CAT PAWSITIVE

GREATER GOOD CHARITIES | THE JACKSON GALAXY PROJECT

Important Information and Frequently Asked Questions

Cat Pawsitive is a self-paced, virtual version of The Jackson Galaxy Project/Greater Good Charities' Cat Pawsitive introductory feline behavior training program. Cat Pawsitive can maintain and improve the quality of life of the cats in your care, help shorten their length of stay, and help increase adoptions!

We put together this comprehensive FAQ to help you learn more about how the program works. Feel free to e-mail us at catpawsitive@greatergood.org with any questions you might have that aren't covered here.

We won't lie: Cat Pawsitive will require time and effort, as all new programs do. But we think you'll find it's totally worth it for the amazingly positive effect it can have on your cats as well as on your staff and volunteers!

How much does it cost to participate in The Jackson Galaxy Project (JGP)/Greater Good Charities' (GGC) *Cat Pawsitive* program?

The Cat Pawsitive online training program is free!

Your organization will be responsible for providing training supplies such as quiet clickers (appropriate for cat training), treats, toys, treat pouches/aprons, training journals, and kennel cards for your training team (templates for journals and kennel cards will be provided by JGP).

How long does it take to complete the program?

Cat Pawsitive is a predominantly independent-study program that is typically led by the organization's Cat Pawsitive training Team Leader (see below). We expect most team members can review and work on the training material, at a pace set by the Team Leader, in about three months, but times will vary. Live webinars with a JGP behavior consultant will be presented regularly.

Program material will be released via our learning management platform, Bridge, on January 5th to all selected shelters/rescues.

Where do we get clickers and other supplies?

- Clickers

    o The Cat Pawsitive Pro program has always used *quiet* clickers from The Doggone Good Clicker Company. The particular clicker we use is their QT clicker, which we have found to be a high-quality clicker at an affordable price. The QT clicker has a soft clicking sound that is better to use for training with cats than the traditional box clickers typically used for training dogs.

    o Your organization can purchase QT clickers in a variety of colors in any amount, OR can purchase QT clickers imprinted with your organization's logo with a minimum purchase requirement.

    o iClick clickers (also quiet) and clickers with attached target sticks can be purchased through Karen Pryor Clicker Training.

- Training Journals and Kennel Cards

    o We will provide your Cat Pawsitive training team with templates for training journals and kennel cards.

- Other Supplies

- o For supplies such as perishable treats, DIY toys, or other specialized training supplies, we recommend putting out requests to supporters to donate them via an Amazon Wish Lists or similar methods.

- o In addition to clickers, supplies we like to have on hand include:

  - Craft dowels and craft pom poms/puff balls (to create target sticks)
  - Wooden treat spoons or tongue depressors (to dispense treats)
  - Treat pouch/bag (like those typically used by dog trainers) or treat apron (like a hardware store waist apron) to wear during training
  - A variety of toys
  - A variety of treats, from traditional cat treats to cat-safe human food

We will review supplies, and how to use them, during some of the program's initial training modules.

What is a "Team Leader"?

We *strongly recommend* that all participating organizations have a Team Leader to guide training, for efficacy and continuity of training and for safety. Without a Team Leader guiding all participants and coordinating with your operations team (and those not actively training cats), training can quickly become unproductive and even detrimental to your cats. For maximum training success, a Team Leader is a vital component of the Cat Pawsitive program.

Once the program begins, the Team Leader usually serves as The JGP's main point of contact at the participating organization and acts as the primary liaison for all organization staff/volunteers regarding the Cat Pawsitive program.

The Team Leader could be an organization's behavior manager, a volunteer coordinator, a program manager… anyone who can:

- Serve as the day-to-day manager of the Cat Pawsitive program at the organization
- Guide cat selection for the program
- Coordinate selection and scheduling of training team members
- Consult with the organization's operations team to ensure smooth, consistent work with the cats
- Monitor training plans and progression
- Track and manage data

Team members should expect to put in two-to-three hours of training cats each week. The Team Leader will put in more time in order to review training journals, set training schedules, meet with team members to discuss training progress, make sure all cats are getting the recommended amount of training (with all scheduled team members providing training), and gather any requested photos and videos for the organization or JGP.

We will review recommendations for training sessions, journals, and photo/video/data collection during the program's initial training modules.

How many staff and volunteers (team members) can be involved?

