Administration for Community Living

Office of Healthcare Information and Counseling (OHIC)

National Conference

August 3–6, 2026 • Washington, DC

The Salty Dog Academy: Charting New Waters in Partnership Strategy

Teaching Old Dogs New Tricks

SHIP State Health Insurance Assistance Program

Navigating Medicare

SMP Senior Medicare Patrol

Preventing Medicare Fraud

Innovative learning approaches for experienced learners



TEACHING OLD DOGS NEW TRICKS

SALTY DOG

Academy

Presenters

- Jose Pinto MS -Georgia Outreach Specialist
- Mark Becker-Volunteer
- Sharmori Lewis MPH -Georgia Outreach Specialist

Same Siren Different Signals





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Ohio Regular January Driving



Atlanta Metro 2014 Snowmegedon!!!
3 Inches of Snow





911 Confusion

- People are often in stressful situations when they call 911. Before being put in this position, it's helpful for you to understand what kinds of questions you'll be asked when you access the 911 system. The call flow will go much smoother when the call taker is allowed to ask you questions in the order the information is needed. Please note that if you have a cell phone, you should review the topics to the right under How to Use 911. The following are some guidelines for the information that will commonly be required:
- **What is the address of the emergency?**
- This is the address where the emergency is actually occurring. If you're not at the address of the emergency, that information will be requested later in the call. If you don't know the actual address, it is important to know at least a cross street, or nearest hundred block on a street. It is also helpful if you can indicate a direction (i.e.; north, south, east, west). When asked for a location, avoid giving answers of "in Eugene," "at my house," or "on the freeway." We need you to be specific. Also, if the emergency is moving (such as an impaired driver you're observing), we need to know the direction of travel (what street are they on and which direction are they driving toward).
- If we ask you for a direction, please give us compass directions if you can. We're looking at a map, and we can see what's north, south, east, and west of us, but we may not know what "just left of the mailbox" means.
- Remember: No matter what else you want to tell us, we can't send help if we don't know where the emergency is.
- **What is your name?**
- Please don't be insulted if we ask you to clarify, or spell your name. There are many spelling variations when it comes to names and it's important we obtain correct information.

The Salty Dog Academy: Building Confidence Before Crisis

Empowering Seniors Pre-Crisis

The academy builds confidence and knowledge for seniors before emergencies occur, reducing fear and uncertainty.

Community Collaboration

Developed with local government agencies, the program fosters partnerships that support senior safety and education.

Trust and Relationship Building

The academy emphasizes trust through interactive sessions where seniors practice real-world emergency scenarios.

Supporting Aging in Place

The program strengthens resilience and reduces harm, enabling seniors to live safely and independently at home.

Presenters and Collaborative Leadership

Leadership Partnership

The academy is led by professional staff members and dedicated volunteers, combining expertise and community engagement effectively.

Cross-Agency Involvement

County agencies such as emergency management, law enforcement, and animal control actively collaborate in curriculum delivery for accuracy and relevance.

Unified Educational Approach

The academy provides a coordinated, unified approach to senior education, breaking traditional silos between agencies.

Sustained Collaborative Success

Ongoing communication and shared goals among partners foster trust and sustain the program's growth and impact.

Understanding the Challenge Facing Older Adults

- Hesitation to Contact Emergency Services
  - Seniors often hesitate to call 911 due to fear of bothering services, uncertainty, or concerns about costs and consequences.
- Vulnerability to Fraud Schemes
  - Older adults are frequently targeted by Medicare fraud, robocalls, and deceptive communications exploiting trust and creating confusion.
- Fragmented Outreach Efforts
  - Prior outreach programs were fragmented and not tailored, lacking context and relationship-building necessary for seniors.
- Salty Dog Academy Solution
  - The academy creates a safe learning space addressing seniors' fears, building confidence and preparedness in emergencies and fraud prevention.

