

Volunteer Guide

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VOLUNTEER POLICY GUIDE
OF
LEND A HEART, LEND A HAND,
PET THERAPY, INCORPORATED

SECTION 1 PREFACE

The purpose of this Guide is to provide prospective and current Lend A Heart (LAH) Volunteers with information fundamental to being an LAH animal-assisted therapy Volunteer.

SECTION 2 INTRODUCTION

Section 2.1 History

Local dog club members founded LAH in March of 1987 with a shared interest in providing the greater Sacramento community with trained and evaluated animals for animal-assisted therapy.

LAH is incorporated as a 501 (c) (3) charitable non-profit organization.

Section 2.2 Mission Statement

Lend A Heart is a volunteer organization comprised of certified handler and animal teams, and associated volunteers, dedicated to providing compassion and understanding for our clients through animal-assisted therapy.

Section 2.3 Vision Statement

To be a respected, dynamic professional organization providing animal-assisted therapy in Sacramento and adjacent counties with sustained manageable growth that enhances our organizational composition while meeting increased demand for our services.

Section 2.4 Core Values

- (a) Integrity – Demonstrate commitment, responsibility and honesty in all of our activities.
- (b) Quality – Treat everyone, the public, clients and colleagues, with respect, dignity and sensitivity while continually striving to improve our services to the community.
- (c) Commitment – Maintain a consistency of purpose to improve our Volunteers and our organization through training and teamwork.
- (d) Celebrate Diversity – Respect, value and welcome diversity in our organization as well as in the facilities and populations we serve.

SECTION 3 CODE OF CONDUCT

- (a) Perform duties that are consistent with your position and training.
- (b) Demonstrate a belief in and attitude of reverence for all life.

- (c) At all times, treat all animals, all people, and the environment with respect, dignity, and sensitivity, maintaining the quality of life and experience for all who are involved.
- (d) Be informed and strive to educate yourself about the aspects and issues that are related to animal-assisted therapy.
- (e) Demonstrate commitment, responsibility, and honesty in all phases of your volunteerism.
- (f) Comply with all local, state, and federal laws and Lend A Heart policies that govern animal-assisted therapy.

SECTION 4 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

LAH trainees and Volunteers are expected:

- (a) To act with kindness and consideration of others while volunteering with and representing our organization.
- (b) To act with the highest standards of honesty and ethical conduct while volunteering with and representing our organization. In all cases, if you are unsure about the appropriateness of an activity or action, seek assistance from the LAH Board of Directors.
- (c) To be responsible at all times for your animal's needs and humane care above all else.

SECTION 5 GENERAL VOLUNTEER PRINCIPLES

LAH is a volunteer organization and every Volunteer must live up to the responsibility and commitment of your volunteer service role. Service work with LAH is not something that can be done in a few odd hours when there is nothing more exciting to do. Rather, service work with LAH is a responsibility that requires a definite allotment of time, energy, intelligence, and a real desire to prepare for the job.

Section 5.1 Volunteer Principles

- (a) Be present and on time for every commitment you make. People are looking forward to your pet's visit and the time you share. If you find yourself unable to meet an obligation, notify the Team Leader as far in advance as possible. Remember - if you don't come, someone will be disappointed.
- (b) Respect the confidential aspects of your assignment and the dignity and privacy of the people with whom you visit.
- (c) Show empathy rather than sympathy. Empathy is the ability to relate to another and understand their feelings without condescension and over-involvement.
- (d) Treat fellow LAH Volunteers respectfully and politely.

- (e) Stay with your pet and in control of the situation at all times.
- (f) Become involved in a warm and natural manner with the people you meet. Don't become over-involved and, if in doubt, discuss your feelings with a Team Leader.
- (g) Be optimistic about life in general and an individual's outlook in particular. But don't encourage unrealistic goals and attitudes.
- (h) Be honest and genuine at all times.
- (i) Be friendly while having fun yourself.
- (j) Be part of the team. Be willing to accept supervision, instruction and guidance from the LAH Team Leader and/or facility staff member.
- (k) Ask a facility staff member, Team Leader or coordinator about anything you do not understand. Don't harbor any doubts or frustrations.
- (l) Keep learning, training and working toward becoming the best therapy team possible!
- (m) Be your pets advocate; the happiness and general well-being of your pet are paramount.
- (n) Proactively act on your pets needs, take breaks or end a visit early should your pet indicate they have had enough.
- (o) Choose visits that your pet enjoys.

Those who meet and work with you and your pet appreciate your time and commitment. You are part of a group that cares about the service it is performing in our community.

