



Dogs on Duty
1624 Elizabeth Ellen Ct
St. Peters, MO 63376

636-544-0988

Dear Friend,

Thank you for your interest in membership with Dogs on Duty Therapy Dogs (DODTD).

Qualifications for DODTD begins with a friendly dog, any breed or mix, and an owner/handler who has the desire to share it with those who are no longer able to own a pet, in a health facility away from their pet, in a camp setting or school or in another facility which would benefit from friendly pets to love on.

Our process begins with a completed application. We will then schedule a handler/dog evaluation. The Tester will observe you with your dog and administer the handler/dog test. This test includes basic handling skills first, and if you and your dog pass, you move to the next step of background check. Once the evaluation comes back with a passed score, you will be invoiced \$100 for your background check, therapy bag and insurance. You will be required to pay \$15 upfront for the background check. If that comes back favorable, then the remainder of the invoice (\$85) will become due for insurance and your therapy bag. Once paid, you will be added to the GroupMe app and be able to attend supervised visits. At least your first 3 visits will be supervised by a senior handler. You will then schedule a time to attend an orientation with one of our Therapy Dog Team Members. This orientation will give you the basic policies and procedures and allow you to ask questions about the program.

The following must be submitted for review and processing for membership.

- DODTD Completed Application complete with Authorization for Background Check
- Release of Claims Form
- DODTD Evaluation form completed by a DODTD Tester/Observer
- Copy of Proof of Rabies vaccination
- Copy of Proof of Physical Exam within 12 months
- Signed Rules Review
- Membership Payment

All of these items must be completed to process your membership in a timely manner.

The Following items are things you will want to bring with you to your initial test that you have scheduled with the Tester/Observer:

- Proof of current rabies vaccination or rabies titer of .05 or > within two years
- Proof of negative fecal within 12 months

- Proof of physical exam within 12 months
- Six foot or shorter leash and DODTD approved collar (see DODTD Member Guidelines)
- Water for dog (have available)
- Bag for clean up (have available)
- Paper towels or towel (have available)

The application, test and a copy of the guidelines are enclosed. You may also find additional information, presentations and forms on our website: www.dogsondutymo.org/DODTD. We look forward to hearing from you!

Dogs on Duty Therapy Dogs Rules and Regulations and Member Guidelines

Failure to adhere to the DODTD Governing Member Guidelines, Code of Ethics or Policies will jeopardize your membership.

The organization

DODTD is a non-profit. Donations are welcome. All requests to use the DOD name, logo or slogan must be submitted in writing to the president. The requestor will be notified in writing whether or not permission is granted. Permission to add the link www.dogsondutymo.org to a personal website is not needed.

Membership is a privilege, not a right, granted by the DOD Board of Directors.

Annual Review: Members must pass an annual member review which shows their familiarity with the DODTD rules. During this review, the handler will agree to a current background check. Renewals will not be finalized until 100% of the documentation has been received and rules are reviewed with 100% accuracy.

Description of therapy work; requirements for members and dogs:

Members: Any person, aged 18 or older may be tested with a dog and apply for membership. Anyone aged 12 through 17 may be tested with a responsible adult and a dog to become a junior member.

Dogs: Any breed or mixed breed of dog may be used for therapy. Dog must be at least 6 months old and have current rabies vaccination. Dog and handler will be tested by an evaluator. Wolf and coyote hybrids can not be accepted due to insurance coverage.

Therapy dog functions, insurance and DODTD ID tag: DOD provides liability insurance. This coverage does not protect you or your dog from injury or illness as a result of participation in this program.

If you do not renew by your renewal date on time, there is no insurance grace period. You will not be allowed to visit locations and will not be covered by insurance until you receive your new membership card. If a claim is filed on your behalf by DOD and it is determined that you were not following the DOD rules at the time of the incident, you may be required to reimburse DOD for any monies paid out on the claim.

A therapy dog function may include, but is not limited to, making visits at a facility such as a hospital, nursing home, library, school, detention center, hospice care center, Veterans Administration, etc.

Therapy visits can also be for community events such as a parade, educational seminar, dog breed showcase, public educational event, or an event promoting and describing DOD or any of the organizations that we support. At such an event, if the dog is displaying the DODTD yellow therapy bandanna, the team is representing DOD. **Dogs may not wear DOD yellow therapy bandanna at any other time.** DOD gear such as t-shirts, collars, black public bandannas, etc are always permissible to wear, however do not indicate DOD insurance coverage.

Members who take their dog to work with them and/or use them in their jobs, including, but not limited to teachers, therapists, doctors or psychologists, are not covered by DODTD insurance when functioning as employees. During such times, the dog must not display the DODTD yellow bandanna. These dogs must also go through more training and conditioning to be facility /comfort dogs and be expected to “work” long periods of time.

