

Policy Established: 6-17-2019	Prepared By: Darlene Underhill

Target: Healthcare Facilities

ANIMALS IN THE LONG TERM CARE FACILITY

I. POLICY

It is the policy of this facility that pet visits will be encouraged for the enjoyment of the residents. Catholic Charities encourages pet socialization with residents as a normal part of day to day life in the facility. We welcome pet interactions provided by facility pets, pet therapy groups, employees, resident's pets visiting from home, and visitor's pets.

Pet and human interactions can lower cholesterol levels, improve appetite, fight depression and may even help protect against heart disease and stroke. Pets can make the elderly feel needed and that feeling can translate into a greater sense of purpose and self-worth.

Catholic Charities New Hampshire adheres to the following protocols to ensure that our residents can benefit from animals in the facility, while preventing the risk of injuries and disease to our residents, employees, and the animals.

II. PROTOCOL

- The typical types of visiting animals we would expect to see would be dogs, cats, birds.
 Other animals before or at the time of the visit must be approved by administration or
 facility designee. Reptiles or amphibians (snakes, turtles, lizards, etc.) are not advocated for
 pet therapy, as they may harbor Salmonella bacteria that are easily transmissible on hands.
 These species visit must be approved on a case-by-case basis by the Administrator/DNS/
 Infection Preventionist. If approved, hands must be thoroughly washed after contact with
 the pet or their environment.
- 2. For facility owned animals, the recreation/activity department or designee, with the cooperation of all staff members, will be responsible for daily pet care and will maintain regular visits to the veterinarian.
- 3. Residents should be asked prior to contact with an animal if they choose to have an animal visit.
- 4. Service animals will be included in all of the below guidelines.
- 5. All staff and residents will practice good hand hygiene when interacting with animals.

For Animals Who Visit the Facility on a Regular Basis: (such as staff animals and therapy animals)

- 6. The animal <u>must</u> be approved by administration or facility designee before or at the time of the visit. Approval includes ensuring the animal meets the requirements of this protocol, including health and temperament. Administration reserves the right to limit the number of visiting pets on premises at any given time.
- 7. Approved animals will be entered into a log (see attached). The log will be reviewed annually, and as temperament and health evaluations are completed.
- 8. The person responsible for the animal will provide proof (e.g. health certificate or signed letter from a veterinarian) that within the last year the animal (as indicated for the species):

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- a. Has received a physical exam by a veterinarian, including screening for internal and external parasites.
- b. Is up-to-date on vaccinations for common infectious agents including rabies.
- c. Is on appropriate flea and tick prevention program to prevent external parasites.
- d. Is on an appropriate worming prevention program involving: fecal examinations that are negative for internal parasites.
- e. Is free of known or suspected infectious illness, wound or skin infection.
- f. Is well trained, calm and obedient.
- 9. The owner/handler has completed the Dog Obedience & Temperament Questionnaire. *
 - a. If any of the questions are rated between a 2 and 4 (Moderate Aggression to Serious Aggression), Administration must be notified prior to the animal entering the facility for further evaluation of the circumstance(s).
- 10. The owner or handler is responsible for cleaning any mess (feces, urine, vomit) the animal makes while at the facility.
- 11. The owner/handler is responsible for bagging and disposing of feces on facility property during outside "potty breaks".

Visiting Animals of Residents/Families or Animals Not Expected to Visit on a Regular Basis:

- 12. Animals <u>must</u> be contained on a leash or in a carrier while in the elevators, corridors or any facility common area. Leashes should be no more than 6 feet long (standard size). No retractable leashes are allowed.
 - a. In the event an animal enters the facility without a leash, it is recommended that a temporary **Slip Lead** leash be provided by the Receptionist, which will be returned at the end of the visit.
- 13. The animal is free of known or suspected infectious illness, wound or skin infection.
- 14. The animal is well trained, calm and obedient.
- 15. The owner or handler is responsible for cleaning any mess (feces, urine, vomit) the animal makes while at the facility.
- 16. The owner/handler is responsible for bagging and disposing of feces on facility property during outside "potty breaks".
- 17. See Emergency Preparedness Manual for guidelines on evacuation and housing animals during an emergency.

