditional Client must pass a Public Access Test (PAT) during his/her final ITT Session. This allows him/her to go home with "Black Vest" status (In-Training vest) until his/her final PAT is scheduled (usually at the next paws4people Annual Reunion and Graduation). Once this final PAT is passed, the Assistance (Service) Dog receives his/her custom "Red Vest" and the Team is official!

Secondary Handler Training – Assistance (Service) Dog

A minimum of six (6) months after he/she "Red Vests" with his/her Assistance (Service) Dog, a Certified Client can request to have a Secondary Handler trained. A decision on the request is in the sole discretion of the Executive Committee.

A Secondary Handler of an Assistance (Service) Dog is required to attend a Seminar with paws4people in Wilmington, North Carolina and a required number of ITT Sessions, the schedule to be determined by the Executive Committee.

A Secondary Handler of an Assistance (Service) Dog must pass a PAT during his/her final ITT Session.

Contact and Care

Each Client is welcomed into our growing family and supported as he/she learns and grows with his/her Assistance (Service) Dog.

Advocates will communicate with Clients on the following schedule *at a minimum* and document each contact within their email archives and/or in the Client's digital file:

- acceptance as a Potential Client to Bump: every two (2) weeks
- Bump to Seminar: every two (2) weeks
- Seminar to “Black Vest”: every two (2) weeks
- “Black Vest”: within 48 hours of taking home the Assistance (Service) Dog In-Training
- “Black Vest” to “Red Vest”: weekly
- “Red Vest”: within forty-eight (48) hours
- first six (6) months on “Red Vest”: every two (2) weeks
- after six (6) months - Dog's retirement: monthly

Advocates are available to their Clients each and every day.

We support each other during paws4people events and fundraisers, and most especially at our Annual Reunion. We all come together at least once a year for graduations to celebrate and to get to know each other better, thus forming stronger relationships.

Each Client must provide his/her Advocate with the contact information for his/her veterinarian, and provide proof of a new-patient check up with this vet within thirty (30) days of transfer of a Dog's conditional custody. At the first recertification Public Access Test, veterinarian records must be submitted to prove the Assistance (Service) Dog is being seen regularly by his/her veterinarian.

Annual Recertification

paws4people Assistance (Service) Dogs with Public Access are required to be re-certified annually, to include a temperament test, obedience test, Public Access Test, general health check, and any other evaluation deemed necessary by paws4people staff.

Type of Certification	Assessments/Req @ Cert	Assessments @ Re-Cert	ADA Public Access Re-Cert Frequency
Physical or Neurological AD (PND)	Temp/AO, PAT, ITT	Temp/AO, PAT	Annual
Medical Alert AD (MED)	Temp/AO, PAT, ITT	Temp/AO, PAT	Annual

Annual Recertification Logistics

All Public Access Tests must be scheduled and completed during the fourth quarter of each calendar year. Upon successful passing, an ID card will be issued for January 1-December 31 of the subsequent calendar year. Any Tests taken during any other quarter of the year, for any reason, shall result in certification only through December 31 of that calendar year. A new Test must then be taken during the fourth quarter.

It is the Certified Client's and his/her Secondary Handler's responsibility to schedule his/her annual Public Access Test.

Each Certified Client and his/her Secondary Handler must contact his/her Advocate who will coordinate with paws4people Certified Public Access Test Evaluators to schedule an annual Public Access Test for the Client and his/her Secondary Handler. If an Evaluator's time cannot be conveniently scheduled in the geographical area of the Client and his/her Secondary Handler, the Certified Client and/or Secondary Handler will be required to travel to the nearest certified Evaluator.

If the Certified Client or his/her Secondary Handler fails to make this scheduling request within reasonable time and a Public Access Test date is not available during the 4th quarter, the Assistance (Service) Dog shall become de-certified as of January 1 until such time an annual Public Access Test is scheduled, taken, and passed.

Expired Certification

If certification is allowed to expire for any reason, de-certification shall be effective immediately. Each Certified Client and his/her Secondary Handler shall be notified both by email and mail of de-certification. Re-certification may be obtained by scheduling the Public Access Test, as detailed above, within sixty (60) calendar days of expiration.

If certification is expired for more than sixty (60) days, in order to obtain re-certification, the Team must complete, at a minimum: attendance of a Seminar, ITT Sessions, temperament test, advanced obedience test, and Public Access Test. If certification is allowed to expire for any reason, de-certification shall be effective immediately.

If certification is expired for more than sixty (60) days, in order to obtain re-certification, the Team must complete, at a minimum: attendance of a Seminar, temperament test, and advanced obedience test

Additional evaluations, retraining, and/or the number of ITT Sessions is determined by the Executive Committee on a case-by-case basis and in its sole discretion.

Retirement

paws4people controls the decision about when a Dog retires from active service. A Certified Client may then be considered for placement of a Successor Dog per the Successor Dog Policy.

paws4people reserves the right to deny, revoke, and/or otherwise modify an individual's status with the organization at any time, for any reason, and in its sole discretion when determined to be in the best interest of the organization. An action deemed necessary and in the best interests of the organization will be communicated in writing (via email or letter) from the Executive Committee of paws4people and/or its CGC. In the case of an immediate termination of physical custody and immediate removal of a Dog, written communication may follow removal.