



# **PET THERAPY VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK**

**Volunteer Services**

**2021**

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# HOW TO USE THE HANDBOOK

## WELCOME

Welcome to the UF Health Shands Pet Therapy Program! We hope you enjoy your time as a UF Health Shands volunteer! This handbook is designed to supplement the Volunteer Handbook and help you understand our Pet Therapy policies and expectations.

## VOLUNTEER SERVICES TEAM

Director of Volunteer Services – Allyson Crawford

Volunteer Coordinator – Samantha Tracy

Volunteer Coordinator – Kiah Coleman-Spradley

Administrative Clerk – New Admins Clerk

## VOLUNTEER SERVICES CONTACT INFORMATION

Office Hours: Mon - Fri 8:00a – 4:30p

Phone Number: (352) 265-0360

General Information Website: [www.ufhealth.org/volunteering](http://www.ufhealth.org/volunteering)

Volunteer Information Center (VIC) Website: <https://ufhealth.org/volunteer-information-center-vic>

## BENEFITS OF PET THERAPY

Hospitalization can be a stressful time for a patient and their family. Pet Therapy visits offer an enjoyable social activity that is beneficial for the patient and all members of the family. Pet Therapy visits:

- Provide a diversion from the normal hospital routine
- Promote a sense of play and humor
- Stimulate physical activity and social interaction
- Reduce feelings of isolation and loneliness during hospitalization

Specific safety measures have been implemented into the UF Health Shands Pet Therapy Program. These measures will maximize positive outcomes for the patient, their families and the Pet Therapy teams.

## PET THERAPY TEAM POSITION DESCRIPTION

**Purpose:** Under the direction of Volunteer Services, you and your certified therapy dog provide one-on-one visits with inpatient patients in approved units. Therapy dog team visits offer a social activity that is beneficial for patient and family members by providing diversion from the normal hospital routine, promoting a sense of play and humor, stimulating physical activity and social interaction, and reducing feelings of isolation and loneliness during hospitalization.

## DUTIES

- Assist patient and family members to interact with the therapy dog in a safe and controlled environment.
- Check in at the nursing station before entering any patient rooms. Ask for special requests for dog visits, rooms not to visit.
- Wash hands frequently: before entering a patient room, in-between visits with each child, and when assignment is completed.
- Practice "good" safety techniques as indicated in the Volunteer Handbook.
- Turn in copies of dog's registration and vaccination records as they are updated.

## LIMITATIONS

- Therapy dog volunteers are not allowed to take patients out of nursing units.
- Do not visit in restricted units unless specifically asked to by Volunteer Services.
- Do not enter isolation rooms with your dog unless specifically asked to by Volunteer Services.

## QUALIFICATIONS

- Current certification through Pet Partners, Therapy Dogs International, or Alliance of Therapy Dogs. Must be in good standing with certifying organization.
- Annual certification and vaccination document must be on file in the Volunteer Office.
- Friendly, outgoing
- Organized, able to work independently
- Comfortable interacting with a wide variety of people

## PET THERAPY HANDLER/OWNER INFORMATION

### PET THERAPY CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Your therapy dog must be currently certified through one of the following approved organizations:

Alliance of Therapy Dogs

Pet Partners

Therapy Dogs International

Continued certification is required for visiting at UF Health Shands Hospital.

Due to the often challenging environment in our hospital, **UF Health Shands requires that Pet Therapy teams be re-evaluated and re-certified by their certifying organization every two years.** Submit documentation to the Volunteer Coordinator when you and your dog have passed the re-evaluation.

## REQUIRED VACCINATIONS AND MEDICAL NEEDS

### THERAPY DOG

Each dog is required to meet their certifying organization's health and vaccination requirements including, but not limited to:

- Verification of current inoculations for: Rabies (1 or 3 years), DHPP (Distemper, Hepatitis, Parvovirus, Par influenza),
- Results of annual heartworm test
- Verification of negative stool exam for parasites

Dogs are to be deemed by a veterinarian to be in good physical and mental health and free of contagious disease.

