

Hero Pups

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Hero Pups is a NH-based 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that places dogs with veterans and first responders diagnosed with PTSD, depression, anxiety, and other service-connected challenges. Our Facility Comfort Dog program is geared towards helping all first responders and their departments support staff, and/or community by providing a dog that can assist within the department.

Hero Pups placed the first comfort dog with a police department in New Hampshire. We had the privilege of working with Concord Police Department to introduce the concept of Comfort Dogs to law enforcement agencies in New Hampshire and share some of the exhaustive research that shows specially trained dogs can have a calming effect for individuals who have experienced crisis or trauma. Concord Police Department added Liberty to their team so that she could be a resource for members of the entire Concord community. She is there to help make the legal process easier for children, victims of sexual/domestic violence, and many others as well as providing support in crisis situations.

Since then, we have worked with many more police departments to train more comfort dogs to assist their departments in reaching members of their communities in times of trauma and crisis. The community involvement aspect of these comfort dogs is more than we could have hoped for, and we take great pride in the impact our comfort dogs have on the communities they serve. These dogs have opened an important dialogue about broadening the ways law enforcement can be more accessible to the people they serve, as well as having more tools to support their communities. We are also invested in sharing knowledge and experience with police departments nationwide so they can implement the best practices to have their own comfort dog programs.

We choose to place comfort dogs primarily with police departments because police officers are able to bring the dogs into settings like victim interviews, where a traditional therapy dog wouldn't have access. Comfort dogs are specially trained to not only provide comfort, but also to be stable in unusual experiences such as riding in cruisers, large yelling crowds, and tense situations. These comfort dogs have a therapeutic role and can de-escalate stressful situations while providing unconditional love and support to people on some of their hardest days. The most important and meaningful work these dogs do, the public will never know about – which is a responsibility we do not take lightly.

Hero Pups will work with Somerville Police Department to create and implement a plan to bring a facility comfort dog to their department.

Hero Pups use rescues for comfort dogs and strive to select dogs that will be under 80 pounds full grown (making them able to fit in most vehicles), 100% healthy, of sound temperament, and are steady in stressful situations. Please remember, each dog is different and we want a dog that is obedient but more importantly steady, stable, and connects with people well. We WANT a personality, not a robot dog. Our training will focus on all of that rather than "party tricks". The handler can do tricks with the dog after transfer as a way to bond if they so choose.