

**TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER
SCHOOL MEDICINE- VOLUNTEER SERVICES**

Volunteer Placement Description: ANIMAL THERAPY PROGRAM

Report To: Volunteer Services

1. Participation in the Animal Therapy Program requires compliance with the following criteria:

- a) Before a scheduled visit, the volunteer must report to the Volunteer Services Office in order to pick up a visitor's badge and to verify the necessary paperwork as described in the guidelines.
- b) Facility Guidelines:
 - 1) A copy of current annual health records will be kept in Volunteer Services. All records will be updated annually.
 - 2) Volunteers/dogs or cats will be certified members of Therapy Dog International, the Delta Society, or an equivalent that provides liability insurance coverage of the volunteers/dogs or cats as a benefit or membership. Proof of membership is required.
 - 3) Any dog or cat bite to an employee or volunteer must be reported to the Regional Institutional Personnel Health Unit. If a patient is scratched or bitten by either a dog or cat, Safety Services must be notified.
 - 4) Volunteers will ensure that an unusual occurrence report is completed if necessary. The Volunteer Office can assist in completion of the form if needed.
- c) Dog or Cat Guidelines:
 - 1) Complete a veterinary screening with written proof of vaccinations which must be dated and performed annually.
 - 2) Have proof of current rabies vaccination and a copy must be provided to Volunteer Services.
 - 3) Must be accompanied by an experienced handler/volunteer. The dogs or cats must remain within the control of the volunteer who brought the animal to TTUHSC/TTPMP.
 - 4) Must be bathed within 2 days prior to visiting the facility. The nails must be short and filed to prevent rough edges. The dog or cat must be neatly groomed and free of all external parasites.
 - 5) Must wear a collar, leash and therapy ID card. The animal may be kept in a carrier.
 - 6) Must be housebroken.
 - 7) May not participate while in season (female).
 - 8) May not participate if the dog or cat has an illness which may be transmittable to people or other animals.
- d) Handler/Volunteer Guidelines:
 - 1) Is an approved volunteer and completes volunteer orientation.
 - 2) Provide proof of therapy certification.
 - 3) May provide treats for the dog or cat if needed (treats will not be shared with the individuals).
 - 4) May not participate if he/she has an illness which may be transmittable to people or other animals.
 - 5) Must wear ID badge.

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e) Post Visit Procedures:

- 1) All visitors, staff, and patients interacting with the animal will wash their hands and/or use an alcohol hand gel after contact.
- 2) Trainers will be responsible for taking care of any elimination mishaps the animal has while on TTUHSC property, inside or outside. If an accident occurs inside the TTUHSC/TTPMP, Safety Services must be notified.

f) Visitation Guidelines/Restrictions:

- 1) The handler should check with the head nurse/administrator prior to being in a clinic area.
- 2) The patient must not be allergic to animals.
- 3) Animals are not allowed to visit if the patient is immunocompromised, even though the patient is not on isolation or protective precautions.

2. Any animal other than a dog or cat must be approved by the Executive Leadership of the Medical Practice Income Plan before the animal is allowed to visit any patient.