- This is entirely up to your organization and Cat Pawsitive Team Leader. We recommend a minimum of six people, including the Team Leader. You'll want to make sure that you have enough team members to meet the training needs of your Cat Pawsitive cats, but you'll also want to make sure that the total number of team members is manageable for the Team Leader. The number of cats you can select for the program will be directly related to the number of people on your Cat Pawsitive team (and their availability).
- For the purposes of this FAQ, when we refer to team members without mentioning the Team Leader, the Team Leader is included as a team member.

What makes an ideal team member?

Ideally, team members will all start the program at or about the same time and will:

- Be able to commit to participating in the program for its entirety.
- Be open to change and dedicated to learning to work with cats in a brand-new way.
- Be comfortable with computers and accessing training material online.
- Be good communicators.
- Be detail oriented.
- Be able to commit to spending, on average, 2-to-3 hours per week working on the program, depending on the number of people on the team and the number of cats being trained. Training schedules may vary.
- Try to work with cats three-to-four days per week, depending on the number of people on the team and the number of cats being trained. Training schedules may vary.

We will discuss team composition in detail in the foundational training modules.

Besides providing training supplies, what would our organization be responsible for?

Because this is primarily an organization-driven program, your Cat Pawsitive Team Leader and team will be taking the lead in all aspects of training. That requires more oversight by the organization than is required in our traditional Cat Pawsitive Pro program. To achieve the greatest training success, open communication, training preparation, and consistency in training method application and scheduling will be key.

The Cat Pawsitive participating organization will be directly responsible for all aspects of training at their organization, including but not limited to, ensuring that:

- The proper types of cats are selected for Cat Pawsitive training
- Proper training supplies are provided for all team members (this includes the Team Leader)
- Team members learn and practice clicker skills at a team meeting prior to hands-on training with Cat Pawsitive cats
- Team members fully review (and understand how to interpret) feline body language and considerate approach measures described in their training modules prior to hands-on training with Cat Pawsitive cats
- Team members fully review and understand all relevant Cat Pawsitive Bridge training modules prior to hands-on training with Cat Pawsitive cats
- Training sessions with cats are properly monitored for safety (for people and cats) as well as efficacy
- A method of communication is set up for team members to communicate with one another and with organization management and non-Cat Pawsitive participants about the cats

While there is no direct JGP/GGC oversight of the training process itself, JGP will set up accounts for your Cat Pawsitive team in Bridge (our online learning management system) and will assign training modules to the training team once your organization submits your full team list (pending program application approval). JGP will also lead regular live webinars that will give participants the chance to ask questions and discuss cat behavior with a professional cat behavior consultant.

How does team learning happen?

All training is done remotely, via our online Learning Management System (LMS), called "Bridge."

- All team members should have access to a computer or tablet with a reliable Internet connection.
- Each team member will receive their own login credentials to access Bridge.
- Team members can watch videos and review other class material from home, at their own computers, at times of day that are convenient for them.
- Early in the program, after reviewing foundational training modules, all team members should gather for a mandatory team meeting to practice clicker skills, talk about the cats selected for the program, review training modules, and plan for the start of hands-on training. They will also set their initial training schedules.

- We strongly recommend regular team meetings throughout the semester for greater team communication and cat training success.

- *Where we can and do continue to operate, it is Greater Good Charities' position and recommendation that all our program recipients and third-party associates follow federal and local state health authorities' directives concerning personal and group safety during the Covid-19 pandemic. As individual states impose, change, or end specific requirements regarding such things as social distancing, self-isolation, reporting, etc., please comply with all applicable directions from the relevant authorities.*

How many cats can we work with during the program?

The total number of cats trained at one time by an organization will depend on the individual organization's training capacity (number of team members and their availability) and the type of organization it is (shelter-based, foster-home-based, offsite-location-based).

While cats are not typically assigned to a particular team member (except, for example, in the case of foster cats participating in the program), in a team of six people, for example, six cats *should* be able to be trained at any one time. In a team of four people, four cats should be able to be in the program at any one time.

But depending on team member availability and the type of organization, having fewer cats trained at one time could end up being better for training success. We recommend that each team start with a small number of cats and work up to (no more than) ten cats, if they have the capacity.

We will discuss cat selection in detail in the foundational training modules.

How often do we work with each cat?

All cats chosen to participate in the program are worked with "simultaneously." That is, each of the cats selected for participation should be worked with on three-to-four days out of each week once hands-on training begins.