Documentation will be submitted to the volunteer office when vaccinations are updated. If your dog requires medication or medical treatment, please submit documentation from your veterinarian that your dog is cleared before visiting the hospital.

## VOLUNTEER DRESS CODE

As mentioned in our [Volunteer Handbook](#), all volunteers must be dressed in the appropriate uniform components. Please dress in your full volunteer uniform when visiting and volunteering with your dog.

## VISITING WITH YOUR THERAPY DOG

### PET THERAPY GUIDELINES

Please walk your dog prior to entering the hospital to reduce the chance of toileting accidents. It is recommended that you carry a cross body bag, or fanny pack to keep necessary supplies, like cleaning wipes. If your dog has an accident, please notify housekeeping immediately for additional cleanup.

### VISITING GUIDELINES

When visiting a nursing unit, check in first with the nurses station for any special instructions (i.e., who NOT to visit, who has specifically requested a dog visit, etc.).

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### WHEN VISITING PATIENT ROOMS

- Check doors for precaution signs- don't enter any that require you to wear a gown, gloves, or mask.
- Knock on door before entering room.
- Stop in doorway of room, explain you have a therapy dog with you and wait for patient or family member to invite you in.
- Obtain permission from all individuals in the room before entering.
- If the patient or family does not want a dog visit, smile and move on to the next patient room. Do not try to talk them into a visit with your dog.
- Do not visit with patients while they are eating or drinking, do not permit the patient to eat or drink while interacting with the dog.

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### GENERAL INTERACTIONS

Always keep your dog under your control. You are responsible at all times for your dog's behavior. The follow behavior is expected of your dog:

- Refrain from interacting with other dogs
- Only interact with patients/ visitors after you give them permission
- No jumping on patients, visitors or staff
- Dog remains calm and approachable
- Dog remains on leash and leash is in your hand at all time
- Dog's paws remain on the floor at all times unless patient request dog to join them in bed. (Before placing a dog on a patient's bed, lay a gown down as a barrier so that the dog doesn't exchange any germs with the patient's bedding)

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### WHEN INTERACTING WITH PATIENTS, VISITORS, AND STAFF

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| • Smile! And say "Hello"                     | • Sit or crouch down to the patient's level  |
| • Use a friendly tone                        | • Introduce your dog                         |
| • Make eye contact                           | • Breed, age, name                           |
| • Introduce yourself                         | • Training they've had                       |
| • Ask patient's name                         | • Tricks and cute quirks                     |
| • Listen patiently                           | • Ask if they have any special pets at home. |
| • Give the patient time to answer or respond |  |

## OBSERVING PATIENT EXPERIENCES

- Watch the patient carefully. Be aware of their body cues and body language and terminate your visit when appropriate.
- Leave quickly and appropriately if patient becomes upset, frightened or unhappy.
- Use appropriate conversation, questions and humor for patient's age.
- **Do not ask questions about why they are in the hospital or when they are going home.**
- Respect directions from family members, patient and/or staff
- Keep the dog off the patient bed, wheelchair unless requested by patient
- Help the patient interact with your dog by lifting the dog up to the patient's eye level, teaching the patient how your dog likes to be petted, etc.
- Ask permission before moving furniture to allow easier access for the dog. Replace the furniture at the end of your visit.
- Watch for patient being too "rough" on your dog. Stop the activity immediately and show the patient how the dog likes to be petted, or leave the room if the activity continues.
- Keep dog away from medical equipment, tubes and bandages
- Do not sit on the patient's bed.
- Leave the patient's room when medical staff enters.
- Relate any questions or concerns you may have about a patient to nursing staff.

REMINDER: PLEASE KEEP VISITS WITH STAFF TO A MINIMUM. YOU CAN REMIND THEM THAT YOU ARE HERE FOR THE PATIENTS!

## VISITING IN OUR HOSPITAL

Our hospital system can be very confusing for new volunteers. The Volunteer Services team will work as a resource to help you navigate. Maps and other tools will be provided to you when you get started!

