

How to Join the
Animal Assisted Activity Team
& Assignment Guidelines



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Table of Contents

Page

3 Animal Assisted Therapy Program Mission

How to Join the Animal Assisted Activity Team

5 Membership in a Qualifying Pet Therapy Organization

5 Application Request & Shadowing Visit

6 Veterinary Records & Dog License

6 Human Health & Security Clearances

6 Hospital Orientation and Animal Team Briefing

7 Mentored Visits

Animal Assisted Activity Team Assignment Guidelines

9 Handler and Escort Responsibilities

10 Dress Code, ID, Leashes

11 Scheduling

11 Pre-visit Preparation

12 Sign In/Out

13 Consent & Potential Visiting Candidates

13 Visiting Venues

14 Off-Limits Sections of Doylestown Hospital for Pet Therapy Teams

15 Contraindications for Contact with Animals

15 Handling Procedures

17 Canine Body Language

17 Guidelines for Appropriate Interactions (including HIPAA)

19 Infection Control

19 Animal Incidents

20 Animal Health & Zoonosis

21 Handler & Escort Health

21 Performance Input & Education

21 Communication & Outreach

Appendix

23 Animal Assisted Activity Veterinary Record Form

24 Preventative Heartworm Attestation Form

25 Commitment to Confidentiality Form

Artwork for this training guide courtesy of Anne Pizzini.

Animal Assisted Activity Program Mission

Lift the spirits of Doylestown Health patients, visitors, Associates and volunteers through interaction with qualified therapy dogs.



Dogs connect in ways humans cannot.

How to Join the
Doylestown Hospital
Animal Assisted Activity Team

1. Requirements

A. Membership in a Qualifying Pet Therapy Organization

1. Animal Assisted Activity Handlers and their therapy dogs must be a registered therapy team with anyone of the following independent pet therapy testing and registering organizations:
 - Alliance of Therapy Dogs [formerly Therapy Dogs Inc.]: 877-843-7364; therapydogs.com
 - Bright and Beautiful: 973-292-3316; golden-dogs.org
 - Comfort Caring Canines: comfortcaringcanines.org
 - Pet Partners [formerly Delta Society]: 425-679-5500; petpartners.org
 - Therapy Dogs International: 973-252-9800; tdi-dog.org
2. You are expected to contact the pet therapy organizations directly for information about requirements, testing process and venue, and to personally schedule your pet therapy testing.
3. A copy of your current pet therapy registration card (with either Alliance of Therapy Dogs, Bright and Beautiful, Comfort Caring Canines, Pet Partners, or Therapy Dogs International) must be included with your Doylestown Hospital Volunteer application.
4. Doylestown Health requires all therapy dog teams to be active, unrestricted, insured members in good standing with their therapy organization and to be compliant with that therapy organization’s requirements.
5. Membership in the Roxy Therapy Dogs organization (roxyreading.org) is required to visit the Pediatrics Unit of Doylestown Hospital. Note that Roxy Therapy Dogs does not accept teams registered with Therapy Dogs International.

B. Application Request & Shadowing Visit

1. Once you have become a member of one of our qualifying pet therapy organizations, you should call the Volunteer Services Office of Doylestown Hospital (215) 345-2204 to request an application form.
2. Prior to submitting your application, a registered pet therapy Handler must accompany an experienced Doylestown Hospital animal team mentor on a shadowing visit. In addition to giving you an opportunity to respond to questions about the application process and form, the shadowing visit lets you see the benefits of therapy dogs in a hospital setting and the necessary behaviors of a therapy dog *before* you invest the time and effort required to join the Animal Assisted Activity team.
3. On the shadowing visit you will be asked to sign Commitment to Confidentiality form; a copy of that form is provided in the Appendix. We request that you wear sneakers or other comfortable shoes with a rubber-sole and conservative clothing.
4. Following the shadowing visit, prospective Animal Assisted Activity Volunteers must submit all required application materials and then interview with a member of the Doylestown Health Volunteer Office staff.
5. The application includes the Doylestown Hospital Therapy Dog Behavior Checklist below which is used during the mentored visits with new Animal Assisted Therapy teams.

Yes	No	Doylestown Hospital Therapy Dog Behavior Checklist
		Enjoys human interactions: <i>Will your therapy dog enjoy interacting with hospital patients, visitors, and staff?</i>
		Calm and confident: <i>Is your therapy dog unfazed by smells, sounds, and petting from people who may have motor-skills challenges?</i>
		Heels nicely: <i>Will your therapy dog walk by your side on a loose leash (under control and without pulling) around potential distractions, including interesting people, food, unusual smells, and surprising sounds?</i>
		Does not lunge or pull: <i>Will your therapy dog be safe with fragile people and politely avoid those who don't wish to interact?</i>
		Responds to sit, stay & leave it commands: <i>Will your therapy dog prioritize obedience over impulse and distractions?</i>
		Does not bark or vocalize in hospital: <i>Can you count on your dog to be quiet in a hospital?</i>
		Won't lick: <i>Will your therapy dog be safe around topical medications and respect preferences of those who don't want "kisses"?</i>

6. A therapy dog may not enter the hospital until the entire application and orientation process has been completed. The shadowing visit and behavior checklist are opportunities for you to evaluate whether or not your therapy dog will be happy and safe in a hospital setting prior to your therapy dog’s initial visit.

C. Veterinary Records & Dog License

1. Animal Assisted Activity Handlers must provide documentation of the animal's current health and inoculation records including the date of the most recent annual veterinary examination and administration and expiration dates of rabies vaccination, DHPP or DHLPP, and annual negative fecal exam. Either proof of current heartworm blood test with expiration date OR an attestation statement that monthly preventative heartworm medication is provided by the Handler must also be submitted with your application.
2. Prior to their first visit, new Handlers are required to provide a Veterinary Record using the Doylestown Hospital Veterinary Record Form (provided in the Appendix along with the attestation statement).
3. Any time your dog's health or inoculation status changes, please submit an updated record to the Volunteer Services Office using the Doylestown Hospital Animal Assisted Activity Veterinary Record form.
4. Animal Assisted Activity Handlers must provide proof of a current animal license as required by state law.