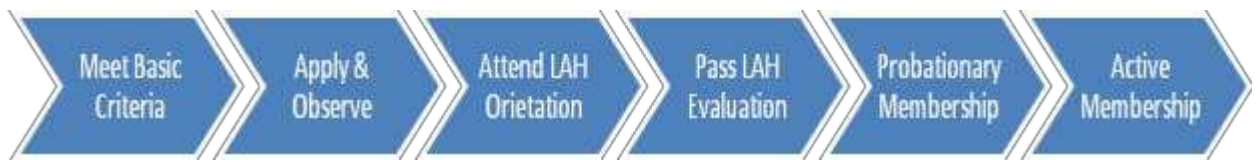
SECTION 6 BECOMING A LAH VOLUNTEER

Section 6.1 Volunteer Requirements

LAH is dedicated to making a difference in the lives of individuals in our community. If you are interested in being a volunteer who touches hundreds of lives each year, bringing smiles, joy, much needed communication, unconditional love, and friendship while interacting with your pet, then this is the organization for you!

We want our volunteers and pets to feel comfortable and secure in the therapy setting. LAH Volunteer requirements are designed to benefit the handler, the pet, and the facilities we serve. While the following steps toward becoming an active Volunteer may seem extensive, the time and activities pass quickly.

Section 6.2 Steps to BECOMING a LAH Volunteer



Section 6.3 Volunteer Criteria

- (d) All teams are required to meet LAH criteria regardless of other certifications you or your pet may already have.
- (e) Pets must be a normally domesticated dog, cat or rabbit of at least one year old and spayed or neutered.
- (f) You must have personally owned your pet for a minimum of six months.
- (g) All pets must possess a sound temperament and be people oriented.
- (h) All dogs must have basic obedience skills.
- (i) All dogs must have the ability to work alongside other dogs without being aggressive or overly excited.

Section 6.4 Volunteer Considerations

Becoming an animal-assisted therapy team requires time and commitment. Our commitment to the facilities and clients we serve necessitates that each LAH Volunteer, in turn, assumes responsibility for maintaining his/her commitments to LAH.

First, consider the commitments you are about to make, including the time to prepare you and your pet for each animal-assisted therapy visit; driving to and attending visits regularly; participating in LAH meetings and events; and fundraising.

Next, take an objective look at your pet:

- (a) Does your pet have the correct temperament for animal-assisted therapy?
- (b) Does your pet calmly accept and enjoy petting from a variety of people? This trait is the foundation of a candidate for animal-assisted therapy.
- (c) Does your dog listen to your commands? Can your dog heel on a loose leash as well as sit, down, and stay? Obedience is important and demonstrates that you and your dog work as a team – that you are aware of and in control of your dog at all times and that your dog pays attention to you.
- (d) Does your dog exhibit behavior that could give the appearance of aggression? Does your dog bark uncontrollably, growl, lunge, snap or bite? Such behaviors are not acceptable in LAH.
- (e) Is your pet tolerant of other animals? Can your pet be in the company of other animals and remain calm without becoming overly excited, fearful or aggressive? Animal-assisted therapy pets should be neutral with other visiting pets.

SECTION 7 VOLUNTEER APPLICATION

If you believe you have met the volunteer criteria and agree to accept the volunteer commitment you may obtain the Volunteer Application Packet from the LAH website or from a LAH Board member. The Volunteer Application Packet contains three forms:

- (a) Application for Volunteers: completed by the individual applying (dog, cat and rabbit handlers).
- (b) Behavior and Obedience Verification Form: dog handlers only, completed by a trainer or behaviorist with the handler and dog present. This form must be completed by a third-party trainer or behaviorist prior to your evaluation. LAH does not complete this form for you.
- (c) Health Screening Form: completed by a veterinarian with dog, cat and rabbit handlers present. Must attach proof of current rabies vaccination, current fecal report and spay/neuter certificate. Note: negative fecal results are required annually to maintain status as a LAH Volunteer.

Additional instructions are found in the Volunteer Application Packet. All forms must be received by LAH at least one week prior to your evaluation appointment.

SECTION 8 SHADOW VISIT

A shadow visit is required prior to your first visit as a LAH trainee. During a shadow visit you will have an opportunity to observe how animals are used in animal-assisted therapy and how handlers respond to different situations that arise. You may attend as many of these visits as you wish.

- (a) Select a facility to visit from our on-line list.
- (b) Do not bring your pet to the shadow visit.
- (c) E-mail your visit selection to lendaheart.aat@lendaheart.org.
- (d) Your request will be routed to the Team Leader of the facility you wish to shadow and they will contact you with specific information with regard to directions, parking and any special rules or requirements for the visit you have selected.

SECTION 9 LAH GENERAL MEETINGS

You are welcome to attend LAH General Meetings at any point in the Volunteer process or as a visitor wanting to learn more about LAH. Pets are welcome and are encouraged to be in attendance as this provides an additional socialization and obedience training opportunity. The schedule and location for LAH General Meetings can be found on the LAH website.

SECTION 10 ORIENTATION

LAH Volunteer Orientations are held three or four times per year. Prior to being evaluated to become a LAH Volunteer, **you and your pet must attend an Orientation together**. The Orientation addresses various aspects of animal-assisted therapy work as well as the organizational structure and required Volunteer obligations. Orientations also provide an opportunity to observe the interactions of you and your pet and allow for a general assessment of your readiness to be formally evaluated for animal-assisted therapy work. At the conclusion

of the Orientation the teams that demonstrate pet obedience, socialization and teamwork will be invited to schedule an Evaluation.

