



**Furry
Friends**
Pet
Assisted
Therapy
Services

Captain's Guidelines

Introduction

The Furry Friends Pet Assisted Therapy Services Captain's Guidelines contains information on the requirements and expectations for captains of Furry Friends teams.

Types of Sites Needing Captains

There are several types of sites that need captains:

- Regular site
 - These are typically hospitals and nursing homes or residential care facilities, with scheduled (usually) monthly visits.
- Off-leash site
 - These are sites where pets are allowed to be off-leash, e.g. San Jose Family Shelter.
 - The captain of an off-leash site must attend the off-leash training class.
 - Any pet who is off-leash must have attended and passed the off-leash training class. (Note: pets who have not attended/passed the off-leash class may participate in these visits but must remain leashed during the visit.)
- Reading Buddies site (schools, libraries)
 - The captain and all members of a Reading Buddies team must attend and pass the Reading Buddies class.
- Special Visits
 - These are any non-standard, one-time visit such as stress relief visits at schools/universities, company sponsored health fairs, etc.

Becoming a Captain

A volunteer can become a captain in several different ways:

- A new site has been approved by the Board of Directors, and a captain is needed in order to begin visits.
- An existing site loses its captain and a new captain is needed in order to continue visiting.
- An upcoming special visit needs a captain for a specific date/time (for example, stress relief visit at high school or university).

In each of these scenarios, an email will be sent to the Furry Friends membership, asking if anyone is interested in serving as captain.

Captain Responsibilities

A captain of a Furry Friends team is responsible for the following:

- Serves as point of contact between Furry Friends and the site or special event contact.
 - For a new site, this includes working with the site contact to establish the day/time of the visit.
- Maintains a positive attitude during the visit and encourages members to do the same.

- Establishes rules for the team visits, including:
 - How far in advance of the visit starting time members are expected to arrive.
 - Whether or not “meet and greet” among the pets is allowed prior to the start of the visit.
 - Ensures all team members follow the established rules documented in the member handbook:
 - Furry Friends attire must be worn on all visits, including a purple leash.
 - Not allowed on any visit: pinch collars, retractable leashes, treats, visitors/observers who are not also Furry Friends members.
 - Each volunteer can have only one animal with them on a visit.
 - If a team member is not in compliance with any of the rules, the captain should remind the member of the rules. If the captain is not comfortable having this conversation, he/she can come to the board and request their assistance.
- Requests new members by contacting Julie Bond or Furry Friends admin.
- Reviews etiquette class evaluations for prospective team members and decides whether the volunteer/animal will be a good fit for the team.
 - Communicates with the prospective volunteer about membership on the team. (Note: this does not apply for special visits.)
 - Informs the new member of the team rules – arrival time, meet and greet, where to toilet the pet, etc.
- Contacts the team members, usually by email, to remind them of the upcoming visit.
- Provides the Furry Friends Admin with attendance information for each visit.
 - Any format is acceptable: email after each visit, spreadsheet, etc.
 - Rosters for special visit attendance must be submitted within one week of the event.
 - Rosters for regular visits must be submitted at least quarterly.
 - This is crucial information for keeping track of active volunteers, and the information is used to determine which volunteers receive service award pins.
- Reviews site rosters provided by the Furry Friends Admin on a quarterly basis. Do not allow members to visit if:
 - They have not paid yearly dues.
 - The pet is not current with shots/vaccinations.
- Fills out an incident report, if required, and submits to the Furry Friends Board of Directors for review. A link to the incident form is on the Captains’ page of the web site.

Captain’s Training

Furry Friends periodically offers a captain’s training class; taking this class is not a requirement in order to become a captain. The Furry Friends Board of Directors and/or an existing team captain will be able to answer any questions and provide guidance.

Signature

Date