- On each of those training days, each cat will ideally have two (2) training sessions.

- Each of those two training sessions will be *up to* ten minutes in length.

  - This means each cat gets up to 20 minutes of training 3 or 4 days per week.

  - When team members come in to work with cats they should plan to spend, *in the beginning*, 20-30 minutes per cat. As they get used to clicker training, writing in the behavior journals, taking photos/videos, etc., the time they need to spend with each cat will diminish to closer to 10-15 minutes.

We will discuss training schedules in detail in the foundational training modules.

Do we have to assign a particular team member to a particular cat?

With occasional exceptions, one particular person does *not* need to train a particular cat. If everyone on the team is up to speed and follows the training protocols in a consistent manner, any team member should be able to step in on any day or for any session to pick up where the last person left off with a given cat.

The most important thing is that the chosen cats are getting *consistent training sessions*, using correct training techniques, for the proper amount of time each week.

What kind of cats should we plan to choose for Cat Pawsitive?

The Cat Pawsitive program is designed so that your team begins by working with "adoptable," and certain types of "less-adoptable," cats to help them find, maintain, and increase their mojo while waiting for a new home. Training provides cats with mental and physical enrichment to help keep them engaged, active, and ready to meet their family.

This can mean your team will start training with, for example:

- Cats who are not getting enough mental or physical enrichment from playtime-as-usual
- Cats who need some help with letting out energy in an appropriate way
- Cats who are a bit shy or fearful and could use some positive reinforcement where humans are concerned
- Cats who are just settling into the shelter, or who have been there a while, who could use some extra fun and TLC
- Young cats who are happy and healthy
- Cats of any age who are simply waiting for the right person to come along to adopt them
- Senior cats in foster homes who need a boost to show adopters how cool cats are, no matter their age
- Cats at offsite locations who for one reason or another tend to get overlooked for non-behavior-related reasons (appearance, age, health issues such as FIV, FeLV, diabetes, etc.).

In general, your team will begin the program with cats who are not exhibiting *major* signs of behavioral stress or advanced behavior issues.

Once they have experience under their belts, the team may choose to build upon what they've learned so they can help cats with more complex behavior concerns. We will discuss this in detail in the foundational training modules and in our webinar series.

Do we have to hold back cats from adoption opportunities if they are participating in the program?

No. Cats participating in the program do NOT need to be placed on hold or held back from adoption. If a cat being trained happens to be adopted the team can just select another appropriate cat to slot into the program. ☺ It's perfectly fine if all of your initial cats make such great progress that you end up with a whole new group of cats several times over before the end of the expected program duration.

Note: While we expect Cat Pawsitive to help increase the rate and number of adoptions at an organization, these metrics will also be affected by an organization's adoption policies, location, seasonal considerations, and other factors.

Live Webinars

The Jackson Galaxy Project will host a series of live webinars with one of our Cat Pawsitive cat behavior consultants to cover various aspects of the Cat Pawsitive program as well as other cat behavior topics. Webinars will include opportunities for Q&A so that participants may ask questions about training. The webinar schedule for 2022 is currently as follows:

- February 15, 2022 at 7:00 pm Eastern
- March 8, 2022 at 7:00 pm Eastern
- April 12, 2022 at 7:00 pm Eastern
- May 3, 2022 at 7:00 pm Eastern
- May 17, 2022 at 7:00 pm Eastern

Additional webinars to be scheduled for the Autumn of 2022 (dates TBD). *Webinars will be recorded*.

Data Collection and Reporting

Data reports (plus photos, videos, and stories about Cat Pawsitive cats) will be required 3 months, 6 months, and 1 year from the start of the program.

Please plan to track the following data points throughout your training:

- Number of paid staff members training cats
- Number of volunteers training cats
- Number of unique Cat Pawsitive cats trained
- Number of training sessions conducted

- Number of minutes spent training cats
- Number of Cat Pawsitive adoptions
- Number of Cat Pawsitive cat transfers out to another rescue, if any
- Number of Cat Pawsitive cat "other outcomes," if any
- Number of Cat Pawsitive cat returns after adoption, if any

What helps to make the program as successful as possible?

- **Computer and Internet access for each team member**

  - All training modules are taught via an online learning management system (LMS) called Bridge. *Keep in mind when selecting team members:* Each team member and Team Leader must have access to a computer or tablet with a good internet connection and speakers. Each person can view training modules from the comfort of their own home or office.