### APPROVED AREAS TO VISIT

As you and your dog become familiar with our hospitals and facilities, you will need to assess what environment your dog responds best in. Some prefer spaces that are open, and allow people to walk up to them, like waiting areas. Many dogs do not mind walking in and out of unfamiliar rooms. As you start to explore the approved spaces in our hospitals, please take cues from your dog of what he/she responds to best.

UF Health Shands Hospital	Shands Children's Hospital	UF Health Cancer Hospital	UF Health Heart & Vascular Hospital	UF Health Neuromedicine Hospital
1 <sup>st</sup> Floor Surgical Waiting Room	1 <sup>st</sup> Floor Children's Hospital Atrium	2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor Surgical Waiting Room	1 <sup>st</sup> Floor Lobby	1 <sup>st</sup> Floor Lobby
1 <sup>st</sup> Floor Atrium Lobby	4 <sup>th</sup> Floor Units 44 and 45	5 <sup>th</sup> Floor – 5E Med Surg & 5W Gen. Surg	2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor Surgical Waiting Room	2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor Surgical Waiting Room
6 <sup>th</sup> Floor Units 64 & 65		6 <sup>th</sup> Floor – 6E Transplant & 6W Orthopedics		5 <sup>th</sup> Floor – Unit 56 & 57
7 <sup>th</sup> Floor Units 74 & 75				6 <sup>th</sup> Floor – Unit 66 & 67

## PROHIBITED AREAS TO VISIT

Pet therapy Volunteer Handlers are provided a tag that list various units that are prohibited from pet therapy team visits. If at any time you are asked to visit any of these units, please respectfully decline and ask hospital staff and patient care teams to contact our office.



- Isolation rooms (Any room that requires you to wear gloves, gown, or mask)
- Intensive Care Units (Also known as ICU's) – Visiting is only allowed when requested by Volunteer Services staff
- Any patient room with a color coded signs posted on the door or window

UF Health Shands Hospital	Shands Children's Hospital	UF Health Cancer Hospital	UF Health Heart & Vascular Hospital	UF Health Neuromedicine Hospital
2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor	3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor – NICU	4 <sup>th</sup> Floor – 4E SICU & 4W Trauma ICU/IMC	7 <sup>th</sup> Floor – Unit 76 & 77 CICU/IMC	4 <sup>th</sup> Floor – Unit 46 & 47 Neuro ICUs
3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor	4 <sup>th</sup> Floor – Units 41 and 42	7 <sup>th</sup> Floor – 7E BMTU Clinic & 7W BMTU	8 <sup>th</sup> Floor – Unit 87 CICU/IMC	
5 <sup>th</sup> Floor – Select Rehab*	10 <sup>th</sup> Floor – Units 10-2 & 10-4			
7 <sup>th</sup> Floor – Unit 72 BICU				
8 <sup>th</sup> Floor – Unit 82 ICU/IMC				
9 <sup>th</sup> Floor – Unit 94 IMC				
11 <sup>th</sup> Floor – Unit 11-4 MICU				

\*IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN VISITING WITH PATIENTS ON THE 5<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR AT SELECT REHAB, PLEASE CONTACT RANDAL HAMILTON [RHAMILTON@SELECTMEDICAL.COM](mailto:RHAMILTON@SELECTMEDICAL.COM).

## DO NOT VISIT PATIENT ROOMS WITH ANY OF THE FOLLOWING SIGNS



IF YOU ARE ASKED BY A STAFF MEMBER OR PATIENT TO VISIT A ROOM THAT REQUIRES YOU TO WEAR GOWN, GLOVES, OR MASK, POLITELY DECLINE AND LET THEM KNOW THAT IT IS TO PROTECT THE HEALTH OF OUR PATIENTS BECAUSE THE DOGS AREN'T ABLE TO WEAR THESE ITEMS THAT HELP STOP THE SPREAD OF INFECTION. IF THEY HAVE QUESTIONS ASK THEM TO CALL VOLUNTEER SERVICES FOR MORE INFORMATION.