Section 10.1 Orientation Requirements

- (a) Your pet must be clean, brushed and free of fleas. Eyes, ears and teeth must be clean and nails trimmed.
- (b) Small, discreet, kibble-sized treats are permitted. No bones, rawhides or chew toys are allowed.
- (c) It is recommended that you bring a mat or towel for your dog to lie on. Your cat or rabbit must be brought in a carrier.
- (d) Dogs must be leashed at all times and cats and rabbits must be in harnesses and leashed.
- (e) Your overall appearance must be clean and appropriate.

SECTION 11 EVALUATION

Evaluation appointments are scheduled several weeks following Orientation. All three forms in your Volunteer Application Packet must be received at least one week before your evaluation appointment. Once all three forms are completed, make a copy for your personal records. Evaluation appointments are scheduled on a first come first served basis. Mail the originals to:

LAH
11230 Gold Express Drive, Suite 310 #284
Sacramento, California 95670

Or scan all three forms and email to lendaheart.aat@lendaheart.org.

Section 11.1 Evaluation requirements

- (a) Bring your copy of your Volunteer Application Packet with you.
- (b) Come to the Evaluation prepared and dressed as you would to a LAH client visit.
- (c) Arrive at least 15 minutes early to allow you and your pet time to decompress from the trip over.

You and your pet are evaluated as a team. Be proactive, anticipate your pet's response to situations and set them up to succeed.

You will either pass your evaluation, be deemed "Not Ready" or "Not Appropriate".

A Not Ready designation means there is some area or issues that need additional work and improvement to become a successful animal-assisted therapy team.

Examples of behaviors that may earn a Not Ready designation include but are not limited to:

- (a) The handler is reactive and does not adequately anticipate their pet's behavior.

- (b) The animal is excessively stressed.
- (c) The animal mouths or jumps on evaluators or assistants.
- (d) The animal is excessively vocal.

You may schedule another evaluation when you feel that you have made the suggested corrections to address the behavior issues.

A Not Appropriate designation means the handler, animal or team is not accepted in LAH. If the animal is deemed Not Appropriate the handler may evaluate with a different animal to attempt to become a pet therapy team.

Examples of behaviors that may earn a Not Appropriate designation include but are not limited to:

- (a) Handler displays inappropriate conduct or otherwise roughly handles their animal at any time during the evaluation.
- (b) The handler treats people inappropriately during their evaluation.
- (c) The animal growls, threatens, snaps, bites, attacks or attempts to attack any person or other animal during their evaluation.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Passing the LAH Evaluation does not qualify your pet as a service animal. LAH therapy animals must observe all laws that exclude animals from food and medical establishments, indoor shopping malls, public buildings and public transportation. Posing a therapy dog as a service dog is illegal as well as a violation of LAH policy.

SECTION 12 PROBATIONARY VOLUNTEER: LAH TRAINEE

Upon successful completion of your evaluation you will become a LAH Trainee and begin a three to four-month probationary period required of all LAH pet therapy teams.

Trainee Requirements:

- (a) Trainees must wear a red shirt.
- (b) You and your pet must attend a minimum of six visits in a consecutive three to four month period.
- (c) Sign up for each visit and note "trainee and pet name" in the comment box.
- (d) Call or email the Team Leader at least 24 hours in advance of the visit.
- (e) You will receive a Trainee Visit form that Team Leaders will use to document your visits. Team Leaders will give you both verbal and written feedback concerning your performance. LAH Team Leaders, Officers and Directors are available to assist you in developing and improving your animal-assisted therapy skills. LAH therapy teams endeavor to improve their skills regardless of how long they have been volunteering.

- (f) Trainees are encouraged to participate in LAH public education and fundraising events.
- (g) Upon completion of your trainee period, mail the Trainee Visit form to the address provided on the form. It is recommended that you keep a copy for your records.

Upon receipt of your Trainee Visit form, the LAH Vice President or designee will review comments made by Team Leaders and make a determination as to your readiness to move to active LAH Volunteer status. Some teams may be advised that they may need additional probation time to reach the skill levels required to be active Volunteers.

SECTION 13 ACTIVE VOLUNTEERS

Upon completion of the trainee volunteer requirements you will receive a certificate stating that you and your pet are a registered animal-assisted therapy team with LAH.

Note: You and your pet are registered as an animal-assisted therapy team ONLY for official LAH functions as listed on the on-line LAH volunteer calendar. Posing a therapy dog as a service dog is illegal and a violation of LAH policy and will result in revocation of your LAH Volunteer status.

As an Active Volunteer you will be able to purchase a LAH vest and other items with the LAH logo. Handler and dog vests are worn only to LAH programs and events.