A Proactive Solution: Education Before Crisis

- Structured Gradual Learning
  - The five-week academy allows seniors to build knowledge gradually, fostering trust and confidence over time.
- Practical Emergency Skills
  - Seniors learn when to call 911, what information dispatchers need, and how emergency decisions are made.
- Relationship-Based Approach
  - Meeting community professionals builds trust, reduces hesitation, and empowers seniors during crises.
- Fraud Awareness Education
  - Training includes recognizing legitimate versus fraudulent Medicare communications to prevent scams.

What Makes the Salty Dog Academy Unique

- Unified Agency Collaboration
  - Multiple agencies coordinate under one banner to provide a cohesive training experience for seniors.
- Senior-Focused Training Design
  - Training content and delivery are tailored specifically to meet the needs of senior learners.
- Innovative Regional Model
  - The academy is the first of its kind in the region combining training and outreach for seniors across agencies.

Delivery Model

- Expert-Led Sessions
  - Each session is led by county office professionals, ensuring credibility and direct expert access.
- Interactive Delivery
  - The delivery model is conversational, encouraging questions, discussions, and real-life scenario participation.
- Safe and Familiar Environment
  - Consistent schedule and familiar settings create safety, routine, and confidence for older adults.

Program Structure

- The program runs for five weeks, with two-hour sessions designed to balance content depth and participant engagement.
- Training sites are typically existing facilities such as community education centers, libraries, government buildings, and public service or emergency centers.
- The training curriculum is not recreated; instructors use pre-developed, established curriculum materials.

