



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
CITY OF CHICAGO



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

August 27, 2018

**CONTACT:**

Mayor's Press Office

312.744.3334

[press@cityofchicago.org](mailto:press@cityofchicago.org)

**TAILS OF REDEMPTION PROGRAM PAIRS DETAINEES WITH CACC SHELTER DOGS**

Mayor Rahm Emanuel, Chicago Animal Care and Control (CACC) Acting Executive Director Kelley Gandurski and Cook County Sheriff Tom Dart today announced the launch of Tails of Redemption, a new partnership where Cook County Jail detainees provide training to shelter dogs to support the dogs' behavioral health and overall well-being.

"Tails of Redemption gives shelter dogs and their caretakers a chance to learn valuable new skills that will help them start new lives," said Mayor Emanuel.

"This program will empower detainees to help change the future for these dogs, and hopefully in turn, they realize that they have the power to change their own future as well," said Sheriff Dart.

Tails of Redemption is an eight-week training initiative that pairs dogs from the shelter with detainees in the Cook County Jail. During the program, the dogs will receive basic training with the goal of becoming ready for adoption. Detainees participating in the program will acquire valuable skills and practical work experience that can be applied to future employment opportunities.

"This program will allow CACC to follow the dogs on their journey and show their progress, so by the time they are ready to graduate, there should be a list of people waiting to meet them," said CACC Acting Director, Kelley Gandurski. "We know the inmates who are lucky enough to participate will benefit greatly from the unconditional love and the skills they acquire."

The detainees participating in the program are thoroughly vetted, and no one charged with rape, murder or any crimes involving animals is eligible to participate. Most of the dogs participating in the program will be medium-to-large mixed breed mutts – as larger shelter dogs are historically more difficult to place in new homes, especially if they have not had manners training. CACC partner, Safe Humane Chicago, is leading the team conducting the behavior assessments used to select dogs for the program. The Sheriff Office's canine unit is providing training and support to the detainees.

121 NORTH LASALLE STREET, ROOM 507, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60602

“Safe Humane Chicago is pleased to provide behavioral assessments and recommendations of CACC dogs who would benefit from the Tails of Redemption program and who would themselves provide inmates with the opportunity to develop skills and connect with unconditional love,” said Cynthia L. Bathurst, Executive Director of Safe Humane. “This kind of community-building programming and innovative use of resources is a win for everyone — the inmates, the dogs, the agencies involved and the communities into which these dogs and inmates will go when they leave.”

This past winter a team from CACC visited the Jail to scout safe locations that would also appropriate living arrangements for the dogs. CACC and the Sheriff’s Office selected Division 9, a small maximum-security section that allows for privacy, quiet and direct access to a fenced-in outdoor training area. CACC will also be setting up a training library in a common area, including books and videos about dogs, that will allow program participants access to a variety of resources for ongoing learning.

The following lucky dogs will be part of the first class:

- Rochelle (A182289) a one-year-old female
- Gilmore (A180918) a two-year-old male
- Bitsy (A181645) a one-year-old female
- Dutch (A181295) a three-year-old male
- Cookie (A179455) a three-year-old female

CACC is collecting supplies for the program including leashes, collars, stainless steel bowls, large Kongs, dog food, treats, poop bags, pooper scoopers, and large airline-style dog crates. Donations are welcome and the public can view CACC’s Amazon Wish List at:

<https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/dl/invite/h4eQDDK>

###