

Paws for Pioneers Guidelines and Expectations

Member Expectations

- Pet/Handler teams must provide up to date certification and registration records through the Alliance of Therapy Animals and submit an application to school administration to be considered for the Paws for Pioneers program.
- While working on school property, the pet/handler team will abide by all Alliance of Therapy Dog rules and regulations, as well as any site specific rules and guidelines.
- Pet Therapy teams may not conduct visits at non-SPS sponsored events representing Paws for Pioneers. All Paws for Pioneers gear identifying the program must be removed and the visit should be conducted as a visit for Alliance of Therapy Dogs.

Before Working in the School

- Before the team comes into the school, they will review a list of animal approved areas in the school. These areas should be prominently marked “Pet Friendly” with therapy team schedules posted at the entrances.
- Therapy Teams should not work in areas where food is prepared/served or in classrooms while snack is being served.
- The owner/handler will work with the school administration to determine the work schedule of the therapy dog and the role the pet therapy dog will play within the school.
- While on campus, the dog must wear a program identification vest.

Hygiene Expectations

- The owner/handler will be responsible for the hygiene of the dog. Pets must be clean and well-groomed when working.
- While at work, all fecal material must be discarded immediately in the appropriate waste receptacles.
- Dogs shall not be fed a raw dog food diet.
- The work area shall remain neat and tidy.

Interacting with Faculty, Staff, and Students

- Dogs must remain leashed while in public areas and classrooms other than their handlers room/office.
- All students who work regularly with the therapy team should have a signed permission form on file. Teams should be aware of classrooms with students/teachers who have dog related allergies, aversion/fear of dogs, or dog therapy refusal forms on file. Handlers should not enter classrooms where these students are learning. Before entering a classroom with a dog, the handler should ask the room if they can come into the classroom with their dog. If anyone says no, the handler must wait at the door and ask for the teacher or student they need to come to the door to speak with them.

- The pet/handler team's primary classroom/office should have a location to the side where the pet can sit or lay. This area should be off limits for students and a place where the dog can be alone and or rest.
- The therapy dog may remain unleashed in their handler's primary classroom or office but only if it is clearly posted on the entrance that an unleashed therapy dog is at work. The dog should ALWAYS be leashed while in public areas including hallways.
- The owner/handler will be asked to track any visits outside of the normal scope of the animal's work environment. A visit tracking form will be provided and should be submitted on a monthly basis. This will allow the the program to track the impact of the program – number of visits and number of people reached.
- In the case that a pet/handler team is housed in a general education classroom and snack is served, the dog should be asked to sit or lay in an area away from where students are eating snack.
- All classroom teachers participating in the program must provide a introductory training for their students on proper handling and behavior expectations with their classroom dog.

Handler Expectations and Rights

- The owner/handler may be expected to participate in various in-service training as deemed necessary.
- If at any time the owner/handler does not follow the contractual guidelines, administration reserves the right to remove him/her from the program and all benefits provided will be lost. The animal will remain with the owner/handler.
- The handler has the right to remove their dog from any situation that makes them uncomfortable or ask that their animal not work with a student or professional that does not foster a safe and healthy relationship with their dog.
- If an incident or injury to a student, employee, or visitor in the facility occurs while representing Paws for Pioneers: Immediately contact the school administrator and document the incident on all required forms for the facility.

Other Therapy Programs

- The presence of a Paws for Pioneers team does not exclude other therapy dog programs from working in the school. In the event that another therapy animal is scheduled, the school should inform any Paws for Pioneers teams as a courtesy. All therapy teams should abide by the ATD standards for being around/interacting with other animals.