Active Volunteer Requirements:

- (a) All active Volunteers are required to obtain LAH ID name and pet tags.
- (b) Volunteers are required to wear LAH red vests and/or other LAG logo attire to all events or programs identifying you as an LAH Volunteer.
- (c) The official LAH color is red.
- (d) To remain an active Volunteer, you must participate in a minimum of two hours of therapy visits or programs each month and contribute a minimum of four hours at events or fundraisers each year.
- (e) Your pet must be healthy and current their rabies vaccination. Current proof of rabies vaccination and negative fecal results must be carried by LAH teams and provided to Team Leaders or LAH Board members upon request. If these records are unavailable you may have your status as a Volunteer suspended until the required records have been provided.
- (f) Expiration dates for rabies vaccines and fecal tests must be posted by the volunteers in the volunteers' profile on the LAH online Volunteer Matters website. Failure to post the required health information within one month of the expiration date will result in suspension of Volunteer status until the health information is brought up to date. A suspension exceeding four months will require reapplication to LAH.
- (g) The optional LAH Therapy Dog vest may only be purchased from the LAH-authorized vendor. Information regarding ordering the dog vest is provided to Active

Volunteers.

SECTION 14 LEAVES OF ABSENCE

If you are not able to attend programs regularly for more than four consecutive weeks please contact the LAH President to request a Leave of Absence. A Leave of Absence that is longer than three months will require an informal re-evaluation prior to commencing visits. If you are absent for three or more months without a granted Leave of Absence you will need to re-apply and formally evaluate before you can resume visiting.

SECTION 15 VOLUNTEERS WITH MULTIPLE PETS

LAH Volunteers may handle multiple pets in compliance with the following:

- (a) You must be an active Volunteer in good standing for six months or more, and have demonstrated regular program attendance.
- (b) You must follow the Volunteer requirements, beginning with completion of the Volunteer Application Packet, attendance of an orientation and subsequent evaluation.
- (c) Under no circumstances may a Volunteer bring more than one LAH therapy animal to any program at any one time.

SECTION 16 JUNIOR HANDLER

LAH grants Junior Handler status to children between 10 and 17 years of age. Junior Handlers are considered Volunteers and must go through the regular LAH Volunteer process. However, Junior Handlers are required to attend three regular LAH visits in the three-month training/probation period. Once passed into Active Volunteer status, Junior Handlers are required to volunteer at least one hour per month and contribute at least two hours per year at fundraisers and events. Junior Handlers between 10 and 15 years of age must be accompanied by an adult at all times; both are expected to follow LAH guidelines.

SECTION 17 LAH PUPPY AND KITTEN PROGRAM

LAH Volunteers may apply to handle puppies and kittens at LAH visits. The Puppy and Kitten Program requirements include the following:

- (a) The applicant must have been an active Volunteer, (completed the probationary Volunteer period) handling another pet for a period of at least six months.
- (b) The puppy or kitten must be between the ages of four months and one year when the Volunteer applies for participation in the LAH Puppy and Kitten Program.
- (c) The Volunteer must complete a Membership Application and Health Screening Form. The puppy or kitten must be fully vaccinated and a negative fecal test must be documented on the Health Screening Form.
- (d) The LAH Vice President or designee must approve the application and schedule a puppy/kitten evaluation.
- (e) Prior to the first visit, an LAH Evaluator will determine if the team is appropriate for the Puppy and Kitten Program.

LAH Puppy and Kitten Program Volunteers work with Team Leaders and Volunteers to develop visiting skills, and teams may be re-evaluated at any time to determine their continued appropriateness for program participation.

Puppy/kitten handlers must re-apply for the LAH Volunteer program when their animals are between the ages of twelve and 20 months, and schedule a standard LAH Evaluation at the next available evaluation session. Continued participation based upon the outcome of the LAH Evaluation is at the discretion of the Vice President. As with other LAH animals, LAH ID tags are required upon successful completion of the probationary trainee period.

SECTION 18 PROGRAMS/THERAPY VISITS

Section 18.1 General Requirements

The length of stay for an LAH animal-assisted therapy visit is usually one hour. Allow time before and after the visit for your pet to rest. Visitors are always welcome to attend LAH programs without their pets and must follow LAH guidelines (refer to Article 16 During the Program/Visit) and facility etiquette.

Trainees and Volunteers must sign up to attend LAH events and programs using the calendars in VolunteerMatters or by directly contacting the Team Leader. This creates a record for insurance purposes as well as documenting that Volunteers are maintaining active status with LAH. Verify your attendance by going to the “Volunteering” tab in your VolunteerMatters profile.

If you sign up for a program and later determine that you cannot attend, use the “Withdraw” function in VolunteerMatters. As a courtesy send an email to the Team Leader if possible.

The following are some examples of situations in which you and/or your pet should not visit clients. Your pet should not visit if;

- (a) The animal is on medication for an infection or illness or another animal in your household is ill.
- (b) The animal is emotionally stressed or behaving unusually.
- (c) The animal is injured or ill.

You should not visit if:

- (a) You are ill.
- (b) You aren't emotionally competent to visit.
- (c) You have an ill child or other family member at home.

