

# **Allen FFA Volunteer Puppy Raising Program**

***for Canine Companions for Independence ®***



**Canine  
Companions®**

**AHS Sponsor:  
Stacy Schertz  
Agricultural Science Teacher  
FFA Advisor**

## About the Program

Canine Companions for Independence is a non-profit organization that breeds, raises, and trains assistance dogs to enhance the lives of individuals with a variety of disabilities. The organization relies on volunteers to raise the dogs from a young age in order to teach them basic commands and experience socialization in addition to providing them with a safe and loving home. The headquarters of Canine

Companions® is located in Santa Rosa, California, and there is a local training center and chapter that operates out of North Texas. The Allen ISD CTE Department and Allen Agricultural Science Department have partnered with this organization to provide volunteer puppy raisers who are students at Allen High School and members of the Allen FFA chapter.

The activity of raising an assistance dog serves as a FFA Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) for agricultural science courses. In addition to fulfilling the requirements of Canine Companions, one must be a paid Allen FFA member in good standing and thus also enrolled in agricultural science courses at Allen High School. Due to a high volume of interested students, there is a rigorous application and screening process through both the Allen FFA chapter and Canine Companions for Independence.



## Requirements

As a volunteer puppy raiser, you must agree to the following:

- Provide a safe environment for a puppy, who will be the only dog under one year old in the household
- Work closely with Canine Companions and the AHS program sponsors (Mrs. Schertz) while monitoring the puppy's progress and submitting monthly reports to CCI and Mrs. Schertz
- Attend Canine Companions approved obedience classes at the Kinkeade campus (7710 Las Colinas Ridge, Irving, TX 75063) 2x per month or scheduled training off site with Veteran Canine Companion Puppy Raiser volunteers.
- Teach the puppy manners and basic commands
- Provide financially for the puppy's food, medical, and transportation expenses
- Feed the puppy a diet recommended by Canine Companions (Eukanuba Lg breed puppy)
- Provide a kennel or crate for sleeping indoors
- Provide the puppy with age-appropriate socialization opportunities such as public outings (school-sponsored as well as personal) and medical appointments
- Keep the puppy on a leash at all times unless in a securely fenced area
- Supervise the young puppy throughout the day
- Agree to return the puppy upon request to Canine Companions

You must be at least 18 years old to be an independent volunteer puppy raiser. Those under the age of 18 must have a parent or legal guardian as a co-applicant on the puppy raiser application (the majority of Allen FFA puppy raisers will require a co-applicant). Per Allen ISD, all parents involved in the program will be required to complete a background check.

The Allen FFA Volunteer Puppy Raising Program will abide by the UIL eligibility policy. Program members must be eligible at all times through UIL, and frequent grade checks will be put in place. The sponsors will also monitor member attendance and discipline, both initially upon application and frequently while in the program.

All puppy raisers will be given a thorough timeline detailing feeding and medical expectations as well as training and socialization directions. A puppy raiser manual will be provided as well. All program members will be expected to utilize and abide by these resources as well as others.

## Approximate cost:

	cost per incidence	yearly cost	
Vet Office Visit	\$40-60	\$160 - \$240	Puppies will need to see the vet at least 4 times for vaccines, plus any additional vet visits that may be required
Vaccines	\$20-50 each	~ \$400	Puppies will need 3-5 different vaccines 2- 4 times during the time they are being raised
Monthly preventatives	\$25 - 30/month	\$300	Heartworm, flea, and tick preventatives
Dog food	\$45/ 6 weeks	\$375	Eukanuba Large Breed
Spay/neuter	\$500		If the puppy is slated for “placement” (meaning the PR is responsible for spay or neuter) that can add \$200-600 for males and \$400-800 for females depending on the vet used. If the dog is a potential breeder (purebred males, most females), this cost will not apply.
Crate	\$100		
Toys, treats, leash/collar, etc.	variable	\$500	
Medical issues	≤ \$1000		UTI, skin infection, broken toe nail, etc.
<b>total cost</b>	\$2000 - \$3000		

**Puppy sitters:** those who are unable to be an Allen FFA volunteer puppy raiser may qualify to be an Allen FFA puppy sitter. Puppy sitters will abide by all of the same guidelines and follow the same steps as the puppy raisers except they will not be placed with a dog. Instead, they will be available to care for and train various puppies in the program for a specific amount of time when the need arises.