D. Human Health & Security Clearances

1. All Volunteers must agree to abide by Doylestown Health policies and procedures and complete all required forms.
2. All Animal Assisted Activity Volunteers must pass Criminal Background Clearance, FBI Fingerprint Clearance, and PA Child Abuse Clearance for Adults. Doylestown Health will complete the PA Criminal Record Clearance at no charge to the new Volunteer after the interview with the Director of Volunteer Services. At the time of application, Volunteers will be given directions on obtaining the FBI Fingerprint Clearance and PA Child Abuse Clearance. Clearances must be returned with the application. New Volunteers will be responsible for any charges associated with obtaining these two clearances initially; PA State Law requires these clearances to be repeated every five years. Doylestown Health will pay for repeat clearances for any AAA Volunteers who have completed 36 unsupervised visits. Doylestown Health Volunteers are required to get two, two-step PPD (TB) tests before beginning to volunteer. Results of these TB tests must be read within 48-72 hours of testing. Doylestown Health provides PPD testing at no charge to the Volunteer.
3. Every Doylestown Health Volunteer must receive an annual flu vaccine. Vaccines are provided at no charge by Doylestown Health. If Volunteers receive a vaccine outside the hospital, documentation of receiving the vaccine must be provided to the Volunteer Services Office.
4. Animal Assisted Activity Volunteers must show proof of receiving a TDaP vaccine; that vaccine is given at Doylestown Hospital at no charge to the Volunteer.
5. Animal program volunteers must be at least 16 years of age.



E. Hospital Orientation and Animal Team Briefing

1. Following a successful application and interview, a new Animal Assisted Activity Volunteer must complete the Doylestown Health Orientation Process, which includes attendance at a hospital orientation session. Orientation is typically scheduled on a Monday morning, takes approximately five-hours, and covers hospital policies and procedures such as compliance with HIPAA, fire safety, sanitation, and other issues relevant to all new hospital employees and volunteers.
2. An animal team briefing – Handlers without their dogs -- is required for all Animal Assisted Activity Handlers and Escorts prior to participation in supervised training visits. This briefing is a review of policies and procedures relevant to Animal Assisted Activity volunteers and an opportunity for Q&A.

F. Mentored Visits

1. Dogs and their Handlers will be observed on a minimum of three supervised training visits before receiving approval to join the Animal Assisted Activity team. Mentored visits help Animal Assisted Activity Volunteers become acquainted with Doylestown Hospital and its Animal Assisted Activity procedures as well as help to identify the best volunteering opportunity within the hospital for the new Animal Assisted Activity team.
2. Therapy dogs who participate in the Doylestown Hospital Animal Assisted Activity program must be calm, confident, controlled, and safe, and have the desire to interact with hospital patients, visitors, and staff. The Doylestown Hospital Therapy Dog Behavior Checklist will be reviewed with the Handler following the therapy dog team's first three mentored visits.
3. Not every dog is happy in a hospital setting. A registered therapy dog may or may not be comfortable with the smells, sounds, equipment, lighting, floor surfaces, and population in a hospital.
4. Next steps following initial mentored visits may be approval to visit, additional mentored visits, or recommendations for training outside the hospital setting prior to additional mentored visits.
5. Upon completion of training, Handlers will sign their Handler Training Checklist to acknowledge review and understanding of each aspect of training prior to visiting.
6. If a Handler has more than one registered therapy dog, each dog must be observed individually on mentoring visits prior to becoming a member of the Animal Assisted Activity team.
7. Escorts are required to successfully complete a minimum of one mentored visit.

Animal Assisted Activity Assignment Guidelines

A. Handler and Escort Responsibilities

1. An Animal Assisted Activity Team consists of one registered pet therapy team (one Handler and one therapy dog registered with that Handler). The Team must also include an Escort when Doylestown Hospital or the therapy team's registration organization requires an Escort.
2. Doylestown Hospital requires all Animal Assisted Activity teams to include an Escort in the Pediatric Unit.
3. Handlers must follow the policy of their registration organization with regard to Escorts while visiting other areas of Doylestown Hospital. Handlers are expected to be aware of their organization's policies which may or may not currently be consistent with the following:
 - o Alliance of Therapy Dogs (formerly Therapy Dogs Inc.): Escorts required on only Pediatric visits
 - o Bright and Beautiful: Escorts required on all visits
 - o Comfort Caring Canines: Escorts not required; keep in mind Doylestown Hospital requires Escorts on all pediatric visits
 - o Pet Partners: Members who are minors are required to have an Escort on all visits; adult members are required to have Escort on Pediatric visits only
 - o Therapy Dogs International: Escorts required on Pediatric visits only
4. A Handler may choose to be accompanied by an Escort from the Doylestown Hospital's Animal Assisted Activity team even if the Handler's certification organization does not require an Escort.
5. No Animal Assisted Activity Handler may hold the leash of, or otherwise handle, any dog other than the Handler's own registered therapy dog on the Doylestown Health campus.
6. No Escort may hold the leash of or otherwise handle any registered therapy dog on the Doylestown Health Campus.
7. A Doylestown Hospital Volunteer Handler may be an Escort for another team. While functioning as an Escort, a Volunteer Handler may not be accompanied by his/her own therapy dog.
8. If the Pediatric patient census allows, a nurse or patient care technician may serve as an Escort for a therapy dog team visiting the Pediatric Unit.
9. The following individuals may accompany a Handler and the Handler's registered therapy dog on an Animal Assisted Activity visit:
 - o The Handler's Escort
 - o Members of the Doylestown Health Animal Assisted Activity program for training, observation, and/or evaluation purposes
 - o Prospective members of the animal team with clearance for observation/training from the Volunteer Services Office and a signed Commitment to Confidentiality form (provided in the Appendix).
 - o Doylestown Hospital staff members cleared for observation of Animal Assisted Activity by the Volunteer Services Office
10. Handler & Escort Responsibilities include the following:

Handler	Escort	Responsibilities
X		Manage behavior of therapy dog
X		Manage interaction with therapy dog
X		Hold therapy dog's leash
	X	Determine if a visit is appropriate
	X	Obtain consent to visit
	X	Introduce therapy dog
	X	Provide/dispose of linen barriers
	X	Move tray tables, chairs as appropriate
	X	Offer hand sanitizer after every interaction