# HEALTH & SAFETY

## INFECTION CONTROL

The following infection and safety measures are for the protection of the patient, your dog, and you. You must follow these guidelines every time you volunteer with your dog to help reduce the spread of infection in the hospital.

- Your dog is clean and well-groomed for visiting. This includes being bathed (wet or dry bath) 24 hours or less before your visit, being brushed, nails trimmed, ears clean and free of odor, eyes and teeth cleaned.
- Dogs do not lick or "kiss" patients, visitors, or staff at any times. They never lick an open sore, wound or incision.
- Carry sanitizing gel with you while volunteering. Small bottles of gel are available in the volunteer office. Offer the gel to anyone who pets your dog and use it as required on your own hands.

Wash your hands or use the hand sanitizer:

- Before and after you enter a patient's space
- Before and after patient contact
- After using the restroom
- After sneezing and coughing

Do not visit with your dog starting from onset of and until at least one week beyond the resolution of:

- Episodes of vomiting or diarrhea
- Urinary or fecal incontinence
- Episodes of sneezing or coughing of unknown or suspected infectious origin
- Treatment with non-topical antimicrobials or any immunosuppressive doses of medications
- Open wounds
- Fleas, ticks, or mange (may return when veterinarian determines animal to be clear)
- Ear infections
- Skin infections or "hot spots"
- Orthopedic or other conditions that, in the opinion of your veterinarian, could result in pain or distress to the dog during handling and/or when maneuvering within the facility
- Is in heat
- Is recovering from surgery



## SAFETY

- Do not leave your dog alone or under the control of anyone else. You are responsible at all times for your dog's behavior.
- Do not transfer (lift) patients in or out of bed. If a patient wants to get out of bed to see or pet your dog, ask a nurse or other staff to assist the patient.
- Do not bring food, candy, gum or drinks to a patient.

## INCIDENT PROCEDURE:

In the event of an injury (scratch, bite or any other inappropriate animal behavior) or other adverse incident:

- End your visit and leave the room
- Report scratch, bite, or other injury to nursing staff immediately so wounds can be cleaned and treated promptly
- Share the incident with Volunteer Services
  - In the case of accidental scratches, the situation will be reviewed and appropriate measures will be taken to prevent similar injuries from occurring again
  - In the case of bites, intentional scratches or other serious, inappropriate behavior, the animal's visiting rights will immediately be withdrawn
- Complete Pet Partners, TDI or ATD required reports and provide a copy to Volunteer Services

IF MEASURES CANNOT BE UNDERTAKEN TO REDUCE THE RISK OF RECURRENCE, VISITATION PRIVILEGES WILL BE WITHDRAWN  
IF IT IS DETERMINED THAT THE HANDLERS BEHAVIOR WAS AT FAULT IN THE INCIDENT, THE HANDLERS VISITATION PRIVILEGES WILL BE  
SUSPENDED

# PATIENT PRIVACY

## PATIENT PRIVACY

### PATIENT PHOTOS

Patients may ask to have their picture taken with you and your dog. You may take a picture of the patient with their phone or camera (if you feel comfortable doing so). However, you cannot take pictures of patients on your phone or camera.

### CONFIDENTIALITY

Patients have a right to privacy and volunteers (as well as staff) must respect that right. Information you hear or receive from staff, patients, or families must be kept confidential. If you feel information you have been told should be shared with staff, encourage the patient and/or family member to discuss it with their nurse. If the patient and/or family refuse to do so and you feel it is important to the patient's safety, please tell a nurse on the unit you are visiting.

# PROGRAM ENGAGEMENT

## WORKING TOGETHER

Working with our Pet Therapy teams is very important to the Volunteer Services department. With continued partnership, we strive to provide unique and fulfilling volunteer experiences and opportunities for both of our Pet Therapy Team.

## PROGRAM PHOTOS

