

# CANINE RESCUE AND TRAINING



**GEORGIA**  
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

## MISSION

To protect Georgians by operating secure facilities and providing opportunities for offender rehabilitation.

**Tyrone Oliver**, Commissioner

**Alan Watson**, Chief of Staff

**Jay Sanders**, Assistant Commissioner Inmate Services Division

Canine Rescue and Training programs are provided to state offenders at specific facilities throughout the state. Canine training and rescue programs are provided to female and male offenders at multiple facilities across the state. Upon completion of these programs offenders receive certificates through partnership with the Technical College System of Georgia..

## Vision Guide Dog Program

### HISTORY



- Began at Metro State Prison (SP) in August 2002 as a collaboration with Southeastern Guide Dog, Inc. in Florida and Middle Georgia Technical College
- Moved to Burruss Correctional Training Center in 2008

### OVERVIEW

- Partnership with the Guide Dog Foundation for the Blind, Inc. in New York
- Dogs to include Labradors, Golden Retrievers, Shepherds, Collies, and Standard Poodles, are brought into a facility and trained for 12-16 months
- Dogs are returned to the Guide Dog Foundation for the Blind to complete their final orientation and mobility training for 4-6 months
- Upon completion of training, the dog is matched with a visually impaired student
- Student and dog participate in a week of additional training at the Guide Dog School before returning to their home
- Offenders can earn two, 15 credit hour certificates and two On-The-Job training (OJT) certificates through Central Georgia Technical College in Animal Healthcare Assistant, Computer Technology and Customer Service, Animal Caretaker OJT, and Dog Groomer OJT

### PARTICIPANTS

- Must be a high school graduate or hold a GED, read at the 12<sup>th</sup> grade level, complete SAGE Occupational Assessment and match the skill sets identified to complete the courses
- Offenders must be within 18-36 months of their tentative parole month (TPM) or max out date
- Crime type is also reviewed and may preclude participation in the program
- Positive Disciplinary Record (DR) record: no assaultive disciplinary reports or participation in major institutional disruption within the last 12 months
- Must complete an interview with instructor

### LOCATION

#### Burruss Correctional Training Center

- 12 to 15 dogs
- Dogs are housed and sleep in a kennel/classroom with an offender aide on duty
- Handlers groom dogs daily, train, and provide structured playtime for the dogs
- Class time for handlers always include their assigned dog
- Volunteer raisers take dogs on the weekends to provide socialization opportunities

INFORMATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

CONNECT WITH US!



# CANINE TRAINING

## Canine Rescue Programs

### OVERVIEW

These programs rescue and rehabilitates dogs that may otherwise be euthanized while positively impacting the offenders within the facility: saving offenders and dogs, one life at a time.

The programs provide housing, basic training and socialization to prepare the dogs for adoption. Offenders can earn On-The-Job training (OJT) certificates through Central Georgia Technical College in Animal Caretaker, Dog Training and Dog Groomer

Offenders can earn On-The-Job training (OJT) certificates through Central Georgia Technical College in Animal Caretaker, Dog Training and Dog Groomer

INFORMATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

### PARTICIPANTS



- Background check
- Assessed institutional history
- Essay
- Interview

### LOCATIONS



- Augusta State Medical Prison
- Bulloch Correctional Facility
- Athens-Clarke County Correctional Facility
- Colwell Probation Detention Center
- Emanuel Women's Facility
- Jenkins Correctional Facility
- Johnson State Prison
- Metro Reentry Facility
- Paulding RSAT
- Pulaski State Prison
- Riverbend Correctional Facility
- Walker State Prison

# CANINE TRAINING

## Canine Companions for Independence

### OVERVIEW

- Began at Rutledge State Prison in May 2024 as a collaboration with Canine Companions for Independence
- Partnership with Canine Companions, a non-profit organization that enhances the lives of people with disabilities by providing highly trained services dogs and ongoing support free of charge to recipients.
- Labradors, Golden Retrievers and the cross of the two breeds are brought into a facility and trained for 10-16 months
- Dogs are returned to the Canine Companions to complete their health evaluations and professional training for 5-9 months
- Once a dog has completed professional training, it is ready to be match with a person with a disability. The team is matched at one of our regional training centers during a two-week group class where the students learn how to direct the dog and maintain their health.
- Offenders can earn two, 15 credit hour certificates and two On-The-Job training (OJT) certificates through Central Georgia Technical College in Animal Healthcare Assistant, Animal Caretaker OJT, and Dog Groomer OJT

### PARTICIPANTS



- High school graduate or have a GED, read at the 12th grade level, complete SAGE Occupational Assessment and match the skill sets identified to complete the courses
- Must be within 18-36 months of their tentative parole month (TPM) or max out date
- Crime type is also reviewed and may preclude participation in the program
- Positive Disciplinary Record (DR) record: no assaultive disciplinary reports or participation in major institutional disruption within the last 12 months
- Must complete an interview with instructor

### LOCATION



- Rutledge State Prison
- 4-6 Dogs are housed and sleep in a kennel in their handler's cell
- Everyday handlers groom dogs daily, train, and provide structured playtime for the dogs
- Class time for handlers always include their assigned dog
- Volunteer raisers take dogs on the weekends to provide socialization opportunities