11. Handlers take on the responsibilities of Escort as well as Handler if they make a visit without an Escort.



**Hold onto your dog's leash at all times.
When you let go of that leash, you let go of
your pet therapy insurance.**

B. Dress Code, ID, Leashes

1. Animal Assisted Activity volunteers must wear a Doylestown Health shirt or jacket with long khaki pants and sneakers or other flat, rubber-soled shoes.
2. Roxy Therapy Dogs requires Animal Assisted Activity Volunteers in the Pediatric Unit to wear a shirt with the Doylestown Health and Roxy logos (which is available through the Volunteer Services office of Doylestown Hospital).
3. Escorts and Handlers should refrain from the use of cologne, perfume, and scented products to respect patients who may be sensitive to scents.
4. Doylestown Health photo-IDs must be worn by Handlers and Escorts. ID badges are created and provided as part of the orientation process.
5. Doylestown Health animal ID badges should be displayed either near the Handler's ID badge or on the animal. Ideally, the therapy dog's ID badge will be obtained in conjunction with the team's first supervised visit inside Doylestown Health.
6. Teams must conform to the credential display requirements of their pet therapy organization.
7. Be sure your dog is identifiable as a therapy dog. Your therapy dog should wear the scarf, vest, collar, harness or leash, tag or other special identifier required by your therapy organization to make your dog recognizable to staff, patients, and visitors.
8. Handlers must have a copy of their current therapy organization card in their possession at all times when their therapy dog is in the hospital.
9. Dogs must be leashed at all times and the Handler – not the Escort --must always hold the dog's leash regardless of where the team happens to be on the grounds of the campus, including rest rooms.
10. Teams must use a leash and collar/harness approved by their certification agency.
11. Prong collars, pinch collars, chain, and choke collars which may trap and injure patients' fingers are not acceptable at Doylestown Health. Doylestown Health advocates the use of a flat buckle collar.
12. Leashes must be non-retractable and no longer than six (6) feet.
13. Dogs must be on an appropriate leash or harness or in a pet carrier at all times while anywhere on the grounds of the Doylestown Health campus.



Prominently display your and your dog's Doylestown Health ID cards for the benefit of patients, visitors, and staff, including security professionals. Your pet therapy organization also requires you to have your certification card with you when you visit.



**No need to make life challenging for your dog.
Stick to your schedule and prevent animal interactions.**

C. Scheduling

1. Teams are requested to make one visit per week and required to make a minimum of one visit per month, on average, over the course of twelve months.
2. Handlers sign up for a specific visiting schedule through the Volunteer Services Office. Visiting schedule specifies day(s), week(s), and time; for example, “first and third Tuesdays between 2pm and 4pm.”
3. Handlers sign up for a two-hour window with the understanding that they will visit with their dog for about an hour within that two-hour time frame. The two-hour window is meant to provide flexibility for the Handler and respect for extra time that may be needed with a dog prior to entering the hospital.
4. Handlers are expected to stick to their schedule.
5. Contact the Volunteer Office (215) 345-2204 or klangley@dh.org if you wish to change your established visiting schedule or location on an ongoing basis.
6. One-time changes in scheduling are not feasible.
7. Handlers should email klangley@dh.org -- do not call -- if you cannot make a scheduled visit.
8. If a Handler cancels a visit, their next visit is their next regularly scheduled date and time.
9. Teams are scheduled and approved to visit multiple specific locations within the hospital with the understanding that it may not be practical to visit all locations on a single visit given variations in patient population and time spent on interactions.
10. Teams must stick to their scheduled time and approved visiting locations because, for the safety of all, multiple therapy dogs must not be in the same area at the same time.
11. Handlers consult the Escort List when they have a need for an Escort, and then Handlers contact Escorts directly via phone or email to identify an Escort(s) who is available during the Handler’s visiting schedule.
12. Handlers schedule visit(s) with their Escorts.
13. Handlers and Escorts decide if an ongoing partnership as a team is desired after their initial visit(s) together.
14. Handlers advise the Volunteer Office when they have established a visiting partnership with an Escort.
15. Escorts follow the schedule of their assigned Handler, making sure they arrive in time to escort the Handler and dog into the hospital. Teams who require an Escort may not enter the hospital without an Escort.
16. When their usual Escort is not available, it is the responsibility of the Handler to find another Escort or to email klangley@dh.org and cancel the visit. The regular Escort may agree to find a substitute for the Handler.
17. Handlers and Escorts must communicate with each other directly about precise arrival times and scheduling changes.
18. Handlers and Escorts should contact each other and be sure the message is received if there’s a need to cancel a visit.

D. Pre-Visit Preparation

1. Make sure your dog has adequate rest, nutrition, and hydration.
2. Your dog’s coat should be brushed or combed before a visit to remove debris and as much loose hair and dander as possible.
3. Your therapy dog’s nails should be short and free of sharp edges.
4. Be sure the dog is clean and smells good when visiting. As necessary, bathe the dog with a mild, ideally, unscented hypoallergenic shampoo and allow the dog’s coat to dry.
5. Brush the dog’s teeth as appropriate.
6. Inspect the dog for fleas and ticks.
7. Visiting animals must be healthy, parasite free, and on a flea control program.
8. Pets may not be treated with a product such as Frontline within 48-hours of a visit.
9. Maintain animal leashes, harnesses, and collars so they are

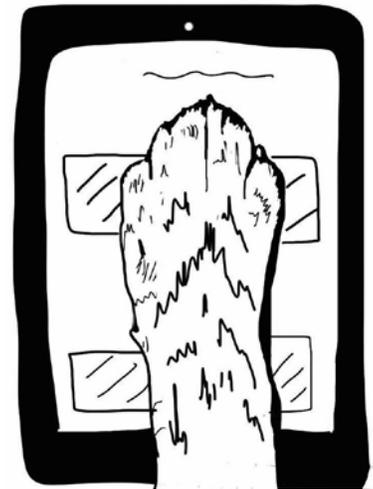


Take time to make sure your dog looks and smells good before each and every visit.

- functional as well as visibly clean and odor-free.
10. It's helpful to maintain a visiting bag that includes your ID, your dog's ID, visiting collar and leash, therapy vest or scarf, poop bags, paper towels or wipes, hand sanitizer, water and a collapsible water bowl. If you have a dog who sheds, consider bringing a roller that picks up fur.
 11. Transport your groomed therapy dog to the hospital in a clean carrier.
 12. Provide your dog with an opportunity to eliminate immediately before entering Doylestown Hospital.
 - a. Handlers may park in the outdoor Visitor's lot near the main entrance and use the surrounding grass to potty their dog.
 - b. Use an outdoor trash can to dispose of waste and practice hand hygiene immediately afterward.
 13. Make sure your dog is ready to visit before you enter the hospital. Pay careful attention and be responsive to your dog's body language when you put the "therapy clothing" on your dog.
 14. Allow enough time for you and your dog to settle before leaving the sign-in area and beginning your visit. Pursue appropriate calming, exercising, or energizing procedures necessary to prepare for a visit. Only visit when and if your dog is ready to visit.