Be certain of the time of your visit and location of the facility you will be attending. Facility information can be found on the LAH VolunteerMatters online calendar, and on the page where you sign up for the program. LAH makes every effort to schedule programs and events

months in advance so you are able to plan for these activities. Please be sure the Team Leader is aware that you are planning to attend a particular function so she/he can better prepare for a successful program. Sign up using the calendars in VolunteerMatters or call/email the Team or Event Leader.

SECTION 19 HEALTH CARE FACILITIES

Programs at health care facilities require special mention. Many animal-assisted therapy programs take place in health care facilities. It is imperative that both the handler and the pet be healthy and clean. Some clients in the facilities we visit have reduced immunity and we do not want to endanger them. If you and your pet are scheduled for an activity and one of you is ill, let your Team Leader know that you will not be attending and withdraw from the visit in VolunteerMatters. If you have a question about how you or your pet's health would be perceived, contact your Team Leader immediately to determine whether you should attend. Some health care facilities may also have additional health requirements that must be complied with prior to the visit.

SECTION 20 GENERAL PROGRAM GUIDELINES

The following general guidelines are to be observed:

- (a) Bring a bag with items that your pet may need or utilize during the program. The following items are recommended: 1) water and a bowl; 2) poop bags, or other equipment to clean up after your pet; 3) a towel - should the ground be wet or to keep muzzle free of drool; 4) a brush for "sprucing up" before entering a facility; 5) lint brush or tape to remove stray animal fur or hair from clients; and 6) hand sanitizer.
- (b) Never allow your pet to be off leash during a visit at a facility. **Maintain control of your pet at all times**, including in the parking and outdoors areas.
- (c) Small dogs and cats should be able to lie quietly in someone's lap without wiggling. Cats should be encouraged not to knead with their claws.
- (d) Towels, blankets or lap pillows are to be used whenever an animal is placed in a client's lap or on a bed. You should familiarize your pet to these items prior to your visit.
- (e) Medium sized dogs may be taught to sit on a low step stool or chair when visiting with clients who have limited mobility. By utilizing such items, the pet's head is brought within reach for the client. The stool should be lightweight, covered in a non-slip material and large enough for the pet to sit comfortably. Large dogs may be taught to put their paws up on a stool, and/or sit by a client and gently place their head in the lap.
- (f) Do not allow anyone else to hold your pet's leash during a visit.
- (g) Arrive at the facility ten to fifteen minutes early to meet with the Team Leader and prepare for the visit.
- (h) Pets must be clean, brushed and free of fleas. The use of flea collars, powders, sprays or dips is not permitted. Flea drops must be applied a minimum of seven

days prior to attending any therapy programs.

- (i) Clean the pet's ears, remove any drainage matter from eyes and check pet's breath (if sour give the teeth a quick brushing).
- (j) Do not cut or trim toenails two or three days prior to a visit, as they will be rough and may scratch a client. If you are planning to clip your pet's nails within a day or two of a program, take extra time to file the nails as well or use a nail grinder.
- (k) Assess overall health and attitude of the animal. DO NOT take your pet if he/she is feeling out of sorts; has hot spots or open lesions. If your pet is on any type of medication that could cause excessive urination, diarrhea or vomiting, please do not attend programs until the end of the treatment cycle.
- (l) If you are a trainee, give your Trainee form to the Team Leader (or designee) before the visit or event begins.
- (m) Withdraw from a visit if you or your pet are ill, stressed or injured.
- (n) Notify the appropriate Team Leader if you withdraw from a visit the same day it is schedule.

SECTION 21 ATTIRE AND EQUIPMENT

- (a) The appearance of trainees and volunteers must be clean and neat. Handlers and pets must be free of offensive odors. Refrain from using any heavy fragrances.
- (b) At official LAH functions, all trainees and volunteers must wear apparel identifying them as LAH teams or volunteers. Take pride in your team's appearance – both you and your pet. LAH-approved equipment promotes the safety of our pets as well as those we serve.
- (c) Attire must be professional and appropriate. Temperatures at the facilities fluctuate extremely, dress accordingly. Nice jeans or slacks are suggested with conservative shorts acceptable for hot weather. Volunteers wear the LAH red vest over a clean blouse or shirt of any color in good condition or red LAH logo apparel. Volunteers wear the LAH identification badges. Trainees wear a red shirt and the trainee badges. Shirts, pants and shoes must be clean and free of rips, stains, holes and dirt.
- (d) Footwear is required at all LAH programs. Some facilities or visits require closed-toed shoes; these are generally hospitals and skilled nursing facilities. Check with the Team Leader if you are unsure about footwear requirements. Sandals are acceptable at some programs in warm weather. Flip-flops are prohibited at all programs.
- (e) Dogs are to use a flat, non-slip quick release collar, a martingale with a plastic quick-release buckle, or a dog harness with two quick release mechanisms, such as an Easy Walker. Choke chains, buckle, pinch or slip collars, Halties, figure 8s, chains or any other type of restrictive collars are not permitted. Headgear, Gentle Leaders, or

muzzles are not allowed. Cats and rabbits are to use a harness and leash.

