

# Industry Experts Gather to Develop Standards for Animal-Assisted Crisis Response and Goal-Based Canine Interventions

*Canine intervention experts from across the country will gather to update standards for canines and handlers in the field of animal-assisted interventions.*

ATLANTIC CITY, NJ, USA, April 16, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Over 50 industry experts are

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*Andrea Hering*

collaborating to develop updated standards for animal-assisted crisis response and goal-based canine interventions. This collaborative effort focuses on updating standards for handlers, canines, and facilities in animal-assisted crisis response programs, specifically emphasizing handler critical incident stress management training, canine temperament, obedience requirements, and developing universal national standards.

[Crisis Response Canines](#) and [The Hero Academy](#) have

joined forces to spearhead the symposium collaboration. Crisis Response Canines has deployed nationwide to provide support to communities in the aftermath of tragic events. Their expertise in critical incident stress management debriefings and defusings, as well as their ability to leverage their canine partners to facilitate communication, showcases their proficiency in the field of animal-assisted crisis response. The Hero Academy's program aims to empower veterans, first responders, and their families with the support of highly trained service dogs and facility dogs provided free of charge. Their participation in the initiative underscores their unwavering commitment to supporting individuals grappling with crisis and trauma, lending credibility to the collaborative endeavor.

Additional participating national and international organizations include: International Critical Incident Stress Foundation ([ICISF](#)), Pet Partners, Hero Labradors, Canine Companions, K9s for Warriors, Next Step Service Dogs, Mutts for a Mission, and K9 Farr Fitness.

Animal-assisted crisis response and goal-based canine interventions have been shown to be effective in providing support to individuals dealing with crisis and trauma. However, with increasing numbers of teams identifying themselves as animal-assisted crisis response, facility dogs, or goal-based canines, there is a need for standardized practices to ensure consistency

and effectiveness in the field. This initiative aims to create national standards to promote a uniform and cohesive approach to animal-assisted crisis response and canine interventions ensuring safer and more effective interventions for handlers, canines, and the individuals they interact with. The standards will include updating handler training requirements, which will now encompass crisis intervention courses to equip handlers with the necessary skills to support individuals following tragic situations. Canine task training, resiliency, and temperament evaluations will also be updated to ensure that canines are well-prepared for their roles in crisis response.

Over the years, numerous studies have shown the beneficial and long-lasting effects of animal assisted crisis response on individuals of all age groups. These interventions provide immediate support following a crisis event and contribute to stress reduction in the long term. The incorporation of animal-assisted crisis response is supported by evidence of human-animal bonding, as indicated by cortisol levels during interactions with specially trained canines.

Andrea Hering, CEO of Crisis Response Canines and one of the event organizers, remarked, "We are thrilled to unite some of the leading experts in the canine intervention industry to enhance and elevate the current standards. The industry's response has been tremendous, and we are excited to collaborate and collectively raise the standards to new heights." The event will include presentations, panel discussions, and focus sessions, providing a comprehensive and collaborative approach to updating the standards.

This collaborative effort of over 50 industry experts signifies an important step towards developing standards that will enhance the effectiveness and quality of animal-assisted crisis response and canine interventions. It demonstrates the commitment of these professionals to ensure the well-being of handlers, canines, and the individuals they serve. As the development of these standards progresses, the industry players and the general public can look forward to a more standardized and reliable approach to animal-assisted crisis response and canine interventions, ultimately leading to better outcomes for those in need of support. "In recent years, the use of assistance dogs has gone beyond traditional roles, and there is an increasing demand for national standards for goal-based canine interventions. The partnership between CRC and The Hero Academy is a significant step towards creating a more standardized and professional approach," said Danique Masingill, U.S. Navy veteran and executive director of The Hero Academy, "National standards will help ensure that both the handler and canine are appropriately trained and equipped to assist in various crisis situations, such as mass shootings, line-of-duty deaths, suicide, community crisis and natural or man-made disasters."

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