E. Sign-In/Sign Out

1. A registered therapy animal may be on the grounds of Doylestown Hospital only if they are with their registered Handler acting as an Animal Assisted Activity Volunteer.
2. Handlers may only bring one registered therapy dog who has completed the Doylestown Hospital training process to Doylestown Hospital on a visit even if they have more than one dog who is a member of the Hospital's Animal Assisted Activity program.
3. Escorts and Handlers registered with a therapy organization that requires Escorts at all times must:
 - a. Meet outside the Main Entrance of the Hospital.
 - b. Enter the hospital together through the main lobby.
 - c. Sign-in with your volunteer numbers on Doylestown Health electronic system at the computer station near the entrance of the hospital.
 - d. Sign-out at the computer station near the main entrance.
4. If a Handler arrives before the Escort, the Handler and dog should wait outside the Main Entrance (outdoors) until the Escort arrives.
5. Handlers who do not require an Escort at all times must sign-in and sign-out either: a) in the Volunteer Office; or b) at the computer station near the main entrance.
6. Teams are encouraged to visit the Volunteer Office and sign out there about once a month.



Sign in and sign out on one of the touch screen kiosks.

F. Consent & Potential Visiting Candidates

1. Animal Assisted Activity begins the moment the therapy team enters any Doylestown Health campus.
2. Verbal consent is required prior to interacting with all adult hospital patients, visitors, volunteers, and staff anywhere on the campus.
3. A signed permission slip must be in place before visiting a patient in the Pediatric Unit. Pediatric Unit staff will ask parents/guardians to sign the permission slip as part of the admission process. The Handler or Escort should check with the Pediatric Unit staff to determine which pediatric patients can have a therapy dog visit.
4. Before any therapy dog interacts with a child who is on the hospital grounds, but not a patient in the pediatric unit, verbal consent is required from the adult accompanying the child along with a verbal or body language OK from the child.
5. Determine whether or not a patient is a candidate for Animal Assisted Activity prior to seeking consent from a patient. Animal Assisted Activity is not permitted with patients with any contraindication for contact with animals. Rooms marked to indicate contact precautions may not be entered by any member of the animal Team. The charge nurse can be consulted to identify other patients who may not participate in animal assisted activity, including those with an allergy or fear of animals, patients with aggressive behavior, open wounds, neutropenia, HIV infection, immunoglobulin deficiencies, isolation restrictions, or an illness that can be transmitted to animals. Patients with a tracheotomy may be seen only if the tracheotomy is covered with oxygen or capped.
6. The Escort should give each patient who is a candidate for a visit the option to agree or decline a visit before the Handler and therapy dog enters the patient's room. A Handler who is not required to have an Escort should ask for the patient's consent while in the doorway or otherwise at the maximum distance possible from a patient. Keep in mind that some people choose not to interact with an animal because it is one of the few decisions they may make in a hospital setting. Respect the wishes of each person graciously.
7. Postpone visits with patients who are in consultation with medical professionals, eating, on the telephone, or involved in **an** activity that is best left uninterrupted.
8. Visitors in patient rooms should, time permitting, be given the option to interact with the therapy dog.
9. Before entering an elevator with an animal, ask the passengers for permission. Do not enter an elevator if any passenger expresses reluctance or appears apprehensive. Dogs should be either carried or placed in a "sit" or "down" while in the elevator and should exit the elevators slowly, being mindful of the need not to startle or approach without asking permission when the elevator door opens.



Be mindful of what patients AND your dog are saying and feeling.

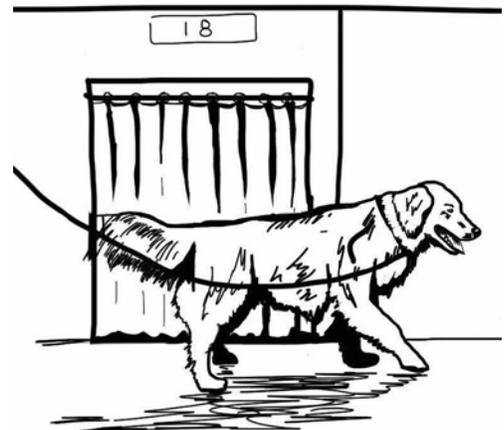
G. Visiting Venues

1. Animal Assisted Activity Handlers are expected to visit with their dog in their scheduled visiting destination(s).
2. Teams are encouraged to go directly to patient areas first and then to visit with staff, volunteers, and visitors in public areas following patient visits.
3. Avoid all restricted areas and do not agree to any visit requested in a restricted area.
4. Based on consultation with the infection control department of Doylestown Hospital, the following patient care areas may be scheduled for visits by Animal Assisted Activity teams:
 - a. In-patient rooms on second floor north and south, third floor west, and fourth floor east and west, including fourth floor west Orthopedic Institute
 - b. Teams may visit the area of the 2nd floor Heart Institute identified as IVU, but may not visit the CVICU
 - c. Moss Rehab located on the west wing of the first floor

- d. Doylestown Hospital's Cancer Institute/Infusion Therapy on the third floor of the Pavilion Building
 - Note that only small dogs (20 pounds or less) may visit the Cancer Institute.
 - Therapy dogs may not approach any infusion patient who is interacting with a staff member.
5. Hospital volunteers may NOT visit the privately owned BucksMont infusion therapy area, also on the third floor, which is not part of Doylestown Hospital.
6. Handlers who are members of the Roxy Therapy Dogs organization and participate in the Animal Assisted Activity team's Pediatric Unit training may visit the Pediatrics Unit (third floor east).
7. Teams may be scheduled to visit in the following waiting rooms:
 - a. Main lobby entrance area
 - b. Lab testing waiting area (first floor, near the info desk and coffee bar)
 - c. Waiting area for Short Procedure Unit and OR (second floor above main lobby)
 - d. ICU waiting room (second floor)
 - e. Cardio Vascular ICU and Cath Lab waiting room in the Heart Institute (second floor)
 - f. Maternity waiting room (second floor)
 - g. Orthopedic Institute waiting room (fourth floor west)
8. Visits may be scheduled in these staff offices: Medical Records (first floor near volunteer office), Senior Administrative (near the waiting area on the second floor above the main lobby), Pastoral Care, and Accounting (ground floor).
9. Teams may visit the Volunteer Services area which has a sign-in sign-out computer.