Service Dogs: If a member has a dog that is also the member's service dog, the official DODTD therapy dog identification should not be displayed while the service dog is assisting the member in restaurants, stores, flights, etc., and is not acting as a therapy dog. DODTD is not liable for damages caused by the handler's use of medical equipment during visits including, but not limited to wheelchairs, electric chairs, scooters, walkers, canes or crutches while acting as a service dog.

Multiple dogs on a visit: A volunteer may not bring multiple dogs to a visit without prior approval from a DOD board member.

Junior Handler Requirements: The minimum age requirement for a regular DODTD membership is 18. When permitted by the facility, a prospective junior member/handler, aged 12 through 17 may accompany a T/O on one visit before being tested. The junior member/handler **must be accompanied at all times** by a regular DODTD member, with or without a dog, and a parent/guardian during testing and on all visits. Upon reaching the age of 18, the handler is required to contact the office and sign a release of claims for the DODTD member files. Junior handlers are expected to attend at least 1 therapy visit per quarter to remain an active handler. They may also be required to go through 2 evaluations per year to ensure they are continuing to work with the dog.

Visits:

Starting a visit: The visit or event begins as soon as you reach the facility property, including the parking lot. The visit does not end until you leave the facility property. Try to arrive 5-10 minutes early so the dogs can do a meet & greet, go potty and expel some excitement before entering the facility. There must always be 3 or more handlers per visit. If there are not 3 handlers available, the visit will be canceled.

Items required on visits: Handlers must wear their Dogs on Duty T-shirt and ID badges and the dogs must wear their Therapy Dog bandana when representing DODTD on visits or events.

Behavior of Dogs: Dogs must remain under control at all times. Any inappropriate behaviors must be quickly and quietly corrected: barks should be quieted; and jumping/pawing dogs should be quickly moved away while apologizing and checking to see if the person is OK. If a dog becomes unsettled for any reason, the team must leave the situation and re-evaluate the dog. If the dog does not settle, the team must then leave the property. If this means there is only one team left, then that team must also leave.

Ask before entering: Always ask before bringing your dog up to a person for visiting. If you are entering a room, make sure everyone in the room wishes to have the dog visit. If one person does not want a visit, ask that person if it is OK to visit with others in the room. If not, do not enter the room.

Frequency of visits: DODTD requires a minimum of one visit month per handler/dog team. If a team fails to make twelve visits in one year, they must be observed at least one time by a DODTD T/O before renewing their membership for the following year. Please keep in mind that pet friendly events are considered an active visit. If a handler needs to take a leave of absence, they must notify the President or Board of Directors.

Guests on visits: Anyone accompanying a DODTD registered team on a visit (i.e. family member, unregistered spouse, friend) must not require assistance from the handler and must be at least 18 years old. Facilities must give permission for all visitors and the guest must be background checked prior to the visit. Please see the office or a board member for assistance in making this happen.

Facility regulations: Therapy dog teams must strictly adhere to all rules and regulations in each facility. If these rules are unclear, ask a staff member or activities director to explain them. Please be aware of the fact that people may have reactions to substances such as lotion, hand sanitizer, hand wipes and oils and these should be used at a minimum while on a visit. Do not give food, water, or assistance to a patient or resident, even if asked. Notify a staff member if help is needed.

Read and obey all warning signs on room doors, such as “ISOLATION” or “INFECTIOUS, DO NOT ENTER.” Handlers must stay alert to their surrounding at all times. If any facility rules conflict directly with DODTD, please contact the DODTD office.

Walking the dog in a facility: Dogs may not precede handlers down halls, around corners, at doorways or at stairways. Stand back while waiting for an elevator door to open. When the door opens, wait to assure safe exit of passengers. If the elevator is occupied, the handler must ask permission to enter with the dog.

Cellphones: Members/handlers must not make or receive calls or text messages using a cellphone inside a facility, with exceptions made only by the President. Cellphones must be set on silent or vibrate while inside the facility. Social Media sites are off limits while in the facility. Focus must be on the dog and those that we are there to visit. If the use of a phone becomes necessary, handlers must excuse themselves temporarily and complete the call outside the facility. Pictures of residents, students or patients may not be taken by DODTD handlers. If the facility members are taking pictures, ask them to tag Dogs on Duty in those photos if they are posting them and then we can share them. Pictures can be taken of your dog so long as there are no recognizable faces in the picture with them.

Health Requirements

Dog Health Requirements: Dogs must have an annual wellness examination, including a fecal check, by a veterinarian. They must be current on their rabies vaccination and any other vaccines as advised by their veterinarian. Titers are acceptable.

Handler or dog developing disabilities and/or stress: The member/handler must notify the DODTD office if the dog has developed any physical or mental change since the initial testing, or shows signs of physical and/or mental distress during visits. The handler/dog will need to be retested with one observation before continuing any visits.

Grooming Requirements

Dog Grooming Requirements: Participating dogs must be clean and well groomed, have trimmed/filed nails, clean teeth and in good general health.