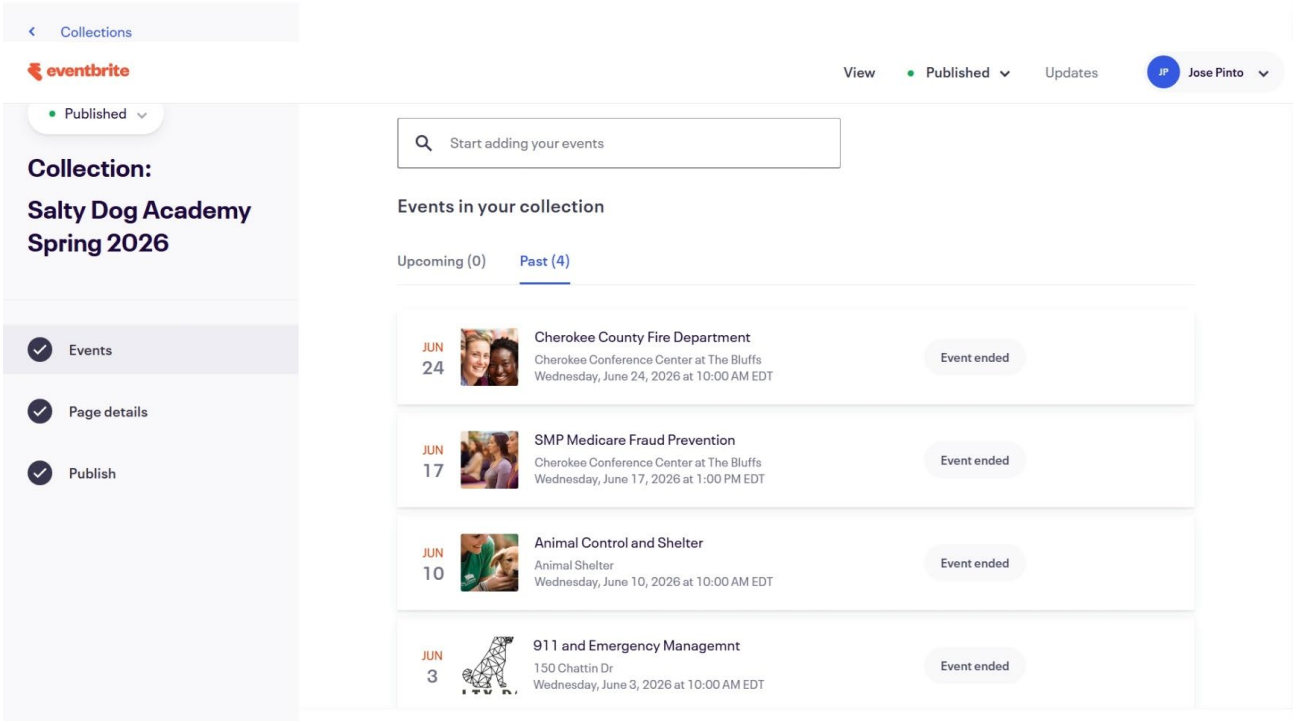
Core Training Topics and Curriculum

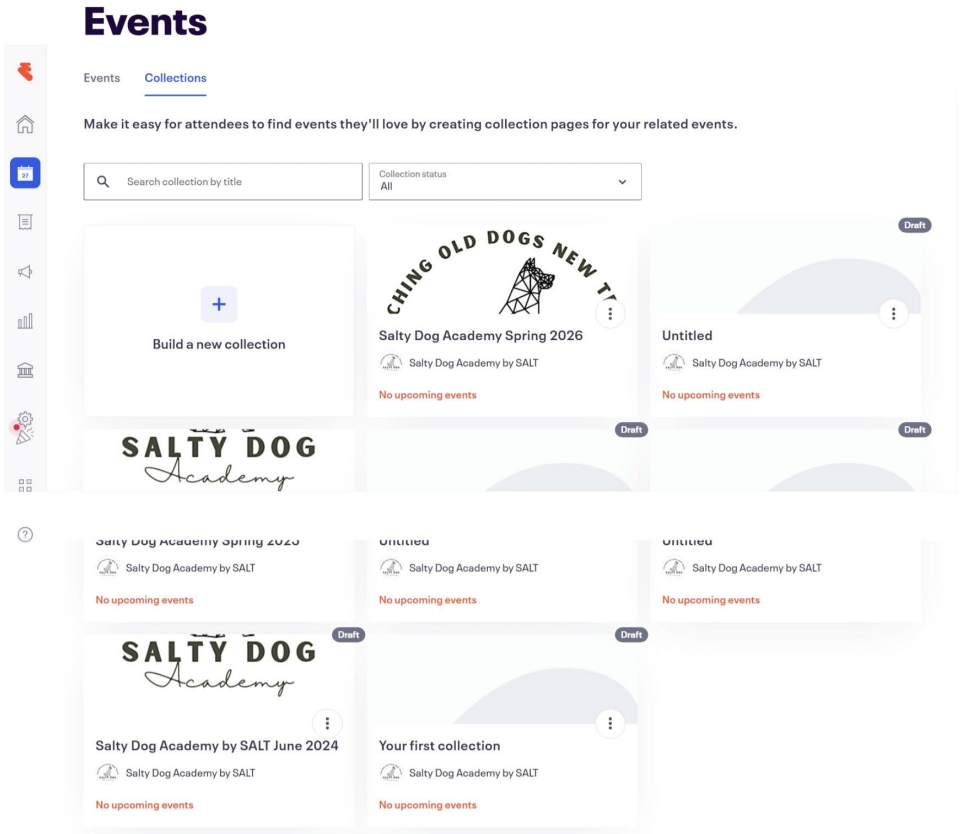
- Emergency Services and 911
  - Training covers how to effectively use emergency services and 911 operations in critical situations.
- Medicare Fraud Prevention
  - Sessions focus on identifying Medicare fraud, recognizing red flags, and reporting suspicious activities.
- Emergency Management Preparedness
  - The curriculum explains alerts, evacuation procedures, and strategies for disaster preparedness.
- Animal Control and Safety
  - Training addresses pet-related concerns and community health during emergencies.

The Power of Program Identity and Branding

- Collaborative Branding Creation
  - The program's name and logo were created jointly by staff and seniors, establishing authenticity and community connection.
- Engaging and Welcoming Messaging
  - Using humor and familiarity in the branding reduces anxiety and makes the program inviting to seniors.
- Impact on Participation
  - The branding encourages curiosity and pride, increasing senior engagement and attendance at the program.
- Symbol of Community Support
  - The program identity normalizes important conversations about emergencies, fraud, and preparedness within the community.