H. Off Limits Sections of the Hospital

1. Teams may not visit any area not specifically mentioned in this document as an area where animal teams may visit.
2. No team may visit any of the following areas:
 - a. Contact Precaution rooms in any area of the hospital
 - b. Operating rooms, recovery rooms, cardiac catheterization suites, and endoscopy suites
 - c. Imaging areas on first floor (MRI Center, CT Scan, Interventional Radiology, Ultrasound & Nuclear Medicine)
 - d. Testing areas on the first floor of the Pavilion building
 - e. Wound care and Wound Care waiting area on first floor
 - f. Emergency Room (first floor) and ER waiting area
 - g. Wound Care (first floor)
 - h. Silverman Community Health Clinic (ground floor)
 - i. Cardiac Services and rehab areas on first floor (including Cardiac, Pulmonary, Hand, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, and Speech Therapy)
 - j. All patient lavatories
 - k. Intensive Care Unit (second floor)
 - l. Cardiovascular Intensive Care Unit (CVICU) within the Heart Institute (second floor)
 - m. Bucks Mont Infusion area (third floor Pavilion Building)
 - n. Maternity, including in-patient rooms, neonatal, and newborn nurseries (second floor)
 - o. Food preparation areas
 - p. Pharmacy (medication storage/preparation areas)
 - q. Clean linen storage rooms
 - r. Clean/sterile supply storage areas
 - s. Physician practice areas on the second and third floors of the Pavilion Building



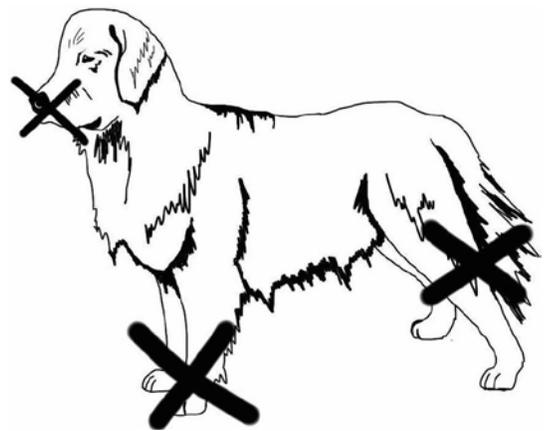
Please don't promise a visit. Not all patients can interact with therapy dogs due to contact precautions. Sometimes patients are not available because they are sleeping or due to testing, medical consultations, or treatments.

I. Contraindications for Contact with Animals: applies to all Hospital areas and all teams

1. Teams may not visit any patient room labeled for contact precautions: Droplet, Airborne, Contact or Enhanced Contact, or Strict Isolation Precautions.
2. Avoid contact with any patient whom a staff member says not to visit. The charge nurse can be consulted to identify patients who may not participate in animal assisted activity, including those with allergy, fear of animals, aggressive behavior, open wounds, neutropenia, HIV infection, immunoglobulin deficiencies, isolation restrictions, illnesses that can be transmitted to animals. Patients with a tracheotomy may be seen only if the tracheotomy is covered with oxygen or capped.
3. Staff members, visitors, volunteers, and patients must be asked whether or not they would like to meet a dog and only those who say yes are appropriate for interaction.
4. Respect the decision of all who choose not to interact because they are allergic, fearful, busy, or simply not in the mood.
5. Postpone visits with patients who are in consultation with medical professionals, eating, on the telephone, or involved in activity that is best left uninterrupted.
6. If there is an unusual or unpleasant smell in a patient room or any other condition with the potential to disturb your therapy dog, avoid that room. Notify a staff member if you have a concern about a smell or other issue.
7. If there is any doubt in your mind about whether or not to visit an area or a patient, do NOT make the visit.

J. Handling Procedures

1. It is the responsibility of the Handler to maintain control of their therapy dog at all times while on the premises of Doylestown Health.
 - a. It is the responsibility of the registered, insured Handler, not the Escort or staff, to manage the behavior of the animal. It is not appropriate for anyone other than the Handler to hold the therapy dog's leash, for example.
 - b. Only the Handler may pick up an animal. If it is appropriate for a small dog to be placed on a patient's lap or next to a patient, the Handler should very carefully place the dog with the patient (using an appropriate linen barrier) while keeping the dog on leash and remaining next to the patient.
 - c. Before any large dog places its head on a patient's bed to make it easier for a patient to pet, a linen barrier should be used.
 - d. Therapy dogs should not be on furniture in the hospital.
2. Handlers must supervise every animal interaction and prioritize the well-being, safety, and comfort of their animal. Handlers are expected to monitor their dog throughout their visits and to be alert for indications of stress, fatigue, thirst, hunger, overheating, or the need/urge to eliminate. If using appropriate calming techniques (including, but not limited to, changing the dog's position, taking the dog away from the potential source of stress, or taking the dog outside) does not remedy the dog's discomfort, the day's visit should end immediately, without regard for planned length of the visit.
3. Handlers should take action to prevent (or, if necessary, immediately stop) activity that might increase the likelihood of frightening, harming, or arousing the dog, or causing accidental harm to the person interacting with the dog, the Handler, the Escort, or the therapy dog.
4. Use particular care to prevent allowing a therapy dog to be touched on inappropriate body sites (e.g., mouth, nose, feet, perianal region).
5. Animal Assisted Activity volunteers should avoid interaction between animals while on the grounds of any Doylestown Health campus.



Prioritize safety. Dogs tend to feel more secure when approached from the side rather than head on. Encourage petting areas other than near your dog's teeth, feet, and tail.

