

2022 Shelter Playgroup Alliance Educational Program Structure (updated May 2022)



Program overview: This series of educational modules will prepare participants to create an enrichment program for shelter animals, including dogs and cats, manage dog playgroups using the LIMA ethical standard, and use canine and feline conspecific interactions and enrichment for behavior modification.

Cohort structure: Learners will join a cohort that will meet virtually for four months via the Litmos LMS platform. Each cohort will be invited to twice-monthly (bi-weekly) hour-long, live meetings via Zoom webinar so that questions can be answered live. These sessions will be recorded and shared only with the cohort. The bi-weekly meetings will feature video analysis and discussion of relevant topics. A discussion board per cohort will be maintained and moderated.

Registration process: Individuals interested in joining each cohort must submit an “e-mail of interest”, which includes the organization that they are affiliated with, requesting to be added to the upcoming cohort to mar@shelterdogplay.org. Each person will be added to a spreadsheet and bulk added to the LMS once the registration period is closed. Each person must login at least twice a month and complete modules in order to continue. If, after a period of 30 days, a learner has not logged-in, they will be contacted; if no response or login within five days, their user account will be deactivated.

Completion timeframe: Learners will be expected to complete approximately 1.5 modules per week during the 16 week period (four months), which will require 60-90 minutes per week. The program consisting of Basic, Foundation, and Intermediate modules all of which must be completed to earn CEUs and/or a certificate of completion. The total seat time per week represents a combination of reviewing the modules, completing assessments, and completing assignments.

Other requirements: In order to complete the assignments, learners must have access to at least two species of animals during the cohort period (e.g., dogs, cats, rabbits, birds, or horses). Application of knowledge and demonstration of skill are key components of this educational program.

Learner Agreement: Prior to registration, each learner must sign an agreement stating that they will agree to the discussion rules, not screen record the sessions or content, nor use any of the materials provided for their own financial gain without prior written consent. Violation of the learner agreement will result in immediate account deactivation.

| 2022 Cohort Dates | |
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| Spring 2022 Cohort | Winter 2022 Cohort |
| <p>Enrollment Period January 1-20: “E-mail of interest” acceptance period for Spring 2022 Cohort January 31: Cohort enrollment in LMS complete</p> <p>Session Period February 1: Session begins February 12, February 19*, March 12, March 26, April 9, April 23, May 7, May 21: Live sessions, 9am - 10am Pacific Time May 31: Final day for homework submissions June 1: Cohort ends June 5: All Spring 2022 Cohort accounts deactivated <i>*Date shift due to in-person handling workshop</i></p> | <p>Enrollment Period August 1-20: “E-mail of interest” acceptance period for Fall 2022 Cohort August 31: Cohort enrollment in LMS complete</p> <p>Session Period September 1: Session begins September 10, September 24, October 8, October 22, November 5, November 19, December 3, December 17: Live sessions, 9am - 10am Pacific Time December 29: Final day for homework submissions December 30: Cohort ends December 31: All Fall 2022 Cohort accounts deactivated</p> |

Basic Modules

Overview: The basic series provides information on the basic principles of learning and training.

| Course number & Estimated time | Module title | Learning objectives |
|--------------------------------|---|---|
| Basics Course 1 30 mins | Operant conditioning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Articulate the basic principles of operant conditioning |
| Basics Course 2 30 mins | Classical [Respondent] Conditioning Overview | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Articulate the basic principles of classical conditioning |
| Basics Course 3 20 mins | Marker training | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe the basic principles of marker training |
| Basics Course 4: 90 mins | Least Intrusive, Minimally Aversive (LIMA): Deep Dive | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define and describe the least intrusive, minimally aversive ethical standard and how to apply LIMA principles to training and behavior modification |
| Basics Course 5: 30 mins | Troubleshooting Training | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe the basic principles of troubleshooting training challenges |

Foundation Modules

Overview: This set of modules will serve as the foundation series for implementing the Shelter Playgroup Alliance guidelines and the basics of behavior modification.