    - Team members and Team Leaders will each have an account and personal log-in credentials for Bridge.

- **Flexible access to participating cats during times when the building is open to staff (if applicable)**

  - For those organizations with brick-and-mortar shelters or off-site adoption locations, team members need access to cats and cat areas at flexible and convenient times to allow the highest possible number of cats to be trained by the team at times that are best for the cats as well as the team members.

- **Social media participation**

  - We actively promote participating shelters and rescues by sharing photos and videos. Much of this content comes from the participating shelters' social media pages. Tagging The JGP and Greater Good Charities in your posts about Cat Pawsitive training will help us to find your posts and share your successes! Details will be provided in the foundational training modules.

- **Photos and videos of training sessions and mastered behaviors.**

  - We LOVE photos and videos and so will your organization's supporters!

  - In the foundational training modules we will discuss ways to use photos and videos of training sessions to help your Cat Pawsitive team and cats to progress in the program, to demonstrate training impact, and to show cats' mastery of various behaviors (such as a "high-five" or a "sit" on cue).

- **Photos of all adoptions (and transfers to rescue partners) of Cat Pawsitive cats.**

  - We LOVE adoption and transfer photos, too!

  - Photos of Cat Pawsitive adoptions and transfers are particularly popular with the public and they highlight your organization's special efforts to help cats.

- **A dedicated Cat Pawsitive space in your shelter (if you have a brick-and-mortar facility or off-site adoption location).**

  - This is a small space in the shelter where team members can store Cat Pawsitive supplies and post updates on progress and adoption status of program cats. This can be as simple as providing a storage bin and a white board in the volunteer sign-in area, in a break room, in a storage area, in a cat adoption area… anywhere that team members can safely store Cat Pawsitive supplies and visit before and after every training session to stay in the loop with how things are going with each cat.

- **Things we recommend a shelter or off-site location has:**

  - Excellent Internet connection
  - An area in which cats can be played with/trained outside of their kennels

What is the program timeline?

- *Application Deadline: October 29, 2021*

- *Announcement of Selected Shelters: @ November 17, 2021*
  - Selected applicants will receive email notification and instructions for onboarding for the program

- *Deadline for Onboarding by Selected Shelters (including assignment of Team Leader): December 10th*

- *Shelter's Cat Pawsitive Team Leader receives team contact list template and instructions: December 13th*
  - Meet the JGP Team
    - Team Leader will be introduced to the JGP Team and will receive guidance on choosing team members.

- *Deadline for Team Leader to Submit Team Contact List to JGP: December 23, 2021.*
  - *Each team member, including the Team Leader must submit a signed participation waiver to GGC via Docusign by January 3rd in order to receive access to the program on January 5th. Once GGC receives the team contact list from the Team Leader, they will send out Docusign instructions to each member of the team.*

- *Deadline for each team member to submit their participation waiver via Docusign: January 3, 2022.*

- *Program Begins; Release of All Course Modules: **January 5, 2022***

  - Team Leader and team members will receive access to Cat Pawsitive modules in Bridge today as long as they have submitted their participation waivers.

  - After the initial review of foundational training materials (which should take about five hours over the course of the first weeks of the program) and the kick-off team meeting, team members will typically work on a new training technique every two-to-three weeks, or as directed by the Team Leader. A detailed recommended training schedule will be provided.

What if someone wants join the Cat Pawsitive team after the program has already started?

Because everyone on the team should be working on the same methods at the same time, it's ideal to have a full team in place at the start of the program. As more people hear about the program, however, you might find there is additional interest in being involved, and that's great! In addition, some team members may come to find that they don't have the time to fully participate and decide to leave the team. We encourage replacement team members to come on board in those cases so enrolled cats can continue to be trained.

Additional or replacement team members may be able to join the team relatively easily until about the half-way mark. If they can catch up with the rest of the team (by reviewing all of the training modules released up to that point and by doing clicker skill practice), they can certainly participate. Team members joining the program late will need to work closely with the Team Leader and other team members to be sure they are on the same page as they start hands-on training.

If you need to add or remove a member of your team, contact JGP at catpawsitive@greatergood.org. Each team member, regardless of start date, will need to submit a participation waiver to GGC prior to receiving access to training materials.

Have any questions not covered in this document? Feel free to e-mail us at catpawsitive@greatergood.org .