6. Therapy dogs must be leashed and the leash held by the Handler at all times unless the animal is in a carrier.
7. The therapy dog's leash should be loose rather than taut. A tight leash is an indication that a dog is pulling and not under the control of the Handler.
8. The therapy dog should be next to its Handler. A leash can be a safety hazard when a dog is out of position.
9. Take time to carefully observe the patient and to notice the medical equipment and devices in the room.
10. Approach patients from the side that is free of any invasive devices (such as intravenous catheters) and prevent the animal from having contact with any catheter insertion sites, medical devices, breaks in the skin, bandage materials, or other compromised body site.
11. While in hallways, heel your dog close to a wall to provide space for others to pass by.
12. If the Handler and dog are not accompanied by an Escort, the Handler will perform the duties of the Escort:
 - a. Determine whether or not each patient is a candidate for Animal Assisted Activity.
 - b. Make sure the timing is appropriate for a visit.
 - c. Give each person the option to meet or not meet the therapy dog before the dog enters a patient room or approaches a visitor or staff member.
 - d. Provide and dispose of linen barriers as appropriate.
 - e. Move (and replace) tray tables and chairs to facilitate interactions.
 - f. Offer hand sanitizer to anyone who has interacted with an animal and encourage/facilitate its use.
 - g. In the event of an animal bite or scratch, immediately inform nursing staff who will provide or facilitate appropriate clinical care. A witnessing staff member should file a Problem Event Form.
 - h. Report any animal incident to the Volunteer Office as well as the registration organization. Incidents include, but are not limited to, bites, scratches, excessive barking, and destructive behavior.
13. Encourage your therapy dog while you visit. Let your dog know he/she's doing a good job.
14. Give your dog as many breaks as necessary.
15. Use of treats is discouraged; animals should focus on people and be motivated/rewarded by human interaction.
16. Avoid cell phone use and participating in other activities that divert attention from animal interactions.
17. If the dog is facing a different direction than its Handler, the dog is typically saying, "let's go" and the Handler should respond.
18. After visiting, give your dog positive reinforcement, personal attention, adequate nutrition, bathing/cleaning as appropriate, and rest.

K. Canine Body Language

1. Handlers should monitor their dog for body language cues prior to, during, and immediately after the visit. Respect what your dog is telling you and respond to body language cues.
2. Displacement behaviors are indications of stress exhibited when a dog feels internal conflict, or is uncomfortable, or afraid. Displacement body language can be typically normal, yet out of context behavior, such as yawning, lip/nose licking, scratching/biting at paws, biting at other objects, or a wet dog shake.
3. Avoidance behaviors – when a dog is anxious and/or wishes to stop or get away from what’s happening – can include excessive sniffing, inattention, turning head, turning body, moving away, hiding behind a person or object, barking, retreating, and submissive rolling.
4. Other signs of dog anxiety can include tucked tail, excessive panting, restlessness/pacing, dilated pupils, tense muscles around eyes/mouth, low body posture/shifting weight to back end, excessive shedding, excessive whining/vocalization, ears pinned back, and “whale eye” (displaying whites of the eye).
5. Arousal behaviors (precursors to barking, pulling, jumping up, aggression, and other behaviors inappropriate in a hospital) can include play bow, staring, slow tail wag, muscle tenseness, hackles raised, body leaning forward, high-pitched growling and barking.
6. Evaluate your dog based on an examination of your dog’s entire body and the situation.
7. If you see your dog exhibiting displacement, avoidance, anxiety, arousal, or other warning behaviors, leave the area/situation immediately. Take your dog to a quiet area and soothe him/her. Give the animal a break outdoors and/or end the visit immediately based on your dog’s needs and behavior.
8. Pet Partners offers an excellent online canine body language course. You need not be a Pet Partners member to take that course.
<https://petpartners.org/learn/online-education/canine-body-language-course/>



This dog’s body language shows that he is happy and ready to visit.

L. Guidelines for Appropriate Interactions

1. Customize every Animal Assisted Activity interaction experience based on human needs and preferences as well as the characteristics of the therapy dog. A patient who does not want to pet an animal may want to look at the therapy dog and talk about the animal.
2. Introduce your dog by name.
3. Encourage dialog about pets and animals. Asking if the patient ever had a pet often leads patients to pleasant memories. Talk about your dog in a way that prompts questions and engages interest. Describing your dog’s breed or rescue, age, weight, diet, tricks, and favorite activities can stimulate conversation.
4. Do not introduce yourself. Keep the focus on your dog.
5. It is a conflict of interest and inappropriate to mention a current or past profession or employer. When you are in the hospital with your dog, you are representing Doylestown Health’s animal team.
6. Regardless of your background or profession, when you are in the hospital as an Animal Assisted Activity volunteer, under no circumstances should you offer any medically-related observations, advice, or recommendations.
7. In the event that you encounter a medical emergency, or suspect a medical emergency:
 - a. Dial 2222 immediately and keep your dog under your control while you make the call.
 - b. Leave the area with your dog and report the emergency to the first clinical associate you encounter.

8. Always be sensitive to the individual's medical and emotional situation; for example, conclude visits with a remark like "It was a pleasure to meet you" rather than comments that are not sensitive to a person in a hospital. "Have a nice day" or "Hope you feel better" are not appropriate when speaking to a **person** with a serious injury or illness. Never refer to a person that you are visiting as a patient; treat and refer to each person as an individual.
9. Be alert for cues that signal the desire to end the visit. "Thank you" is often a polite dismissal. A break in eye contact can also be a signal.
10. Offer hand sanitizer to anyone who has interacted with a dog.
11. Make your offer of hand sanitizer in a kind and friendly way that reflects the fact that your dog is well groomed: "We don't want your dog to be jealous of (your dog's name)." Or simply say, "How about a squirt of hand sanitizer?" If a person has difficulty applying hand sanitizer, you may assist or ask a clinical person to do that.
12. **Respect HIPPA/confidentiality policy.**
 - a. Remember to protect privacy by strict adherence to confidentiality.
 - b. Never ask anyone their name.
 - c. Introduce your dog but not yourself.
 - d. Do not ask any questions about anyone's medical condition or personal situation.
 - e. The only medically-related question that is appropriate to ask is whether or not it is appropriate to interact with a therapy dog.
13. Do not use your phone or camera to take photos of you or your therapy dog with patients, visitors, volunteers, or staff.
14. Others may take a photograph of your therapy dog with your consent.
15. If requested, you may take a photograph of your therapy dog with a patient, visitor, volunteer, or staff using the requesting person's camera or phone (but not with your phone or camera).
16. All clinical questions from patients, families, or visitors should be referred to clinical associates.
17. In the event that you discover a fire, dial 5555. Practice fire safety policy as per RACE acronym:

Rescue – Remove and/or assist in the removal of those patients who may be in immediate danger. Patients should be moved away from the fire beyond fire and smoke doors.

Alarm – Every fire must be reported, regardless of the type or extent. Volunteers should know where each fire alarm pull station is located in their assigned areas and how to operate them.

Dial 5555 for the hospital operator, tell him/her **WHERE** the fire is located, **WHAT** is the type and extent and **WHO** is calling.

Contain – Reduce the spread of fire and smoke by closing all doors and windows, turning off all fans and air conditioners.

Evacuate & **E**xtinguish – by using the closest proper fire extinguisher on the fire as directed. In case of a fire, remember: An alarm will signal the location of a fire. The elevators will not be in use. Never shout FIRE!
18. All volunteers are expected to reflect the SERVE values of Doylestown Health:

Service - Provide every patient and his or her loved ones with unparalleled service in an environment that is responsive and healing.

