

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

ANIMAL THERAPY PROGRAM

Report To: Volunteer Services

1. Participation in the Animal Therapy Program requires compliance with the following criteria:
 - a. For a scheduled visit, the volunteer/handler must report to the Volunteer Services Office to:
 - i. Pick up a visitor's badge
 - ii. Verify necessary paperwork is current
 - iii. Sign in
 - b. Facility Guidelines:
 - i. A copy of current annual health records will be kept in Volunteer Services. All records will be updated annually.
 - ii. Handlers/dogs or cats will be members of Therapy Dog International, the Delta Society, or an equivalent that provides liability insurance coverage of the handler/dogs or cats as a benefit or membership. Proof of membership is required.
 - iii. Any dog or cat bite must be reported to the Regional Institutional Personnel Health Unit. Additionally, Safety Services must be notified.
 1. Volunteer/Handler will ensure an occurrence report is completed if necessary. The Volunteer Office can assist in completion of the form if needed.
 - c. Dog or Cat Guidelines:
 - i. Complete a veterinary screening with written proof of vaccinations which must be dated and performed annually.
 - ii. Must have proof of current rabies vaccination and fecal exam with a copy provided to Volunteer Services.
 - iii. Must be accompanied by an experienced/certified handler. The dogs or cats must remain within the control of the handler who brought the animal to TTUHSC.
 - iv. Must be clean and well groomed to visit 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.
 - v. Must wear a collar, leash and therapy ID during the visit. Small animals may be kept in a carrier.
 - vi. Must be housebroken.

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- vii. May not participate while in season (female).
 - viii. May not participate if the dog or cat has an illness which may be transmittable to people or other animals.
- d. Handler/Volunteer Guidelines:
- i. Must be approved as a volunteer and complete volunteer orientation (unless handler is a current HSC employee).
 - ii. Provide proof of therapy certification.
 - iii. May provide treats for the dog or cat if needed (treats will not be shared with any individual).
 - iv. May not participate if he/she has an illness which may be transmittable to people or other animals.
 - v. Must wear ID badge.
- e. Post Visit Procedures:
- i. All visitors, staff, and patients interacting with the animal should wash hands and/or use an alcohol hand gel after contact.
 - ii. 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:
- i. The handler should check with the head nurse/administrator prior to being in a clinic area.
 - ii. Be sensitive to potential patient or staff allergies to animals.
 - iii. 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 in the animal therapy program.