



# CMSD School Therapy/Service Dog

## Application

### **Definition:**

A therapy dog is a dog trained to provide affection and comfort to students in the school. The most important characteristic of a therapy dog is its temperament. A good therapy dog must be friendly, patient, confident, at ease in all situations and gentle. Therapy dogs must enjoy human contact and be content to be petted and handled, sometimes clumsily. A therapy dog's primary job is to allow unfamiliar people to make physical contact with it and to enjoy that contact.

Minimum standards for dogs to serve in the school.

- A therapy/service dog must be clean, well-groomed, and not have an offensive odor.
- A therapy/service dog does not urinate or defecate in inappropriate locations.
- A therapy/service dog does not annoy any member of the student's body or school personnel by seeking attention.
- A therapy/service dog does not vocalize unnecessarily.
- A therapy/service dog shows no aggression towards people or other animals.
- A therapy/service dog does not solicit or steal food or other items from student body or school personnel.
- A therapy/service dog does not pose health or safety threat to any student, personnel or other persons.

### **Dog Handler:**

If the dog handler is not being compensated for therapy session, he/she will be considered a volunteer. Before serving in a school, they must follow registration protocols for adult volunteers.

If the dog handler is being compensated for service, he/she will be considered a contractor. Before serving in a school, they must follow protocols to be registered in the RAPTOR Visitor Security System.

**Adult Volunteer Registration Protocols:**

**Step 1:** If dog handler is not being compensated for therapy session, he/she/they will be considered a volunteer. Before serving in a school, they must follow application protocols for adult volunteers. Please visit us [HERE](#).

**Step 2:** Principals and/or a designee (Volunteer Lead); and/or CMSD Department Staff working with volunteers, will follow up with the request and confirm (or deny) with the Volunteer Office the volunteer request for service.

**Step 3:** Once the school administrator or designee confirms the request, volunteers will receive an email with registration and BCI/FBI security check instructions.



**Therapy Dog Requirements & Registration:**

- Proof of current inoculations and proof of health, such as a current health certificate from a veterinarian. This requirement must be met on an annual basis, prior to the start of any school year.
- AKC (American Kennel Club) Therapy Dog Title or other accredited therapy/service dog program.
- School building administrators shall notify parents on an annual basis regarding the presence of therapy dogs in the school building.
- The school district bears no financial responsibility for the care or feeding of the animals.

I \_\_\_\_\_ (please print), am the dog therapy handler for:  
\_\_\_\_\_ (therapy dog's name, please print).

I agree to follow CMSD protocols and requirements listed above, and I am aware that the school building administrator reserves the right to terminate this service at any time and inform volunteer dog therapy handler with 3 to 5 days' notice of their scheduled visit.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Volunteer Handler Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
School Administrator Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date therapy/service

Once this document is completed please send to Volunteer Office via email:  
[Judith.Lozada@clevelandmetroschools.org](mailto:Judith.Lozada@clevelandmetroschools.org)