

Facility Dogs

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DAVIE



What are courthouse facility dogs?

- Professionally trained dogs working throughout the country in prosecutor's offices, child advocacy centers, and family courts
- Primarily provide a calming influence for victims and witnesses during stressful legal proceedings
- Legally neutral companions for witnesses during the investigation and prosecution of crimes
- Help the most vulnerable witnesses feel willing and able to describe what happened

<https://courhousedogs.org/>



RCW 10.52.110
Courthouse facility
dog program

- (2) Courts with an available courthouse facility dog **must** allow a witness under **eighteen years of age, or who has a developmental disability** as defined in RCW 71A.10.020, to use a courthouse facility dog to accompany them while testifying in court.
- (3) Courts may allow **any witness** who does not meet the criteria in subsection (2) of this section to use a courthouse facility dog, if available, to accompany them while testifying in court.
- (6) The witness should be afforded the opportunity to have a courthouse facility dog accompany the witness while testifying, if a courthouse facility dog and certified handler are available within the jurisdiction of the court in which the proceeding is held.

Legislative findings

- The legislature finds that questioning child or adult witnesses about a traumatic event in their lives can trigger an acute emotional response. The trigger makes them feel or behave the same way they did during or immediately after the traumatic event because the brain may not differentiate what happened then from what is going on around them now. These triggers can cause an immediate emotional response that bypasses the reasoning part of our brains, resulting in sudden or unexplained bouts of crying; fear, paranoia, or anxiety; panic attacks; and sudden physical symptoms such as nausea or fatigue.
- For children and adults, traumatic events and the responses that result often interfere with their ability to respond to questions or testify in court about traumatic events they have experienced or witnessed.

Legislative
findings
(continued)

The American academy of pediatrics advises ongoing psychosocial support for children to address the adverse effects of the traumatic event and their experience recounting it during the legal process. The American academy of pediatrics identifies assistance from courthouse facility dogs as an effective psychosocial support intervention for children participating in legal proceedings.

Davie has supported
victims in 77 criminal cases
so far in 2024







Survivor quotes

“You have no idea how comforting it was to be able to come love on Davie in your office whenever emotions were too much too handle.”

“If we adopted a third dog we would wish for one just like Davie.”

***Davie is so good at his job.
He’s a true professional!***



Costs

- **Approximately annual costs for care of current facility dog (without additional unexpected costs for illness/emergency): \$1,853.48**
- **Cost to purchase and train a successor facility dog: \$10,000 (Brigadoon Service Dogs)**



THANK
YOU!