Administration reserves the right to rescind the visiting privileges for any pet of staff or visitor that does not meet the requirements outlined in this protocol, or if the animal becomes disruptive.

* See attached 2-page Dog Obedience & Temperament Questionnaire.

References:

Duncan SL. APIC State-of-the-Art Report: <u>The Implications of Service Animals in Health Care Settings</u>. *Am J Infect Control* 2000;28:170–180.

When Animals Visit Patients, Reducing the Risk of Disease Transmission. *Prevention Strategist*. Vol 1, No 1, Spring 2008.

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Dog Obedience & Temperament Questionnaire

The questions on the following 2 pages are designed to allow you to describe how your dog has been behaving in the recent past. Studies have shown that most of these questions can be grouped or condensed into a set of major behavioral traits or factors that describe most of the variation in canine temperament and which are relatively consistent across dogs of different sexes, breeds and ages.

If any of the questions are rated between a 2 and 4 (Moderate Aggression to Serious Aggression), Administration <u>must be notified</u> prior to the animal entering the facility for further evaluation of the circumstance(s).

Please try to answer all of the questions. Only use the "not observed/not applicable" option if you have never observed the dog in the situation described.

Section 1: Training & Obedience

Some dogs are more trainable than others. By writing the appropriate number from the scale, please indicate how trainable or obedient your dog has been in each of the following situations in the recent past. If you have <u>not</u> observed the dog in the situation, please indicate **N/A** for not observed/not applicable:



1	When off the leash, dog returns immediately when called.	
2	Obeys the "sit" command immediately.	
3	Obeys the "stay" command immediately.	

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Section 2: Aggression

Some dogs display aggressive behavior from time to time. Typical signs of moderate aggression in dogs include barking, growling and baring teeth. More serious aggression generally includes snapping, lunging, biting or attempting to bite. By writing in the appropriate number from the scale, please indicate your own dog's recent tendency to display aggressive behavior in each of the following contexts. If you have <u>not</u> observed the dog in the situation, please indicate **N/A** for not observed/not applicable:



1	When approached directly by an unfamiliar adult while being walked/exercised on a leash.	
2	When approached directly by an unfamiliar child while being walked/exercised on a leash.	
3	Toward unfamiliar person(s) approaching the dog while you are in the car with the dog (at a gas station for example).	
4	When toys, bones or other objects are taken away by a household member.	
5	When an unfamiliar person approaches you or another family member at home.	
6	When unfamiliar person approaches you or another member of your family at home.	
7	When unfamiliar person approaches you or another family member away from home.	
8	When approached directly by a household member while dog is eating.	
9	When strangers walk past your home while the dog is outside or in the yard.	
10	When an unfamiliar person tries to touch or pet the dog.	
11	When joggers, cyclists, roller bladders or skate boarders pass your home while the dog is outside or in the yard.	
12	Toward unfamiliar dog(s) visiting your home.	
13	Toward cats, squirrels or other animals entering your yard.	
14	Toward unfamiliar person(s) visiting your home.	
15	When barked, growled or lunged at by another (unfamiliar) dog.	
16	When stepped over by a member of the household.	
17	Towards another (familiar) dog in your household.	
18	When approached at a favorite resting/sleeping place by another (familiar) household dog.	
19	When approached while eating by another (familiar) household dog.	
20	When approached while playing with/chewing a favorite toy, bone, object, etc., by another (familiar) household dog.	

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Animals in the Long Term Care Facility - Visiting Log

(Owner/Handler Must Complete New Questionnaires Annually <u>and</u> as Temperament and Health Evaluations are Completed)

Date	Staff, Visitor or Family	Owner/Handler	Questionnaires Completed? (should be Yes)			Rated o 4?	Adr	<i>'es,</i> nin. oval?	1 Year Renewal Date
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	□S □V □F		□Y	□N	ПΥ	□N	ПΥ	□N	

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