Handler Grooming Requirements: While participating in therapy visits, handlers must be clean, well groomed and without influence of alcohol and/or drugs that would impair safety or judgement. Handlers must be able to act quickly enough to remove themselves and their dogs without assistance from a facility in the event of an emergency. All visited facilities must be informed of any medical conditions that would affect the team's ability to perform volunteer duties.

Attire and Equipment

Handler Attire: Appropriate fitting jeans or shorts, Dogs on Duty shirt and enclosed shoes such as tennis shoes. **Absolutely NO flip flops!**

Dog Requirement: No retractable leashes allowed. Collars, including slip, buckle, quick release, martingale, limited slip or any other smooth collars made of chain, nylon or leather are acceptable. Any pinch or prong collars should have covers or bandannas over them. Leashes must be 6 feet in length or shorter. The collar should fit snugly enough so the dog cannot easily back out of the collar or slip it off of his/her head. A slip collar should be correctly worn so it releases properly as designed. Head halters and body halters/harnesses made of fabric webbing or leather with metal or plastic buckles are acceptable. Dogs wearing a body halter/harness or a head halter must also wear an approved collar. The leash may be attached to the collar, halter or harness.

Safety Precautions:

Two foot rule: Dogs must be kept at least 2 feet from other dogs and animals at all times while representing DODTD on a visit or event to discourage play, to ensure that dogs have enough personal space for focusing on the person being visited and to prevent any interaction between dogs that could possibly lead to an injury to a third party, handlers or their dogs. If a dog prefers more than 2 feet, the handler should be sure to provide for the dog's needs.

Your dog is your first priority: While participating on an official DODTD visit, handlers must have their attention on their dogs for the safety and welfare of their therapy dogs as well as those whom they visit. Do not become so comfortable that you become careless. Excuse yourself and your dog from any situation you do not believe will be a positive experience for all involved. Never put yourself or your dog in a questionable or threatening situation. If you're not sure or have any doubts, remove yourself.

Stay alert: DODTD handlers must be alert to their surroundings at all times. Handlers may not participate in activities that take their attention from their dogs, including, but not limited to, reading to a group, directing bingo or playing piano.

Only handlers may handle their dogs: Handlers must never leave their dogs alone with staff, patients or visitors. Dogs must be kept on a 6-foot or shorter leash held only by the member/handler. The leash must be held by the member's hand and may not be attached to the member's body, belt, any chair, wall, purse or other person, etc.

Dogs on furniture: The DODTD member/handler must know and strictly adhere to the facility policy concerning dogs on any furniture. This is for all furniture, including but not limited to, chairs, couches, wheelchairs, beds or physical therapy beds/pads.

- If the facility policy allows, and permission from the parent/guardian is given, DODTD allows dogs weighing 15 pounds or less to be placed in laps and dogs weighing 50 pounds or less to be placed onto occupied beds. Dogs weighing more than 50 pounds may never be placed onto occupied beds.
- For safety reasons, DOD will only allow one dog at a time on any occupied furniture as described above.
- Be cautious around patients who might have existing or recent injuries or surgery with regard to placement of the dog so as to not cause an injury with the dog's feet or body weight. Always ask if the person has a sore spot or if there is an area that should be avoided when placing the dog.
- Remember to watch for tubes, lines and other medical equipment.

Legal Issues

Legal Issues Privacy: Observe all rules of privacy and confidentiality as required by HIPAA. Never discuss a patient's health or personal issues with the patient or anyone else.

Expenses and taxes: DODTD members may not provide information regarding whether expenses resulting from volunteer activities are tax deductible. Anyone having any questions about whether certain expenses are tax deductible should be told to see the advice of their tax preparer or the Internal Revenue Service, not other DODTD members, the board of directors or the DOD office.

Incident or Injury: If an incident or injury to an employee, resident or visitor in the facility occurs while representing DODTD:

- Immediately contact the facility's supervisor on duty.
- If the incident is a suspected bite, end the visit immediately.
- Document the incident on all required forms for the facility.
- Immediately contact the DODTD office and report the incident. If after hours or during the weekend, please leave a voice message and make contact with the DODTD office during the next business day.

Suspected dog bite: Regardless of whether they are on DODTD visit or not, if a registered dog is suspected of a dog bite, whether to another dog or person, the incident must be reported to the DODTD office. The dog shall not participate in any pet therapy work until the bite incident is investigated by DOD.

Felonies: If a member has been convicted of a felony that has not been previously reported to the DODTD office, s/he must do so.

In Conclusion: DODTD reserves the right to deny, revoke or not renew membership. At the discretion of the DOD Board of Directors, a handler/dog team may be asked to temporarily or permanently refrain from further visits under the name of DODTD if they fail to comply strictly with these Rules and Regulations. Should this action be necessary, the handler will be requested to return the official DODTD yellow bandanna and membership ID to DODTD office.