

Therapy Animal Procedures and Guidelines

Applicability: College-wide

Oversight Department: Office of General Counsel

I. Purpose & Scope

The Therapy Animal Procedures and Guidelines set forth Providence College's (the "College") rules, guidelines and requirements for all Therapy Animals on the College's property. These procedures and guidelines apply equally to any and all Therapy animals on the College's property that are owned by the College, its students, employees, and any third party.

II. Therapy Animals Subject to this Policy

"Therapy Animals" are primary companions, which include dogs, cats, rabbits, and guinea pigs that are working to provide pet-assisted therapy treatment and education. Therapy Animals visit hospitals, retirement homes, hospice centers, nursing homes, and schools. Therapy Animals work with a pet-assisted therapy facility coordinator to provide services in a predetermined medical or educational setting, with a selected clientele. These interactions are individually planned, goal-oriented, and treatment or education based.

Therapy Animals provide the following benefits:

- Improvement of motor skills and movement;
- Decreased feelings of isolation;
- Improved social skills and verbal communication;
- Decreased monotony and boredom; and
- Improved overall emotional outlook

Therapy Animals are **not** pets, Service Animals, Emotional Support Animals (animal approved through Student Affairs for students and limited to residence halls), or Research Animals¹ (animal used within the academic setting for instructional and/or research purposes) and are governed exclusively by this Policy.

III. Requirements for Therapy Animals on College Property

- (1) Prior to a member of the College community bringing or engaging an outside vendor to bring a Therapy Animal onto College property, a formal request for approval shall be submitted to the Office of General Counsel. No one may bring any Therapy Animal onto College property without first obtaining written approval from the Office of General Counsel. The Office of General Counsel will require proof of up-to-date immunizations, Therapy Animal certifications, and insurance before approving any request to bring a Therapy Animal onto College property. The

¹ For more information on Research Animals at the College, please see *Providence College Animal Welfare Assurance Public Health Service in accordance with the PHS Policy for Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals*.

Therapy Animal Provider will be required to sign an agreement prepared by the Office of General Counsel.

- (2) The pet-assisted therapy facilitator and the Therapy Animal must abide by a set code of ethics and must follow professional guidelines to ensure that the actions and deeds of the pet-assisted therapy facilitator reflect advocacy of profession, pets, and clients; while simultaneously ensuring that the interaction of the Therapy Animal and client remains beneficial and strives to enhance the quality of life.
- (3) Therapy Animals must meet standard immunization criteria
- (4) Therapy Animals must have a current certificate of good health, which shall be issued by a licensed, practicing veterinarian;
- (5) Therapy Animals must have a certificate of good temperament, which shall be issued from a certified or practicing dog trainer or animal behaviorist
- (6) Therapy Animals must complete a certain training criteria, in which the pet-assisted therapy facilitator and the therapy pet learn to work as a team to learn to execute safe and effective interactions, which are accepted in the field
- (7) The animal-assisted therapy facilitator individual must have successfully completed, or is in the process of completing, an accepted pet-assisted therapy program.
- (8) The qualified animal-assisted therapy facilitator shall be exclusively responsible for the control and safety of the Therapy Animal
- (9) The animal-assisted therapy facilitator must:
 - Clean up the Therapy Animal's waste;
 - Keep the Therapy Animal on a leash and collar;
 - Adhere to all local, state, and federal rules, regulations, and laws; and
 - Uphold an active insurance policy that will cover an unforeseen mishap and/or accidental occurrence that may result in causing property damage and/or personal injury while actively participating in a program
- (10) Any individual bringing an outside Therapy Animal vendor onto Campus must be present for the duration of the Therapy Animal visit and/or event and must submit a formal space request to College Event Management and Planning prior to the event.

IV. Areas Off-Limits to Therapy Animals

The College will evaluate and determine where Therapy Animals will be allowed on Campus on a case-by-case basis based on the nature of the formal request for approval submitted to the Office of General Counsel.

Therapy Animals are prohibited from entering certain areas where the presence of any animal fundamentally alters the nature of a program or activity or is disruptive. Accordingly, Therapy Animals are not allowed in: (1) research laboratories; (2) mechanical rooms/custodial closets; (3) food preparation areas; (4) any room where protective clothing is necessary, for example, near a kiln, chemistry laboratory, etc.; and (5) any room where there are sharp metal cuttings or other sharp objects on the floor or moving machinery.