

Canine Concierge Animal-Assisted Therapy (AAT) Policies and Procedures

The following are the policies and procedures for therapy animal teams. You're responsible for always following them.

1. I will abide by all Canine Concierge policies and procedures and adhere to the guidelines outlined in this Canine Concierge guide and associated updates at www.canineconciergecorp.org.
2. I will professionally represent the program, for example, by observing rules of privacy and confidentiality, being on time for visits, not being under the influence of drugs/alcohol, and being well-groomed and professionally dressed according to facility dress codes.
3. I will uphold the code of ethics.
4. I will visit only with animals registered with Canine Concierge and with only one animal at a time. I understand that visiting may not exceed 3 hours per team daily for safety and liability reasons.
5. I will ensure that each facility I visit has access to these Canine Concierge policies and procedures so they understand what guidelines I already follow as a visiting team.
6. I will abide by all Canine Concierge policies, procedures, and precautions in each facility I visit. If Canine Concierge and my facility have two different approaches on the same topic, the more conservative of the two will apply.
7. I will always be responsible for my animal, considering its needs and humane care first.
8. I will always stay with my animal and control the situation with the lead in my hand. I will never tie animals to people, equipment, or furniture while visiting.
9. I will clean up after my animal inside and outside the facility and abide by any facility-required cleanup rules.
10. For safety reasons, all animals must wear a collar or harness and be on a leash, and the handler must always hold the leash, including during breaks.
 - Animals carried in a basket, towel, or their handler's arms must wear a collar or harness and always be on a leash.
11. I will abide by the Canine Concierge grooming guidelines before each visit.
12. I will visit only by the Canine Concierge health requirements: for example, my animal and I must be healthy and not wear a waste collection device.
13. I understand that animals must not be on a raw protein diet at any time during their role as a therapy animal and that animals from a household where a raw protein diet is fed are precluded from participating in the Animal-Assisted Therapy (AAT) Policies and Procedures.
14. I will not borrow money or personal items or receive any personal gratuity or gift, such as money or jewelry, from the people I visit. Likewise, I understand that giving gifts to the people I visit isn't routinely acceptable, even small gifts such as candy and cookies.
15. During visits, I will not charge a fee to anyone for services I perform as an animal-assisted therapy (AAT) handler except for the Canine Concierge Corporation.
16. In case of an accident or unusual occurrence, I will stop visiting immediately. I will report, without reservation, all details of the incident to Canine Concierge and follow Canine Concierge's direction, understanding that all information will be treated sensitively and with complete confidentiality.

17. I will not take photographs or videos of the people I visit without first obtaining the client's signed consent or a legal guardian or custodian of the client. I will use the Canine Concierge photo and video release waiver provided on its website to obtain the client's consent unless a facility offers its own photograph and video release form. Instant photos might be acceptable, but only if the image is left with the client and if the client and the facility have granted permission.
18. I understand that I must obtain approved written permission from Canine Concierge for each proposed use of Canine Concierge's logo or name in conjunction with the logo or representation of any other organization.
19. As a handler, I am not authorized to administer Canine Concierge tests unless I am a licensed team evaluator. In addition, I am not allowed to teach Canine Concierge courses unless I am a licensed instructor.
20. When approaching a facility for the first time, I will find out whether other teams are already visiting or if facility animals are present. If there are, I will respect those existing relationships while also making responsible choices for myself and my animal.
21. I understand that my animal must visit in the same type of equipment it was evaluated in and that a change in equipment requires a re-evaluation.
22. I understand that any time I am re-evaluated, the team qualification rating from the new evaluation will supersede the rating of the previous assessment. The new rating applies immediately, even if the team's registration period hasn't yet expired. For example, if a renewing team is scored "Not Ready," the team's registration period expires early.
23. I understand that I must receive formal notification from Canine Concierge about my registration status and qualifications (for example, an acceptance or renewal letter) before I may visit as a registered therapy animal team.
24. I understand that therapy animals can wear a seasonal or holiday scarf when making visits; however, for the safety of the clients and the animals, animals, and handlers may not be dressed in costumes when making visits.

Code of Ethics

1. Perform duties that are consistent with your position and training.
2. Abide by the professional ethics of your profession and organizations.
3. Demonstrate a belief in an attitude of reverence for all life.
4. Treat all animals, people, and the environment with respect, dignity, and sensitivity, maintaining all participant's quality of life and experience.
5. Be informed and educated about the aspects and issues related to AAI.
6. Demonstrate commitment, responsibility, and honesty in all activities.
7. 7. Comply with all local, state, and federal laws and Canine Concierge policies that govern AAI.

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Standards of Professional Conduct

Canine Concierge has deep regard and respect for its therapy animal teams and their critical role in meeting the needs of the people they interact with. Canine Concierge also has high expectations regarding the conduct of its teams. Handlers are expected to conduct themselves professionally and treat our clients and other groups with respect and consideration.

If concerns about unprofessional conduct arise, Canine Concierge will make every effort to obtain an incident report from all parties involved promptly. Canine Concierge will investigate and determine a course of action.

Note: The team's activities, including visits, might be put on hold until the investigation is completed.

The following types of unsatisfactory conduct are severe enough that violations might result in termination from the Canine Concierge Animal-Assisted Therapy (AAT) Policies and Procedures:

1. Breach of client confidentiality.
2. Abuse of any client or animal or conduct detrimental to the Animal-Assisted Therapy (AAT) Policies and Procedures or Canine Concierge.
3. Theft or removal from the premises, without proper authorization, of any property that belongs to a facility, a client, staff, or another team.
4. Unauthorized use or possession of intoxicants, narcotics, or other drugs while volunteering as a handler.
5. Being unfit to volunteer because of the influence of alcohol or drugs.
6. Harassment of any type.
7. Using the Canine Concierge vest to gain public access or otherwise misrepresent your animal as an assistance animal.

Adapted from Pet Partners