

Therapy Dog Handler Ethics Code

1. Handlers should evaluate their dog's health and attitude before each working day.
2. It is permissible for the dog to be off-lead while in a supervised situation where it is working, but it should not be allowed to wander through the facility unsupervised.
3. Be aware and courteous of the places your dog is welcome or allowed in each facility. Students should be taught to "smile and wave" (or other quiet greeting) at the dog in the hall or other less-structured environments to alleviate disruption of students' attention and conduct.
4. Handlers/designated adults will always clean up after the dog, inside or outside the facility.
5. Be aware of small items dropped on the floor and do not allow the dog to rummage through trash containers.
5. Give verbal commands firmly and calmly and praise the dog for exemplary behavior.
6. Students are NEVER to be left alone with a dog; a designated adult must always be present. When the dog is left unattended, it should be put in a kennel with the door latched or in a room or office with the door closed.
7. If treats are used, students should be taught to give the treat with a flat hand or drop the treat on the ground. Treats should only be given under the direct supervision and with permission of the dog handler.
8. Always be alert to signs of stress in the dog. Some signs of stress may be:

- Excessive panting
- Dog jumps or climbs on handler for security
- Dog hides behind handler
- Shaking or tremors, or ears and tail pressed closed to body
- Yawning and changes in facial expression
- Dog looks for doorway or other escape route
- Noticeable change in behavior and/or desire to socialized. Be aware of small items dropped on the floor and do not allow the dog to rummage through trash containers.
- Use the "Leave it!" command if this situation arises.
- When working with disabled persons, the designated adult will assist in commanding and handling the dog.
- Never knowingly put your dog in questionable or threatening situation.
- All ASCD handlers/designated adults will follow the district guidelines to ensure the safety of their dogs, students and staff; in addition, following these guidelines will help provide for the appropriate hygiene and veterinary care for their dogs, ensuring a long and healthy certified therapy dog team relationship.

Owner's Signature

Date

Administor Signature

Date