Eventbrite


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Jose Pinto
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Collection:
Salty Dog Academy Spring 2026
Events
Page details
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Start adding your events
Events in your collection
Upcoming (0)
Past (4)
JUN 24
Cherokee County Fire Department
Cherokee Conference Center at The Bluffs
Wednesday, June 24, 2026 at 10:00 AM EDT
Event ended
JUN 17
SMP Medicare Fraud Prevention
Cherokee Conference Center at The Bluffs
Wednesday, June 17, 2026 at 1:00 PM EDT
Event ended
JUN 10
Animal Control and Shelter
Animal Shelter
Wednesday, June 10, 2026 at 10:00 AM EDT
Event ended
JUN 3
911 and Emergency Managemnt
150 Chattin Dr
Wednesday, June 3, 2026 at 10:00 AM EDT
Event ended


Events
Events
Collections
Make it easy for attendees to find events they'll love by creating collection pages for your related events.
Search collection by title
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Salty Dog Academy Spring 2026
Salty Dog Academy by SALT
No upcoming events
Untitled
Salty Dog Academy by SALT
No upcoming events
Draft
SALTY DOG Academy
Salty Dog Academy by SALT June 2024
Your first collection

Flyers

Salty Dog Academy by SALT

Salty Dog Academy consists of 4 classes over a 4-week period covering topics that will help Cherokee County's aging population interact with government, fraud, and safety officials in a positive and constructive manner.

Attendees will be asked to attend 2 of 4 classes to graduate. A graduation ceremony will be held in July 2024, all graduates will receive a certificate of completion. Graduates will have a better understanding of what to do in an emergency, how to connect with local law enforcement, how to communicate with fire and emergency services, and to protect, detect and report Medicare Fraud.

Class	Date
Cherokee County Fire & Emergency Services Fire Safety Course	Wednesday June 5th 11AM
The Civilian Response to Active Shooter Events (CRASE) course	Wednesday June 12th 11AM
Pet preparedness and well-care for senior pet parents	Wednesday June 19th 11AM
Cherokee County 9-1-1 and Cherokee County Emergency Management Agency	Wednesday June 26th 11AM

For more information call: 770-215-3764

To register click the link below:

Salty Dog Academy link:

https://www.eventbrite.com/o/salty-dog-academy-by-salt-5982715795 3

SALT is always looking for community members to join our committee. Please follow us on Facebook for more information. Cherokee Triad - S.A.L.T | Facebook

Salty Dog 2025

Registration is now open!

April 17th 10 AM
Pet Preparedness-Animal Shelter

April 24th 11AM
Emergency Management Agency

May 1, 11AM
911

May 8th 11AM
Fire and Emergency Services

Graduation, May 2025 date/day TBD

Click Here to Register

Call:770-215-3764

Email: jpinto@advisewell.org

Salty Dog Academy is a community collaboration between local government services and seniors that want to learn how emergency management, 911, animal control/shelter services and the fire and emergency department work to keep seniors safe in our community. Tours, lectures, and lots of question-and-answer sessions make Salty Dog Academy a fun and interactive way to learn about these important services in Cherokee County. Please use the link provided, email or leave a message via phone to register.

Hurry seats are free but limited!

https://www.eventbrite.com/cc/salty-dog-academy-spring-2025-4135013

Program Growth and Long-Term Sustainability

- Strong Community Demand
  - Salty Dog Academy shows ongoing community demand and valuable senior participation.
- Program Adaptability
  - The program evolves yearly based on feedback and emerging community needs to stay relevant.
- Collaborative Agency Support
  - Multiple agencies share responsibility, reinforcing sustainability and shared ownership.
- Sustainable Growth
  - The academy's growth shows senior-focused education can expand with modest resources and strong partnerships.