- (f) Pet equipment must be clean and in good condition.
- (g) All leashes are to be a maximum of four feet in length; larger dogs may be placed on shorter leashes such as traffic leads. Flexi, bungee or coiled type leads are NOT permitted.
- (h) The LAH Team Leader, Officer or Board member may require specific equipment for an individual team. If directed to use specific equipment, trainees and volunteers must comply.
- (i) Body piercing on animals, including spacers, are not to be worn during LAH animal-assisted therapy visits.
- (j) Use of excessive costuming, dyes and decorations is prohibited unless otherwise stated for specific programs or events.

SECTION 22 TEAM LEADERS

Team Leaders are vital to the LAH success. Team Leaders support trainees and volunteer teams and are the primary points of contact for facilities served by LAH. Team Leaders are appointed by and work under the LAH President or designee. Each program and event has a Team Leader.

The recommended ratio of Team Leaders to teams in training is one Team Leader to one team in training. If more than one team in training is attending it is recommended that the Team Leader attend without their pet.

Team Leaders are responsible for the following:

- (a) Verifying that every visit is listed on the LAH calendar with the name of the facility and time of visit. A brief description of the type of visit may be included.
- (b) Attending at least one Orientation, Evaluation and Team Leader workshop per year.
- (c) Observing and reporting on trainee/probationary teams.
- (d) Monitoring the performance of active LAH volunteer teams.
- (e) Asking Volunteers periodically for required vaccination and fecal exam documents.
- (f) Ensuring the teams meet all requirements such as cleanliness and appropriate dress before entering the facility.

SECTION 23 DURING THE PROGRAM/VISIT

LAH therapy teams strive to perform consistently at animal-assisted therapy visits. Please take time to read, understand and follow these guidelines:

- (a) NEVER drop your leash while visiting with a client, walking through a facility, or when socializing with LAH teams or facility staff after a visit. Under the direction of

- the Team Leader, some LAH programs have a demonstration of obedience or tricks at the start or end of group visits. With the Team Leader's permission, you may perform off-leash demonstrations with your dog at this time ONLY. No clients may visit with your therapy pet while he/she is off leash.
- (b) NEVER assist a client getting in or out of a bed or chair. While it may seem cruel or heartless not to give aid, you are not trained or insured for this activity. Your best intentions in assisting could result in pain or injury to someone you truly want to help. Instead, call an authorized staff member for help.
 - (c) Take breaks during a visit as often as needed. Always inform the Team Leader or another LAH volunteer when you are taking a break.
 - (d) Animals should not be allowed to relieve themselves near any entrance or on front lawn area of a facility. Be sure to go to an area well away from the building and always clean up after your pet.
 - (e) Check with each Team Leader for the boundaries on the use of treats at each individual facility. Treats can distract a dog's ability to focus on pet therapy. Since our purpose is to provide animal-assisted therapy, we need to be mindful of how the use of food can prevent other dogs from being able to focus on visiting with clients. If treats are allowed, use small, discreet, kibble-sized treats only. Bones, rawhides or chew toys are not allowed at visits, meetings or events. Plastic bags to hold treats can also distract the attention of other dogs and are not allowed.
 - (f) No one other than you may work with your pet at any LAH function. Do not have another individual (including a client, LAH trainee/volunteer or facility staff member) handle your animal.
 - (g) Be aware of your proximity to other teams and try to maintain a reasonable distance between animals; three to four feet is recommended.
 - (h) Approach other teams from the front to avoid startling the other team upon your arrival.
 - (i) Your pet's leash may not dangle or trail on the floor. This could cause a client or staff person to trip and be seriously hurt, as well as possibly injure the animal.
 - (j) Do not secure/tie your leash to a chair leg or leave your pet during a visit or event. Use a crate or X-pen during events, if needed.
 - (k) Take every precaution to help ensure that your pet does not urinate in a facility. If an accident does occur, clean it up immediately and take your pet outdoors. Inform the Team Leader and discuss possible causes and solutions to this situation so it does not occur again.
 - (l) Never let your pet lick the floor and discourage your pet from licking clients. Medications, disinfectants and human wastes/fluids can make your pet seriously ill or even be fatal.

