

What are the differences between AAA/T & Crisis Response?

The table below compares the differences between Pet Therapy (AAA/T) and Crisis Response (AACR) work.

Pet Therapy (AAA/T)	Crisis Response (AACR)
1. Visits are typically scheduled in advance.	1. Call-outs typically come without much warning.
2. Travel to and from a pet therapy visit is usually by familiar means, such as the family car.	2. Travel to crisis scene may be by car, bus, airplane, train, boat, or even Emergency Response Vehicle.
3. Most visits are routine and predictable. Visits are usually in facilities we and our dogs grow accustomed to.	3. Crisis scenes may be chaotic and are unpredictable. Scenes may have loud sounds, bad odors, and may be visually difficult to handle.
4. Visits are usually calm with a few exceptions such as emergency rooms. Therapy teams <i>may</i> encounter people expressing emotions, stress, trauma and grief.	4. Crisis scenes, by their nature, are not predictable. Teams <i>are likely</i> to encounter people expressing intense emotions, stress, trauma and grief.
5. Help is usually available from facility staff, if needed. Places you might visit for Pet Therapy are usually quite safe.	5. Crisis response teams must be self-sufficient so as to not become <i>victims</i> themselves, or burden responders.
6. Half hour to two hour visits are typical for most AAA/T visits. Stress is typically not a problem, but a handler should be aware of what to look for.	6. Call-outs may last from an hour to several days. Breaks must be taken frequently. Teams must be careful to look for signs of stress in their dog and themselves
7. Visits can be done alone without much concern for safety. Teams should be aware of and practice good hygiene protocols.	7. Call-outs are usually done with other teams for safety reasons. The welfare of our canine partner and other teams is critical. Crisis response teams must be aware of all manner of safety issues when working on a call-out.
8. Visits are usually not physically demanding for the handler or animal. Visits are usually indoors.	8. Call-outs may be very physically demanding, requiring teams to walk distances, remain on their feet for long periods, and work outside.
9. Costs incurred by a pet therapy volunteer are typically under \$200 per year.	9. Costs incurred by a crisis response volunteer may be well over \$200 per year, depending on travel costs.
10. AAA/T visits are usually appropriate for animals such as dogs, cats, rabbits, birds, and a few other domestic animals.	10. Crisis response work is suitable for dogs only. Dogs are generally accepted in American society as "helpers of man" which makes them acceptable at crisis scenes. Crisis response scenes are difficult places and working dogs are common.

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