



Victim Services Facility Dog Program

Meet **Pink and Red**

Pink



Gender: Female
Age: 18 months
Breed: Labrador

Red



Gender: Male
Age: 14 months
Breed: 1/2 Golden,
1/2 Labrador

Pink and Red have been bred, trained, and socialized as facility dogs by Assistance Dogs of the West (ADW).

To Help Victims Mitigate Trauma

The Facility Dog Program promotes the goal of the Victim Services Division: "To help victims of crime mitigate the trauma, navigate the criminal justice system and rebuild their lives." The program supports the work of the Victim Services Division by providing comfort and support to children and vulnerable adult victims during forensic interviews, exams, court and other legal proceedings.

Providing Calm in a Chaotic Legal System

Facility Dogs work in the legal system to provide victims a sense of calm, security and non-judgmental support during investigative and legal proceedings. When a traumatized person is stressed or re-traumatized, they can experience physiological responses out of their control. The brain's own stress response system releases numerous transmitters, hormones such as cortisol and adrenaline, and other peptides that flood the body in stressful situations. This reaction can impair the body's normal coping and functioning mechanisms, include the ability to recall, recount or relay information.

Proven Positive Impact

Numerous studies have documented the positive impact of victims' interaction with Facility Dogs to their physical and emotional health, including short term decreases in blood pressure and heart rate, positive effects on social communication, reductions of feelings of loneliness and isolation, and improvements in depression and self-esteem. Facility dogs can also assist in decreasing anxiety and fear for victims engaged in interview, exam and legal proceedings.

Pink and Red will be partnered with Handlers

Pink and Red must be partnered with working professionals in the legal field with adequate training in behavior, canine care and health, local access and public access laws. The Chief and Deputy Chief of Victim Services, Advocates from Child Abuse and Sexual Assault, Forensic Interviewers from the Child Advocacy Center, and a team of SFDA Advocates are trained to handle Pink and Red.