Enthusiasm - Remember that the true meaning of this value is "to be inspired." Do our jobs with the same spirit and commitment that first inspired us to work in health care.

Respect - Promise to honor the dignity, individuality and rights of everyone, and to pay particular attention to patients' rights to privacy, confidentiality and information. Include concerned loved ones in our circle of care.

Value - Offer care, services and technology of the highest quality at the lowest possible cost. We are responsible to the community for the appropriate use of its gifts, resources and support.

Excellence - We want our customers' experience of Doylestown Hospital to be different because it is BEST. We ask for our patients' opinions and act on customers' suggestions, in order to exceed the community's expectations of excellence.



Most people in the hospital would probably rather not be there. Some are in pain, and missing loved ones. Choose your words with kindness.

M. Infection Control

1. **Always** carry hand sanitizer. Bottles of hand sanitizer are available at the Volunteer Services office.
2. Offer hand sanitizer to every person who has interacted with an animal and encourage/facilitate its use.
3. Handlers may request hand hygiene before anyone touches their animal.
4. Handlers must prevent animals from coming into contact with sites of invasive devices, open or bandaged wounds, surgical incisions, or other breaches in the skin, or medical equipment.
5. If the patient or agent requests that a small dog be placed on the bedside or lap, the Handler should check for visible soiling of bed linens first. Do not place a small dog on the bed or lap if soiling is present.
6. Provide a barrier of fresh hospital linen for each patient when it is appropriate for a small dog to be on a patient's lap or bedside, or for a large dog who places his head on a bed for easy access for the patient.
7. Fresh linen should be used for each patient. A pillowcase, sheet, or towel may only be used for one patient.
8. Place hospital linen that has been used in dirty linen bins, or give linen to nurse, volunteer, or staff member to place in a bin.
9. If a dog has contact with surface of the bed, staff should be advised that the linen should be removed **and** laundered.
10. Handlers may not sit or perch on a patient's bed.
11. Prevent the dog from licking patients, visitors, and staff. Topical medication can be dangerous for dogs and licking or "kisses" are unwanted by some people.
12. Discourage patients, visitors, and staff from "shaking hands" with therapy dogs who obviously recently walked outdoors and on hospital floors.
13. For the protection of the patient and your dog, do not allow patients or visitors to feed your therapy dog. Your dog's reward is the motivating interaction.

N. Animal Incidents

1. In the event that an animal becomes ill on a visit and produces any bodily discharge, assist with preliminary clean up, contact housekeeping by calling 2020, then terminate the visit immediately and withdraw the animal from visitation for a minimum of one week or as advised by a veterinarian.
2. In the case of an animal "accident," immediately terminate the visit.
 - a. Take appropriate measures to prevent recurrence during future visits (observation, exercise, appropriate timing of food and water).
 - b. Submissive urination requires suspending the animal's visiting privileges, having the Handler address the underlying cause, and then formally reevaluating the animal's suitability before visiting privileges are restored.
 - c. If repeated "accidents" occur, the animal's visiting privileges will be withdrawn.
3. Routine cleaning and disinfection of environmental surfaces is done by the environmental services department of Doylestown Hospital.
4. In the event of an animal bite or scratch or any suspected physical injury, immediately inform nursing staff who will provide or facilitate appropriate clinical care. A Problem Event Form will be filled out by a witnessing staff member.
5. A visit should be immediately terminated after any incident.
6. Report any animal incident to Volunteer Services as well as the registration organization immediately. Incidents include, but are not limited to, illness/bodily discharge, bites, scratches, excessive barking/vocalization, destructive behavior, and animal "accident."
7. Public health or animal control authorities should be informed as required by local laws.



This dog's body language indicates real stress and a need to end the visit. Take a break and soothe your dog when you first see a signal that your dog may be uncomfortable with a situation. Be your dog's advocate and prioritize safety.

8. The team's therapy registration organization and Volunteer Services should be contacted immediately if there is any act of aggression by a therapy dog in any venue at any time.
9. Doylestown Hospital has the option to suspend or terminate following the investigation of an incident.
10. Bites, intentional scratches, or other serious, inappropriate behavior is cause for permanent withdrawal of the animal's visiting privileges.
11. In the case of other incidents, contributing circumstances will be considered and appropriate measures, including additional training, may be pursued to prevent similar issues from reoccurring. If measures cannot be taken to reduce the risk of recurrence, then visitation privileges will be withdrawn.
12. Handlers must suspend visits and have the therapy dog formally reevaluated whenever the Handler notices or is apprised of any of the following in the therapy dog:
 - a. A negative behavioral change since the time it was last temperament tested
 - b. Aggressive behavior outside the healthcare setting
 - c. Fearful behavior during visits
 - d. Loss of sight or hearing resulting in an overt inclination to startle and react in an adverse manner
13. The Volunteer Services Office of Doylestown Hospital requires clearance from the animal's therapy organization and veterinarian before the team resumes therapy visits following an incident or issue.
14. Inform the Director of Volunteer Services and Animal Assisted Activity Advisory chair of any inappropriate patient, staff, visitor, or volunteer behavior, including inappropriate dog handling and refusal to follow instructions.

O. Animal Health & Zoonosis

1. Handlers or Escorts may request that any patient, visitor, volunteer, or staff member use hand sanitizer before touching a therapy dog.
2. Consider the use of dog cleansing wipes after patient interactions.
3. Consider bathing your dog after visiting.
4. Dogs are required to receive a health evaluation by a licensed veterinarian at least once per year and to submit an Animal Assisted Activity Veterinary Record Form signed by their vet at that annual visit to Volunteer Services. A copy of that Vet form is provided in the Appendix.
5. Be compliant with your veterinarian's recommendations regarding an appropriate flea, tick, and enteric parasite control.
6. Cancel a visit if your therapy dog seems unwell or injured.
7. Animals with suspected communicable diseases may not visit.
8. Animals with any contagious or concerning medical conditions should not visit until clinically normal, or the condition is managed and written veterinary health clearance is provided.
9. Zoonosis – diseases that may be communicated from dogs to human – are very uncommon and can be prevented by vigilant Handlers:
 - a. Bite or scratch wound: prevented by careful handling by registered, trained therapy dogs
 - b. Rabies: transmitted via bites/open wounds; prevented with required rabies inoculation
 - c. Ringworm: transmitted via contact with skin lesions on a dog; prevented by eliminating visits by any dog suspected of having or diagnosed with ringworm
 - d. Gastrointestinal infection: transmitted when a dog's fecal matter is ingested orally by a human; hand sanitation is essential and preventative; dogs with or suspected of having GI infections should not visit
 - e. Leptospirosis: transmitted via human ingestion of urine or discharge of affected dog; prevented by inoculation and careful handling of registered, trained therapy dogs; prevented by eliminating visits by any dog suspected of having or diagnosed with leptospirosis
10. Animals should not visit while demonstrating signs of heat (estrus).
11. Animals who have been fed within the past 90 days any raw or dehydrated (but otherwise raw) foods, chews, or treats of animal origin, excluding those that are high-pressure pasteurized or irradiated, may not visit.



