

General Guidelines/Rules

****YOUR DOG IS NOT A SERVICE DOG. DO NOT REPRESENT THEM AS SUCH.**

Misrepresenting your dog will be grounds for removal from the team.

Please make sure you are able to explain the difference in case someone in the community asks. **

You are NEVER allowed to show up at a facility and simply state that you are a volunteer and would like to come in. Visits are set up prior to you being able to go.

- It is important that you continue to work your dog after getting certified. If your dog is wearing a training collar at an event, the training collar must be covered by a bandana and your remote should be in your pocket, out of plain sight.
- Drama is left at home! You are to not speak of any issues during an event. If an issue needs to be brought up to a Board Member at an event, it should be done privately, so the Board Member can handle the issue in a timely manner.
- Know you and your dog's limits. This means that every event might not be for you, whether physically or mentally. Do not feel obligated to attend each event. This will burn you out quickly. Also, if an event becomes too much, do not hesitate to ask for a break. This is for you and your dog's well-being.
- Know when your dog is uncomfortable and when they need a break. It is okay to say they are having an off day and remove them from the situation. Know that it is okay to remove your dog. Do not feel bad; dogs like humans have bad days and need a break.
- Unless permitted, do not let your dog on laps(except handlers lap), chairs, people, etc. at any event.
- Members can be suspended and required to continue training until further notice to continue training until the Board approves them to be reinstated.

Visitation/Event Guidelines

CORRECTIONS FACILITIES, JUVENILE DETENTION CENTERS, ETC.

- When volunteering in correctional facilities, prisons, juvenile detention centers, holding areas (adult and juvenile), reformatory centers/schools, incarceration, you MUST have another teammate with you. Your insurance will be voided if you attend one of these facilities, without another P.A.W.S. Therapy Team member. Make sure you do not schedule yourself unless you know you have a minimum of one other teammate. Call your teammates and make sure they will be there before you leave.
- These visits are not made for everyone, which is okay.
- Ask about what will be permitted in the facility. These are the facilities that will usually ask for one backpack and no lanyards.
- Be very aware of your dog at all times.
- Watch the residents' hands and how they are treating your dogs.
- If someone is being rough with your dog, let someone know that your dog is going to "take five" and step away from the situation. This will signal to another team member that your dog is not being handled properly so that they can keep an eye on the resident.
- NEVER bring up an issue in front of a resident. Pull someone in charge aside privately.
- UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES WILL YOU EVER DROP YOUR LEASH.
- Be careful of the information you are giving out to the residents in these facilities. Keep conversations very neutral. They may ask questions that you cannot answer. Just change the conversation back to your dog if needed.
- If you cannot follow the rules at events like this, you will be asked to leave. This is for your safety and your dog's safety.
- If you hear something that you think needs reported to someone in charge, do so before you leave and have moved away from where the residents are.

PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITALS/MENTAL HEALTH FACILITIES (ADULT AND CHILDREN)

- Each hospital is different. If you are going to an established hospital P.A.W.S. Therapy Team is already working at, and you have never been there before, make sure you buddy up with a P.A.W.S. Therapy Team member and learn the ropes before going on your own. This will help you become a better handler and learn what to do and what not to do in different situations.
- Follow the same guidelines when going into a mental health facility that you would follow when going into correctional facilities, detention centers, etc. (See above for more information).

LIBRARIES/PAWS 2 READ

- You are there only to hold the leash.
- Do not correct the child while they are reading, this is supposed to be a stress free and fun time.
- If the child asks for help, then you can help with that one word.
- If the child cannot read, ask them to tell the dog a story or talk about what is in the pictures.

REGULAR HOSPITALS

- Most regular hospitals have their own training program in place. Many have a training program and mentoring program you must go through. Some require you get their insurance. We understand that. Follow their rules.

ASSISTED LIVING FACILITIES

- Watch for food, medication, diabetic test strips, etc. on floors in rooms.
- Do not let your dog's nose wander into trash cans.
- Do not step on oxygen lines. Look at the floor and around the room to make sure you and your dog are aware of them. You would hate to trip or pull something out of the resident/patient.
- Be careful with your dog around IV's as well or anything medical in the room.
- Stay on the opposite side of catheter bags and blood transfusion bags. If both are on opposite ends, be on the side with the urine bag. Avoid blood at all costs.
- Do not let your dog jump up on anyone. Senior's skin can tear easily. If your dog is doing "paws up" on a bed, help them gently. ALWAYS ask the patient and staff if it is ok. Same with small dogs lying next to a patient.
- Watch for walkers with tennis balls attached.
- You are not allowed to help residents with any tasks in a nursing home. Please call for help.
- You must have something underneath your dog if they are on a bed. A disposable pee pad is recommended. If the facility will provide you with a clean towel, you may use that, but the towel must only be used in one room and cannot be used with another resident. Do not use a blanket, either.