| Course number & Estimated time | Module title | Learning objectives |
|---------------------------------|---|--|
| Foundation Course 1 30 mins | Canine enrichment in shelters | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define enrichment List species-typical behaviors in canines Identify ways to measure success in enrichment List potential in-shelter implementation steps |
| Foundation Course 2 30 mins | Feline enrichment in shelters | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define enrichment List species-typical behaviors in felines Identify ways to measure success in enrichment List potential in-shelter implementation steps |
| Foundation Course 3 40 mins | Canine Communication Basics: Part I | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> List the functions of canine communication Recognize common social signals |
| Foundation Course 3A 60 mins | Feline Communication Basics: Part I | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> List the functions of feline communication Recognize common social signals |
| Foundation Course 4 40 mins | Canine Communication Basics: Part II | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> List the functions of canine communication Recognize common social signals |
| Foundation Course 5 40 mins | Canine Communication: Focus on Fear and Anxiety | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe the social signals that indicate a dog is feeling fear or anxiety |
| Foundation Course 6 40 mins | Canine Communication: Focus on Aggression | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe the social signals that indicate a dog is displaying threat signals |
| Foundation Course 7 40 mins | Canine Play Behaviors: Part I | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe canine play behaviors |
| Foundation Course 8 40 mins | Canine Play Behaviors: Part II | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe canine play behaviors |
| Foundation Course 9 40 mins | Basics of LIMA-based play | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Articulate how to manage an inter-dog playgroup using the LIMA ethical standard |
| Foundation Course 10 30 mins | Handling skills | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate the ability to use defensive handling techniques Demonstrate the ability to manage dogs arousal using leash techniques |

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| Foundation Course 11 40 mins | Dog introductions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulate considerations for different types of dog introductions • Demonstrate the ability to safely introduce dogs on-leash |
| Foundation Course 12 40 mins | Playgroups for behavior modification: Part I | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List popular protocols for modifying high-arousal based behavior problems (e.g., BAT, LAT, RAT, CAT, pattern games) • Articulate when and how to use each popular protocol in the shelter environment |
| Foundation Course 13 40 mins | Playgroups for behavior modification: Part II | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List popular protocols for modifying high-arousal based behavior problems (e.g., BAT, LAT, RAT, CAT, pattern games) • Articulate when and how to use each popular protocol in the shelter environment |

Intermediate Modules

Overview: The intermediate series provides additional support for implementing the Shelter Playgroup Alliance guidelines with an emphasis on using playgroups and enrichment for behavior modification within the shelter environment.

| Course number & Estimated time | Module title | Learning objectives |
|----------------------------------|---|---|
| Intermediate Course 1 40 mins | Enrichment for behavior modification | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulate the types of enrichment that can be used to assist in a behavior modification process in the shelter |
| Intermediate Course 2 40 mins | Behavior modification, part I: Fear | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe which behavior modification protocols are most successful in which contexts |
| Intermediate Course 3 40 mins | Behavior modification, part II: Arousal | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe which behavior modification protocols are most successful in which contexts |
| Intermediate Course 4: 40 mins | Behavior modification, part III: Conspecific aggression | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe which behavior modification protocols are most successful in which contexts |

In-person Clinic

Overview: The in-person clinic is a hands-on learning opportunity at a host shelter for participants who have completed both the Foundation and Intermediate series, and will provide hands-on opportunities and coaching.

Prerequisite: Successful completion of the Basic, Foundation & Intermediate Series

Length: 3 days

Host Shelter Qualifications: Host shelter staff who will participate in the in-person clinic must have completed the Foundation and Intermediate levels to qualify.

| Day | Topic | Learning objectives |
|-------|---|--|
| Day 1 | Handling | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate the ability to use defensive handling techniques, a leash wrap, and low-impact handling for managing play |
| Day 2 | Behavior modification, dog-dog introductions, and managing play | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate the ability to use behavior modification techniques with fearful dogs, and identify when conspecific interactions may assist a fearful animal |
| Day 3 | Behavior modification, dog-dog introductions, and managing play | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate the ability to use behavior modification techniques with aroused dogs, and identify when, and how, to use conspecific interactions to assist in the down-regulation of arousal |