Selection of ICAN Handlers

To be eligible for an ICAN Handler position, applicants:

1. Must be able to participate in the program for a minimum of 48 months.

2. Must not have a documented record of cruelty to animals.

3. Must not have a psychiatric diagnosis that would negatively influence performance or mood stability.

4. Must be 12 months clear of any major or minor acts of misconduct within the facility. If the individual has transferred from another facility and conduct records from that facility for the previous year are available, these may be considered suitable at the discretion of ICAN staff and Facility Coordinator.

5. Must have a minimum of 12th grade reading level.

6. Must have the physical ability and stamina to perform tasks of lifting (up to 80 lbs), bending and walking.

7. Must have presented herself/himself as a responsible adult throughout the facility; this includes complying with work and education assignments, housing rules and medical orders.

8. Although not required, prior experience with dogs will be considered a plus in most cases.

Applicants who meet the above criteria may be invited to participate in an interview with an ICAN staff member and the IDOC Facility Coordinator. Input from others within the facility may be solicited.

Applicants who are selected for Handler positions undergo a 12-week probationary period. During this time Handlers follow a structured program of reading and hands-on work with other Handlers, ICAN staff and dogs. Probationary Handlers are expected to pass tests (with 80% or above). These tests include written and hands-on components.

ICAN Program Description

ICAN is a nonprofit organization that does two things. Ultimately, ICAN trains and places skilled service dogs with children and adults who are living with a physical disability. ICAN also has a second mission. Through participation in the program offender/handlers have a chance to develop:

- Interpersonal communication skills
- Skills to work positively and effectively in a team setting
- Problem solving skills
- Advanced dog training theory and applied skills
- A sense of personal responsibility and accountability
- Job skills
- Greater empathy
- Handlers who successfully complete the two-year Department of Labor approved Apprenticeship may receive a 6-month time cut.

ICAN

Indiana Canine Assistant Network

Indiana Women's Prison
2596 N. Girl's School Road
Indianapolis, IN 46214
(317) 244-3387

ICAN Program Rules

- Maintain positive and appropriate behavior when interacting with others in the program and the general population.
- Assist with other dogs in the program.
- Offer constructive information to other handlers.
- Be prepared and on time for all training sessions (e.g., having done reading, prepared questions, and done any necessary homework).
- Be actively engaged in training sessions by paying attention, asking questions, and figuring out how the information may apply to your own dog.
- Keep clear records of your dog's training and health records. Assess what is going well and what needs attention and communicate this as needed.
- Positively address any conflict with ICAN staff, other handlers and facility staff.
- Stay free of conduct or rule violations and follow all ICAN training policies.
- Provide dog with adequate care and appropriate attention.
- Remain flexible with respect to program changes (e.g., you may be asked to train different types of dogs or train a dog different than the one you were originally assigned, etc.). Understand that the training of service dog is difficult and that only a few dogs have the temperament and physical structure to be a service dog.
- Dogs and handlers will be minimally disruptive (e.g., dogs will never be tied up to anything unless being supervised, dogs will be monitored when playing and overly rough play will be interrupted, dogs will not roam the halls or jump on people). Be respectful of those who are afraid of dogs and/or who are allergic to dogs.

Application for Participation as ICAN Dog Handler

Last Name: _____ First :_____

DOC #: _____ Dorm: _____

Current job assignment:

List Conduct Reports received and dates:

_____

_____

_____

What is your earliest projected release date?

_____

Are you willing to change dorms as a part of this job assignment?_____

What are your current charges?

_____

_____

_____

How long have you been at this facility? _____

What is your highest education level?_____

Are you willing to work with a group of other ICAN handlers? _____

What are your reasons for wanting to participate in the ICAN program?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Describe what you know about the type of dogs that ICAN trains.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Describe your past experience with training or having dogs.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

How will you make the program a success?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Describe your most frustrating experience while incarcerated and specifically HOW you handled it.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

If needed, write extra comments below:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____