SCHOOLS

- You must follow all school rules when on their campus.
- You should also be aware of the information you share at schools. Stay neutral.
- In an event that you are in a building due to a tragedy (ex. Suicide or shooting) you are NOT permitted to offer advice to children. YOU ARE NOT TRAINED TO DO THIS.
- Counselors and teachers will be on hand. If you are ever uncomfortable, you need to refer to the teacher/counselor so they can do their job.
- If you ever hear a child talking about hurting themselves or someone else at an event, YOU MUST REPORT IT TO A TEACHER OR COUNSELOR.
- If we are attending a specific classroom, please make sure that the facilitator knows that you can visit rooms, if time permits, at a 10-15-minute interval.

DINING

- Your dog should be under your chair or in front of you. Do not tie your dog up in a place you cannot reach them in case something happens. You need to be able to reach or access your dog quickly.
- Watch for food under the table.

- No feeding dogs from the table! If you are inside a restaurant, you never feed your dog or give them water. Wait until they are outside.
- Do not forget that your dog cannot eat in their vest.
- No one is permitted to pet your dog while you are eating. Your dog is to be in a resting position.

FIRE STATION/FIRST RESPONDERS/PARADES

- Watch your dogs around fire trucks. The exhaust is hot.
- Stay away from the front end of engine because the siren noise will project outward.
- Dogs must wear boots in summer parades to protect their feet.

BUS TRANSPORTATION

- Make sure if someone is going to sit next to you or if you are sitting down next to someone, make sure they are aware that you have a dog.
- Back your dog into the row whenever possible.
- Make sure your dog's legs, tail and head are not in the aisle.
- No dogs on seats.
- For side seats: slide your dog under the seat and between legs.
- Traveling with a person in a wheelchair: if the bus is not full, you go to the rear door and wait for the wheelchair up near the front of the bus. If the bus is full: you follow the wheelchair onto the bus.
- Never let go of your leash.
- Watch your dog's mouth, and make sure that no one is trying to feed them.
- Get on and off the bus quickly. The drivers have a schedule to keep.

AIRPORTS/MALLS

- Most airports and indoor malls will not allow therapy dogs in unless you are training as a group. Outdoor malls are great places to work your dogs.
- Watch the kids around your dogs! They love to run up behind your dog and try to jump on them or ride them.

ELEVATORS/ESCALATORS

- In elevators, make sure everything is on Board BEFORE the doors close. Leashes, tails, feet, etc.
- If someone is getting on an elevator with you, be sure to let them know that you have a dog.
- Be aware of your dog's feet on the escalators. Make sure you are counting and telling them when to jump at the top and bottom, so they do not get injured.
- Be careful of your dog's face right next to a child's face. Be aware of bottles, food, pacifiers, kisses, etc.

Physical Appearance

- Your dog must have a good appearance (clean, well groomed) for each event.
- You may dress dogs up for any appropriate events (ex. Holidays). The dog's vest should be clipped to your backpack, belt, etc. if it is not visible due to the dog wearing a costume.
- You may also want boots for your dog for summer months when we do parades. They will not be permitted to walk on hot asphalt without them. This is for their safety.
- You must wear approved P.A.W.S. Therapy Team apparel - purchased through P.A.W.S. Therapy Team approved vendors.
- P.A.W.S. Therapy Team T-shirt- MUST be worn to every event.
- P.A.W.S. Therapy Team polo shirt- MUST be worn for more formal events, such as a funeral.
- P.A.W.S. Therapy Team jacket- Can be worn over top of P.A.W.S. Therapy Team shirts when weather permits.
- Jeans can be worn at most events. Dress pants should be worn for formal events, such as a funeral. Work-out pants (jogging pants or yoga pants) can also be worn for outdoor events.
- Tennis shoes or comfortable shoes are recommended. NO Sandals/Flip Flops.
- If you are not appropriately dressed for an event, you will be asked to leave.