- (m) Your dog may not bark continuously. An occasional bark is acceptable, but constant barking is extremely disruptive and is not permitted. Larger dogs with deeper, louder voices should be more restrained from barking as their bark can scare an unprepared client or staff person.
- (n) Growling, hissing, lunging, and/or snapping/biting at other animals or people are unacceptable. Such behavior will be reported on the LAH Incident Report form. If problems of this nature continue to occur, the team's certification may be terminated. Be aware if your pet is uncomfortable or stressed, and remove your pet from the visit. Do not put others at risk.
- (o) Know visually where your pet is and what he/she is doing at all times during the visit, for the clients' safety as well as your pets. You must be continually aware of any inappropriate behavior so that every client and LAH team is able to have a pleasant, safe, and successful visit.
- (p) If you see a problem occurring or have a concern about another LAH team before, during, or after a visit, event or meeting, you are required to report it as soon as possible to the Team Leader, Event Chairperson, or LAH Board Member. Problems and concerns include but are not limited to: dirty animal; growling; lunging; handler not abiding by LAH Volunteer Guide or Bylaws, etc.
- (q) Correct your pet privately. If your pet makes a mistake during a demonstration, do not correct or repeat the exercise; programs are presentations, not training exercises.
- (r) If possible, have a facility staff member accompany you on your room visits or group therapy programs. Their input and knowledge of residents can make our visit more productive.
- (s) For room visits, look at entryways to ensure access to the client is not restricted due to medical needs, infectious conditions or other factors. Notices regarding room entry are commonly posted near room numbers or name plates.
- (t) Always ask a client if he or she would like to have the pet visit before approaching them too closely. Some people could become frightened or feel threatened, and react adversely. Never enter an individual's room without knocking and asking permission first. Always respect the client's privacy!
- (u) When a client is visiting with your pet, be ready to remove the animal at any sign of discomfort or stress. Never leave your pet anywhere unattended. Always hold the leash and remain in control.
- (v) Always be alert to protect your pet's tail and/or paws from being accidentally run over by wheelchairs or walkers. Exercise extreme caution when around clients who appear frail, unsteady walking, on crutches, etc. Make certain that your pet does not throw them off balance or cause them to fall.
- (w) If you move anything (bed table, bed rail, chair, etc.) during a visit, always be sure and return it to its original position before leaving.

- (x) Refrain from introducing potentially controversial topics while representing LAH at any function.
- (y) Trainees and volunteers must not speak disparagingly about other LAH teams, facilities, or clients. If there is a grievance that cannot be worked out, address it with a Team Leader, LAH Board Member or file an Incident Report with the President.

SECTION 24 AFTER THE PROGRAM/VISIT

- (a) Remove the LAH Therapy Dog vest if your dog is wearing one.
- (b) Praise your pet or offer a favorite treat as a special reward for a job well done.
- (c) Evaluate the visit with the other volunteers and your Team Leader, while considering ways to improve your next visit. For example, shorter or longer time frame, fewer clients to visit, more verbal reinforcement, breaks, and so forth.
- (d) Realize and respect that most animals will be exhausted after your visit. The stimulation and excitement is more than most of us could imagine. Your pet should be offered water and will need a long, quiet rest period.
- (e) If you are a trainee, the Team Leader (or designee) will fill out your Trainee Visit form. Team Leaders may not fill out the Trainee Visit form of their own pet on probation, but must be observed by another Team Leader or a LAH volunteer of a year or more in good standing.
- (f) No one may fill out the Trainee Visit form of any trainees or probationary pets that are part of their own family, or are deemed as familiar as family as designated by the Vice President. Another Team Leader or a LAH volunteer of a year or more in good standing should be in observance and complete the Trainee Visit form for the visit.

SECTION 25 SPECIAL PREREQUISITES

All costs associated with any special prerequisites are the responsibility of LAH Volunteers. Examples include regular school visits and hospital programs where proof of negative TB testing is required. Check with the assigned LAH Team Leader prior to incurring costs as some facilities provide services at no cost or offer reimbursement.

SECTION 26 CHILDREN AT LAH PROGRAMS

With permission from the Team Leader, LAH volunteers who have passed the probationary trainee period may bring children over the age of eight to LAH programs and events. The LAH Volunteer must accept responsibility for making sure the child complies with LAH guidelines and facility requirements. Children at LAH programs may not directly handle a pet, nor interfere with the handler's attention to his/her pet. Team Leaders and Volunteers should use common sense in the types of programs that are appropriate for children to attend.

SECTION 27 LAH TRAINEE AND VOLUNTEER INFORMATION

The LAH Secretary maintains files containing each trainee and Volunteer's Application Packet, LAH Evaluation documents and other pertinent information. Personal contact information for trainees and Volunteers is maintained on VolunteerMatters and is monitored by the LAH

designee. No one may use the contact information of trainees or Volunteers for non-LAH business without the permission of individual trainees and/or Volunteers.

SECTION 28 AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB (AKC) THERAPY DOG TITLES

LAH is an American Kennel Club (AKC) recognized therapy dog organization. The AKC Therapy Dog Program recognizes dogs and their owners who have given their time and helped people by volunteering as a therapy team.

As per AKC guidelines only therapy visits are counted toward titles. Community events such as parades, animal events (SPCA Doggy Dash, Pets to Go, etc.) and presentations are not considered therapy visits. Attendance at General Meetings, Orientations and Evaluations does not count toward a therapy dog title.

The LAH President or designee must verify your visits and provide a letter to AKC. AKC will not issue therapy dog titles without visit verification letter from LAH.

Refer to AKC webpage at akc.org for more information on therapy dog titles.