### **Steps To Becoming A Puppy Raiser/Puppy Sitter**

- Attend (parents and student) Allen High School Puppy interest meeting (date to be determined by appropriate sponsors)
- Parents must attend a mandatory meeting at the training facility for Canine Companions @ 7710 Las Colinas Ridge, Irving, TX 75063. December (TBA-Specific Date) at 5PM.
- Students participate in scheduled training hosted by Allen FFA with our experienced puppy raiser veteran volunteers. This time frame and frequency for training will be determined by Canine Companions staff.
- Once these things are complete the following steps will begin for the project:
  1. Students fill out Allen High School Interest Form (Google Doc)
  2. Allen High School staff verify student's eligibility based on attendance, GPA, class schedule (Ag science course enrollment), paid FFA membership, discipline etc..
  3. Mandatory Meeting for parents at Canine Companions campus at Irving campus- without students present.
  4. Student and parent attend and observe a puppy class at the Irving Campus and tour the campus where the puppy's will attend puppy classes each month and will return for the remainder of the training prior to being placed with their permanent handler as an assistance dog
  5. Student knowledge /Interest test: canine body language/behavior, basic handling, canine nutrition, daily care, grooming, basic daily health checks (illness, injury, parasites etc.)
  6. If chosen by AHS staff, your family will be given the Canine Companions puppy raising application to complete and return to Becca or Kim at Canine Companions.
  7. Canine Companion phone interview
  8. Canine Companion home visit (completed by local volunteer)
  9. Placed on the puppy waitlist



## Frequently Asked Questions

Individuals are encouraged to review the FAQs provided on the Canine Companions website:

- [Assistance Dog FAQs](#)
- [Puppy Raiser FAQs](#)

Additional FAQs pertaining to the Allen FFA program include:

- **What if I am no longer able to be a member of the Allen FFA chapter (there is no room in my schedule, I am graduating from high school, etc.)?**

This question will most likely be answered on a case-by-case basis. For students who are graduating from high school, the protocol will be aligned with that of the Allen agricultural facility/ag barn: if the student has a younger sibling in Allen ISD, that sibling would be able to continue raising the dog through the program, even if he/she is not a member of the Allen FFA chapter.

- **What if I will be gone for an extended amount of time due to a vacation, stock show, or other trip?**

The student will be required to make necessary arrangements for the care of the dog while he/she is out of town and communicate these to Mrs. Schertz. If a family member is unable to watch the dog, a possible caretaker would be an Allen FFA puppy sitter. Please see above for the description of an Allen FFA puppy sitter.

- **What if I become academically ineligible/placed in an alternative learning center while caring for a puppy or forced to leave the program (moving to a different city, etc.)?**

Those who are selected as volunteer puppy raisers and puppy sitters are expected to display past, present, and future academic excellence. In the rare event that a program member becomes ineligible, decisions regarding the placement of the puppy that he/she is assigned will be made at the discretion of Canine Companions and the AHS program sponsors.

- **Where does the puppy go during the day while I am at school? Can I take it with me to my classes?**

During the day, the puppy will remain in Mrs. Schertz's classroom (K209), or another approved location (i.e. the ag hall classrooms (H116 and H117) and office, etc.) and will not be exposed to the entirety of the AHS population. As the puppy progresses with training, he/she may begin to venture outside of these places. All decisions regarding the location of the puppy will be made by the sponsors and Canine Companions when he/she is ready to come to the school.

**If you are interested in being a part of the Allen FFA volunteer puppy raising program, please fill out the request form below:**

<https://forms.gle/rBLPxrcfHaGLdwzQA>

### **Sponsor Contact Information**

#### **Stacy Schertz**

Agriculture Science Instructor, FFA Advisor

Room Location: K209

Email Address: [stacy.schertz@allenisd.org](mailto:stacy.schertz@allenisd.org)

Office Phone: (972) 727-0400 x5959

School Cell: (214) 876-1661





Here is the link to Canine Companions Puppy Raiser Handbook:

[https://ccipuppyblog.files.wordpress.com/2019/04/2019-puppy-raiser-handbook\\_kg.pdf](https://ccipuppyblog.files.wordpress.com/2019/04/2019-puppy-raiser-handbook_kg.pdf)

### Puppy House Training Flow Chart:

