

Administrative Guidelines for use of Therapy Animal

Administrative Guidelines 4728

The Role & Purpose of Certified Professional Therapy Animal Teams

Professional School Therapy Animals certified with their owners/handlers as Certified Assistance Animal Teams provide emotional and physical support in the educational setting. These highly trained Animals model good behavior, tolerance, and acceptance. All Certified Assistance Animal Teams in the Fremont County School District #25 School District work to support and positively influence student achievement.

- I. Professional Therapy Animals-definition
 - A. Professional therapy Animals are Animals trained and tested to provide specific physical or therapeutic functions under the direction and control of a qualified handler who works with the Animal as a team, and as a part of the handler's occupation or profession.
 1. A professional therapy Animal has been temperament tested by a trainer affiliated with an organization recognized as qualified to do temperament testing (such as Love on a Leash).
 - a) Such Animals, with their handlers perform such functions in institutional settings, community-based group settings, or when providing services to specific persons who have disabilities.
 - b) Professional therapy Animals in the Fremont County School District #25 District are not family pets that have been certified as pet therapy animals.
 - B. Professional therapy Animals have passed a Public Access Test administered by a district-approved trainer/evaluator.
 1. Professional therapy Animals are owned by a professional educator in the Fremont County School District #25 District who wishes to use a professional therapy Animal to augment his/her educational program.
 - a) See attached Therapy Animal Handler Ethics
 - b) See attached documentation requirements (checklist of information) for Certified Assistance Animal Teams in the Fremont County School District #25 School District.
 2. The Fremont County School District #25 Professional Therapy Animal Oversight Committee may require the Handler/Animal to take a Public Access, as needed.

C. Professional Therapy Animals may be used in the school setting on a regular basis when the following documentation is in place:

1. Administrative Approval

- a) The use of the animal or animals must be approved by the administrator(s) of the building(s) in which the Therapy Animal's handler works and the Professional Therapy Animal Oversight Committee.
- b) A letter stating this approval should be written and kept on file in the building.

2. Health Records and Hygiene/Animal Care

- a) The owner/handler must provide a record of annual vaccinations received by the Animal and signed by a veterinarian; these records should be kept on file with the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum.

3. Public Access Test Documentation

- a) A copy of the Public Access Test certificate of completion should be kept on file with the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum.

D. Review of Professional School Therapy Animal Guidelines and Procedures:

1. Professional Therapy Animal guidelines and procedures will be reviewed annually with staff and students at the start of the academic year.
2. Review of the guidelines and procedures will take place as needed (determined by the administrator and Animal owner/handler) throughout the year.

II. Professional Therapy Animal Oversight Committee

A. A committee of objective persons knowledgeable in the use of therapy Animals is established to help with issues and questions that may arise concerning handlers or Animals.

1. The members of the committee shall be made up of from the following individuals:
 - a) Social Worker/Counselor, one from each level.
 - (1) Secondary Level
 - (2) Elementary Level
 - b) A Building Administrator
 - c) Assistant Superintendent
 - d) Local veterinarian (on-call) Sign off on application
2. Concerns should be directed to a district administrator who will address the issues with the Oversight Committee

- B. The purpose of the Oversight Committee will be to:
 - 1. Approve use of a Professional Therapy Animal within the Fremont County School District #25 School District.
 - 2. Provide general assistance with questions and answers pertinent to use of Professional Therapy Animals within the Fremont County School District #25 District
 - 3. Review and approve trainers/evaluators administering Public Access Tests for Professional Therapy Animal teams.
 - 4. Review Professional Therapy Animal policies, procedures, and guidelines.
 - 5. Educate and communicate with the school community regarding the use and value of Professional Therapy Animals.

- III. The privilege to bring the Animal into the school setting may be terminated should the handler or Animal behave in a way deemed unprofessional or unsafe.

PROFESSIONAL THERAPY ANIMAL HANDLER ETHICS

1. Handlers should evaluate their Animal's health and attitude before each working day.
2. It is permissible for the Animal to be off-lead while in a supervised situation where it is working but it should not be allowed to wander through the facility unsupervised.
3. Be aware and courteous of the places your Animal is welcome or allowed in each facility. Students should be taught to appropriately greet the Animal in the hall or other less- structured environments to alleviate disruption of students' attention and conduct.
4. Handlers will always clean up after the Animal, inside and outside the facility.
5. Give verbal commands firmly and calmly and praise the Animal for exemplary behavior.
6. Elementary students are NEVER to be left alone with an Animal; a designated handler must always be present. Animals may be left with a non-handler adult for brief periods of time when elementary children are not present/will not have access to the Animal. When the Animal is left unattended it should be in a room or office with the door closed.
7. No students should be giving treats to Animals.
8. Always be alert to signs of stress in the Animal. Some signs of stress may be:
 - Excessive panting
 - Animal jumps or climbs on handler for security
 - Animal hides behind handler
 - Shaking or tremors, or ear and tail pressed closed to body
 - Yawning and changes in facial expression
 - Animal looks for doorway or other escape route
 - Noticeable change in behavior and/or desire to socialize
9. Be aware of small items dropped on the floor and do not allow the Animal to rummage through trash containers. Use of the "Leave it", or similar command, if this situation arises.
10. When working with disabled persons, the handler(s) will assist in commanding and handling the Animal.
11. Never knowingly put your Animal in questionable or threatening situations.
12. All Fremont County School District #25 District handlers/trainers will follow the district guidelines to ensure the safety of their Animals and students; in addition, following these guidelines will help provide for the appropriate hygiene and veterinary care for their

Animals, ensuring a long and healthy certified Professional Therapy Animal team relationship.

PROFESSIONAL THERAPY ANIMAL

Checklist of Information in Building and District Office Files

Professional Animal Owner _____

Professional Animal Handler(s) _____

Professional Therapy Animal _____

School(s) in which Animal will be used _____

- Administrative Approval - A signed statement of the building administrator's approval and Professional Therapy Animal Oversight Committee approval for use of the Professional Therapy Animal.
- Health Records - A copy of annual vaccinations and exams signed by the veterinarian. It is expected that all owners will use year-round preventative external parasites and Heartworm if the Dog leaves the state of WY.
- Public Access Test Documentation - A certificate certifying that the handler and Animal both passed the Public Access Test must be provided.
- Copy of an Insurance Policy that provides liability coverage for the work of the handler and/or owner, and the therapy doge while the two are on the school district property.
- Current Certification Date: _____

Animal Owner's Signature

Date

Social Worker Signature

Date

Building Administrator's Signature

Date

Assistant Superintendent Signature

Date

PROFESSIONAL THERAPY ANIMAL

VITAL INFORMATION

All documentation to be filed in the building(s) in which the Professional Therapy Animal's owner works and with the District Office. This form should be completed yearly.

Professional Animal Owner _____

Professional Animal Handler(s) _____

Professional Therapy Animal _____

School(s) in which Animal will be used _____

Animal and Handler's Certification Date _____

Name of Organization Certifying _____

Emergency Contact Person and Phone No. for the Animal

1. _____

2. _____

Therapy Animal's Veterinarian and Phone No.

Animal's Date of Birth

Date of Last Health Check

Annual Worm Check _____

Rabies Vaccination Date _____

Parvo/Distemper Date _____

- Verification that preventive parasite control (fleas and ticks) as well as heartworm medication is given year-round.

Please attach the following to this form:

- Proof of registration as a therapy dog handler with the individual therapy dog to be used (*Note: Such registration shall be from an organization that requires an evaluation of the therapy dog and handler prior to registration and at least every two years*)
- Proof from a licensed veterinarian that the therapy dog is in good health and has been immunized against diseases common to dogs. Such vaccinations shall be kept current and up to date all times.
- Proof of licensure from the local dog licensing authority.
- Copy of an insurance policy that provides liability coverage for the work of the handler

PROFESSIONAL THERAPY ANIMAL

and therapy dog
are on school district property.

while the two

Handler's/Owners Signature

Date

Local Veterinarian's Signature (on call)

Date

Social Worker/Counselor

Date

Date