Be conservative. If you or your dog doesn't feel well, cancel your visit.

P. Handler & Escort Health

1. Animal Assisted Activity Handlers and Escorts are encouraged to have all immunizations recommended for healthcare providers within Doylestown Hospital, including measles, mumps, and rubella (German Measles) and varicella (chicken pox) or have immunity to these diseases through having had the disease. Volunteers who have questions about their immunization status should speak to their personal physician to determine the need for vaccinations and/or boosters.
2. A Flu vaccine is required every year.
3. Proof of Tdap or obtaining the Tdap vaccine must be done before beginning to volunteer.
4. The flu vaccine and Tdap vaccine are available at no charge through Doylestown Hospital's Occupational Services. High dose flu vaccines are NOT available through the Occupational Health department.
5. Handlers and Escorts must be free of contagious disease and avoid visiting if exposed to contagious disease.
6. Handlers and Escorts should self-screen for symptoms of communicable disease and refrain from providing animal-assisted activities services while ill. Such symptoms include, but are not limited to:
 - a. New or worsening respiratory symptoms (i.e., cough, sneezing, nasal discharge)
 - b. Fever (temperature >100°F)
 - c. Diarrhea or vomiting
 - d. Conjunctivitis
 - e. Rash or non-intact skin on face or hands
7. Avoid patient rooms with contact precaution signs to protect you and your dog.
8. Handlers and Escorts should avoid direct contact with patients.
9. Handlers and Escorts should personally use hand sanitizer after patient visits.
10. Handlers and Escorts should provide emergency contact information to Volunteer Services.

Q. Performance Input & Education

1. All Hospital Volunteers (and staff) are evaluated on an annual basis.
2. After the first year of service, Animal Assisted Activity Handlers and Escorts will be evaluated using the Animal Assisted Activity Therapy Dog Team Competency form.
3. The registered Handler with his/her own registered animal will be evaluated using the Team Evaluation form at least every three years; an independent evaluator will do that evaluation.
4. When therapy dog-Handler team returns to Doylestown Hospital after an absence of more than four months, their first visit must be an accompanied visit to update the Handler on happenings with the Animal Assisted Activity program at Doylestown Hospital as well as to confirm the performance of the therapy team.
5. Members of the Animal Assisted Activity team are strongly encouraged to attend team meetings which are held approximately twice per year. Team meetings are a forum for feedback, program updates, and educational seminars.

R. Communications & Outreach

1. Handlers and Escorts must communicate openly with each other. Identify potential problems or issues during and following visits. Offer constructive input. Let your partner know he/she is appreciated.
2. Be a proactive communicator. Share insights, exceptional interactions with patients, problems, potential issues, and suggestions with Karen Langley, Director of Volunteers klangley@dh.org 215-343-2204 and Joyce Rivas, Advisory Chair of the Doylestown Health Animal Assisted Activity Team, joycerivas@comcast.net 215-588-9201.
3. Identify potential volunteers. Put people interested in volunteering on the Animal Assisted Activity Team in touch with Volunteer Services (215) 345-2204 and encourage them to go to doylestownhealth.org/ and visit the Get Involved section of the website or Google "Doylestown Hospital therapy dog."

Hazardous Materials: None.

Essential Functions: Animal handling, walking, standing, seeing, kneeling, stooping, reaching, and talking.

How to Join the Animal Assisted Activity Team & Assignment Guidelines updates:

9/14; 10/14, 12/14; 01/15; 03/15; 08/15; 09/15; 3/16; 7/16, 5/17

Appendix



**Animal Assisted Activity
Veterinary Record**

We appreciate your assistance in completing this form for our Handlers so that they may participate in the Animal Assisted Activity Program at Doylestown Health. All of our Handlers are Volunteers who give their time and talent to our patients, families, visitors and staff without expectation of monetary compensation.

Owner's Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

This certificate is to certify that I have carefully examined the following dog on:

Dog's Name _____ **Date** _____

Sex: M F **Breed** _____

Immunization	
Rabies Date Given _____	Expiration Date _____
DHPP/DHLPP Date Given _____ Or Titer	Expiration Date _____
Fecal Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/>	Next time Due _____
*Heartworm Test Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/>	Next time Due _____

**If the Handler treats their dog with monthly preventative heartworm medication rather than getting a yearly heartworm blood test, the Handler must complete the attached Attestation.*

I have examined this animal and in my opinion, this animal is a good candidate to be a therapy dog at Doylestown Hospital. I have not seen any aggressive or inappropriate behavior in my presence. The animal appears to be healthy and free of pain, disabilities and illnesses that can cause unusual behavior that could cause the animal to be unpredictable. To the best of my knowledge, this animal has not been exposed to and is free of any infectious or contagious disease.

Remarks: _____

Name of Veterinarian _____

Signature of Licensed Veterinarian _____

Address _____

Date _____



**Animal Assisted Activity
Heartworm Preventative**

ATTESTATION

I hereby attest that I, _____,

administer preventative heartworm medication to my therapy dog, _____, monthly.

I declare that this statement is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Signature

Date



Commitment To Confidentiality

I, _____, understand my obligation to maintain complete confidentiality of information in order to protect Patients and their families, as well as all members of the Doylestown Hospital family, from improper disclosure of information given in confidence, particularly when the information is related to the health, business, or personal matters of Patient, Patient's families, Associates, Volunteers, or Members of the Board or Medical Staff. I also understand that confidentiality must be maintained regardless of the source of information, for example:

- Spoken word
- The medical record (patient's chart)
- Computer records
- Records of Doylestown Hospital business such as financial reports, statistical data, minutes of meetings, personnel files, etc.

and that access to information and dissemination of information are both subject to confidentiality standards.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

5/2017