Expansion Into Healthcare and Hospital Systems

- Addressing Senior Concerns
  - The curriculum expansion responds to seniors' confusion and anxiety about hospital emergencies and admissions.
- Hospital Admissions Education
  - Sessions explain required hospital information and what to expect during emergency room intake procedures.
- Program Flexibility and Growth
  - The expansion highlights the academy’s ability to adapt and incorporate new partners and topics over time.

Observed Impact on Senior Confidence and Behavior

- Trust in Local Agencies
  - Participants develop stronger trust in local emergency and support agencies over time.
- Recognition of Medicare Fraud
  - Seniors improve skills to identify and report Medicare fraud, reducing exploitation risks.
- Empowered Mindset Shift
  - Participants report feeling more confident and less fearful during emergencies, enhancing safety.

Why the Salty Dog Academy Matters Now

- Addressing Senior Fraud Challenges
  - The academy combats rising fraud attempts targeting seniors by educating and empowering community members.
- Supporting Aging in Place
  - Many seniors want to remain at home, relying on community systems for assistance during emergencies.
- Enhancing Community Resilience
  - The academy improves communication between seniors and agencies, strengthening overall public safety and resilience.
- Proactive Education Benefits
  - Investing in relationship-based education reduces emergency system strain and improves seniors' quality of life.

Key Takeaways and Replication Potential

- Unified Interagency Collaboration
  - Collaboration between agencies is essential for creating effective, adaptable community programs.
- Senior-Specific Program Design
  - Designing programs tailored specifically to seniors enhances engagement and preparedness.
- Trust-Building Before Crises
  - Building trust with seniors before emergencies improves confidence and response effectiveness.
- Scalable Community Impact
  - Small, coordinated efforts can create meaningful improvements in senior preparedness and safety.

Summary

Top 5 counties by population in Georgia:

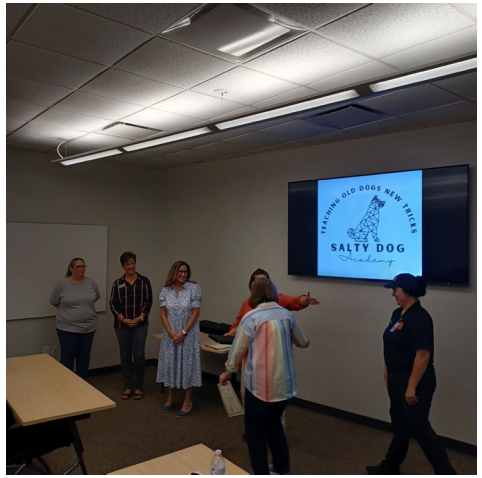
1. Fulton
2. Gwinnett
3. Cobb
4. Dekalb
5. Chatham

Top 5 counties “Annual calls to the hotline”

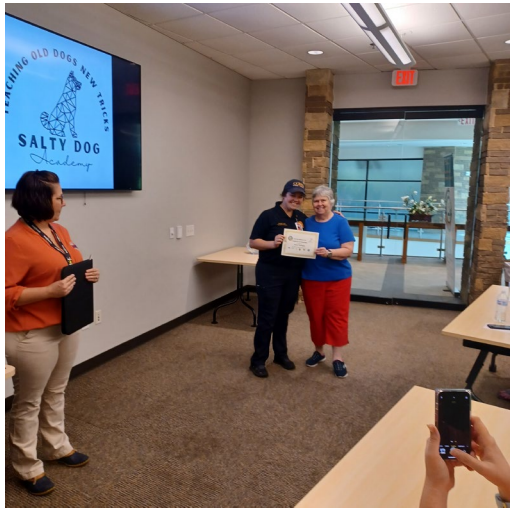
1. Cherokee
2. Fulton
3. Gwinnett
4. Cobb
5. Dekalb

Summary Cont.

- Over 100 seniors have participated in Salty Dog
- Graduation ceremony gives participants the pride of completing a 5-week program







Questions?



Contact

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