



Volunteer Policies & Procedures

Please review the following Hand in Paw Volunteer Policies and Procedures.

General Policies and Procedures

1. Represent Hand in Paw (HIP) in a professional manner at all times, and abide by all Standards, Policies and Procedures for Volunteer Teams as outlined in the Hand in Paw Manual Pages 204- 209.
2. Uphold the Code of Ethics for Animal-Assisted Interventions (see HIP Manual Page 38).
3. Your HIP registration and insurance are valid only with animals with whom you have trained and registered as a team through HIP. When representing HIP, you may handle only one animal at a time, and you may not visit with unregistered animals.
4. Be responsible for your animal at all times, considering its needs and humane care first.
5. Keep your animal on-leash, with you holding the leash, at all times.
6. Complete HIP Therapy Team re-evaluation every two years.
7. Complete shadow visits and/or mentoring as required by HIP in order to participate in therapy visits and programs.
8. Keep your animal companion up to date on all vaccinations, parasite tests, and licensing, as required by your municipality and Hand in Paw guidelines.
9. Observe all requirements for privacy and confidentiality including HIPAA laws.
10. Will not solicit or accept fees for our services under any circumstances.
11. Will not be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs while volunteering for HIP.
12. Appropriate HIP uniforms must be worn by you and your animal while visiting as a volunteer Therapy Team.
13. Clean and carefully groom your animal before each visit according to the standards of HIP and infectious control policies of each partner facility.
14. Therapy Teams may only visit partner facilities that are contracted with HIP.
15. Clean up after your animal, inside and outside the partner facility.
16. Abstain from volunteer visits if your animal is in heat, has open cuts, has undergone surgery within seven (7) days, or has been otherwise unwell in the previous 24 hours.

Equipment for Your Therapy Animal

17. Required for every visit are:
 - (a) HIP Uniform
 - (b) HIP photo ID badge
 - (c) Appropriate leash(es) and/or harness as described in #17 below.
18. We recommend an adjustable nylon collars for dogs. NO chains, prongs, pinch, metal or head/Halti collars are permitted while visiting.
19. HIP requires a leash that is 4 feet long for visiting interactions, for maximum flexibility and maneuverability.
20. Cats and small animals such as rabbits, guinea pigs, etc. shall be carried in a basket or on a towel. All animals must wear an appropriate nylon collar or harness and be on leash at all times. For the sake of your animal, use a small crate for entering and exiting the facility.
21. Birds should be transported in cages. If they come out of their cage for visiting, they, too, must have an appropriate harness or leash.

Conducting a Therapy Visit

22. Again, as a handler you may participate in therapy visits with only one animal at a time.
23. You may not bring your young children along with you on your visits. This is a safety issue and is essentially the same as bringing more than one animal.
24. You shall abide by all policies, procedures and precautions of each facility in which you visit.
25. In addition to a background check, you may be required to provide proof of current immunizations in order to visit at certain HIP partner facilities. If you object to such procedures, you will have to visit a different type of facility where these prerequisites are not required.
26. You agree to comply with each facility's procedures for signing in and out when you visit.



27. Give your animal an overall health and attitude evaluation before each visit. If either you or your animal becomes ill, please notify the Team Leader and HIP Volunteer Coordinator as soon as possible.
28. If you are working in a setting with multiple teams, we require that you have them meet before the session, in a neutral area, 15 minutes prior to the visit. The Team Leader will send instructions on where to meet prior to the visit.
29. Do not participate in a therapy visit without appropriate staff presence, knowledge and supervision. Never hesitate to stop a session or procedure that feels unsafe or uncomfortable for your animal, your client, or you.
30. In the event you feel uncomfortable about anything during a therapy visit, contact the Volunteer Coordinator immediately or as soon as possible.
31. Be discreet and professional at all times:
 - a. Act in accordance with HIP confidentiality agreement and HIPAA laws.
 - b. Never take pictures.
 - c. Cell phones must be TURNED OFF during a visit.
 - d. Relate to your animal when you are in public and in uniform using the premise, "Teach softly, speak softly, and guide."
32. Don't allow your animal to kiss or lick a client.
33. Use treats judiciously, so that your animal will not focus on treats as the entire reason for your visits. Treats should only be used when incorporated as part of the therapeutic technique, oftentimes with a physical therapist, and then only when visiting alone.
34. Your animal may not go off-leash at any time. NOTE: Should any accident happen when your dog is off-leash, your HIP liability insurance will not be in effect.
35. You must not feed, clothe, move, or in any way provide patient care or medical assistance to any client.
36. You shall not borrow money or personal items or receive any personal gratuity, gift or tip, such as money or jewelry, from people you visit.
37. You may not give gifts to your clients however, leaving your HIP business card, a bookmark or photo of your animal is appropriate.

Reporting Incidents or Accidents

38. The following procedure explains what to do in case of an incident or accident while working:
 - (a) Remain calm. Stop the activity and secure your animal.
 - (b) End the visit.
 - (c) Get help from facility staff for the injured person. Do not attempt to give medical aid yourself.
 - (d) Immediately contact the facility's supervisor and complete any documentation required by the facility.
 - (e) Notify your team leader and/or the HIP office immediately (seven days a week, at any reasonable time).
 - (f) Fill out an incident Report and submit to HIP Volunteer Coordinator



Acknowledgment of Policies and Procedures

I have read and agree to abide by the above Standards, Policies and Procedures for Hand in Paw Volunteers and by signing this form, I agree to:

Honor my commitment to Hand in Paw

Be my animal's advocate

Be prompt and reliable for all volunteer assignments

Notify the HIP Volunteer Coordinator of any changes to my commitment as a volunteer

Keep all communications with or concerning the clients confidential

Maintain a respectful relationship with Hand in Paw staff, volunteers, and clients

Model professional behavior, through both dress and decorum

Discuss any and all issues with Hand in Paw Volunteer Coordinator

Promote the safety of facility staff, clients, and volunteers by adhering to all Hand in Paw policies and procedures

Signature_____

Date_____