SECTION 29 INSURANCE

LAH maintains the following policies.

- (a) Commercial General Liability Insurance
- (b) Commercial Property Policy
- (c) Umbrella Liability Policy
- (d) Directors and Officers Liability Insurance
- (e) Accidental Death and Dismemberment benefit

Insurance will be in effect only if the following conditions are met:

- (a) Volunteer and pet must be in good standing at the time of the incident.
- (b) Volunteer is acting on behalf of and within the scope of our principal objectives as a pet therapy organization.
- (c) Volunteer is attending an organized LAH pet therapy program or event that is listed on VolunteerMatters.
- (d) Pet is on a 4' leash and in handlers' control.
- (e) Pet is up to date on vaccines and fecal exam is clean and current.
- (f) You have followed the rules and regulations of the facility/event you are visiting.

SECTION 30 LAH WEBSITE

LAH recognizes the use of the internet and email as valuable communication tools. However, misuse of these tools can have a negative impact upon our organization. The following policies

address use of the LAH website:

- (a) The LAH website is located at www.lendaheart.org where the public has access to information about LAH.
- (b) No for-profit or non-profit businesses or individual enterprises may provide links to LAH's website on their own websites or in electronic or written communications without permission of the Board of Directors.
- (c) All text, materials and images on the LAH website are controlled and managed by the LAH Board of Directors.
- (d) Only Board authorized individuals with ID and password may make approved additions, modifications, and/or deletions to the LAH website and its contents.

SECTION 31 VOLUNTEERMATTERS

VolunteerMatters is a private, online membership management service accessed via the LAH website. Access to VolunteerMatters is restricted by unique username and password, and is for trainees, associate Volunteers, and Volunteers only. Access to VolunteerMatters is controlled and managed by the Board of Directors.

The LAH directory and calendars are available on the LAH VolunteerMatters website. Official LAH functions and meetings are listed on the calendars. LAH volunteers may sign up to attend functions using these calendars.

Each individual granted access to VolunteerMatters is responsible for maintaining his/her profile information. Each Volunteer profile should include a phone number and email address.

SECTION 32 LAH GROUP EMAIL LIST

The email addresses of LAH trainees and Volunteers may be used as part of our group email list; allmembers@lendaheart.org. Additions, modifications, and deletions to the LAH group email list are controlled and managed by the Board of Directors.

Team Leaders and Board members are authorized to use this list for LAH business ONLY. Examples of LAH business include reminders of upcoming visits, announcements about events, and meeting notices.

The LAH group email list may not be used for transmitting any commercial or advertising material or messages, for personal messages, to send chain letters, for broadcasting views on social, political, religious, cross posting from other lists/organizations, nor for any other non-LAH business matters.

When you reply to a group message, consider if you simply need to reply to the sender (use your email's "Reply" function) or if you really need to reply to everyone on our distribution list ("Reply All" function).

Policies for use of the LAH group email list include the following:

- (a) All email must adhere to the LAH Code of Conduct.

- (b) To use the LAH group email list, you must be a member of the list.
- (c) Users of the LAH group email list should take precautions, such as the use of updated anti-virus software, to avoid introducing any form of computer virus or malware through use of the LAH group email list.

SECTION 33 LEND A HEART ON FACEBOOK AND YOUTUBE

At least two LAH Board Members or Officers administrate LAH's Facebook page and YouTube channel. Since these are open for the public to view or join, all postings must adhere to the LAH Code of Conduct.

SECTION 34 MEDIA GUIDELINES

As LAH grows, we continue to garner more attention from the media. Media exposure helps to highlight all the great work our teams are doing in our community.

If you are contacted or approached by a member of the media who wants to interview you or shoot a video story about you, your therapy pet or LAH please follow these guidelines to ensure you are representing the organization as accurately and professionally as possible.

- (a) If you receive a request from the media for an interview, or television or video shoot please notify a LAH Board Member immediately.
- (b) If the media wants to shoot a video or do a television story at one of the facilities we visit, make sure to get approval from the facility first. Not all facilities welcome certain types of exposure and HIPAA and privacy laws may preclude some facilities from wanting to participate. If the facility does not wish to participate, try suggesting a different facility or venue (one that you have approval for) to the media.
- (c) It is a good idea to educate yourself on the definition of a therapy pet and difference between service animals and therapy pets.
- (d) Signed photo releases must be obtained from any clients or persons that are featured.
- (e) If you plan to participate in an interview, or television or photo shoot with your pet, make sure you are wearing a LAH vest or other LAH logo attire and make sure your pet is clean and freshly groomed.
- (f) If you're asked a question about LAH and you don't know the answer please refer the media to a LAH Board Member.
- (g) Follow all Volunteer guidelines and remember are representing an entire organization!

SECTION 35 DENIAL OF APPLICATION; TERMINATION OF VOLUNTEER STATUS

LAH in its sole and absolute discretion reserves the right to reject any Volunteer application or terminate a Volunteer's participation with LAH at any time.