



Facility Visitation Request Form

Date: _____

Dear Comfort Caring Canines Therapy Dogs Inc. :

We are pleased to extend an invitation to your organization to visit our facility. Visits from your members and their "therapy dogs" are a welcome and valued activity. Comfort Caring Canines Therapy Dog Inc. ("CCC") members can schedule visits through the contact person listed below.

A facility employee will educate/instruct CCC volunteer(s) on facility policies and guidelines as it relates to public health and safety precautions and protocols including COVID-19 precautions. We understand CCC has a member COVID-19 guidelines (attached hereto) and will communicate any facility additions to safety protocols. CCC will not be held responsible for any COVID-19 related event at our facility.

We understand that all dogs visiting our facility need to be on leash at all times and under the control of the handler on record with CCC. Any violations of this rule will be reported back to the organization for appropriate action.

Please feel free to contact this individual with any questions.

Sincerely,

Facility Representative's Signature

Please fill out and print information below:

Facility Name: _____

Address: _____

Contact Person: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

CCC COVID-19 Guidelines has been received and reviewed. (Initial) _____

Is parking available and free of charge for volunteers?: _____

Is this a one-time visit or ongoing? _____

Additional helpful information: _____

RETURN TO VOLUNTEER OR FACILITYREQUESTS@COMFORTCARINGCANINES.COM



Comfort Caring Canines COVID-19 Guidelines

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to decline in our area, all of us at Comfort Caring Canines are excited at the prospect of welcoming new and existing members – human and canine – to the resumption of therapy dog visits. However, since the threat of the COVID-19 virus does still exist, CCC is establishing this COVID-19 guidelines to help minimize the continued spread of the virus and to help assure the safety of our dogs, ourselves, and the many people with whom we interact. These guidelines are in accordance with the *CDC Guidance for Handlers of Service and Therapy Animals* as well as other CDC guidances.

The facilities that CCC serves are diverse – hospitals, libraries, rehabilitation centers, among others. These facilities serve children, the elderly, and the infirm, each with their own particular concerns regarding COVID-19 infection. As a result, some facilities will re-open to therapy dog visits sooner than others, and some will require more stringent COVID-related precautions than what are stated in these guidelines. In these situations, CCC members must follow the more conservative of the precautions.

CCC remains a 100% volunteer organization. Since we do not assign visiting locations, volunteers are free to visit at the facility of their choosing as their schedule allows. It is at the sole discretion of the volunteer if they choose to visit with their CCC therapy dog or not. They are under no obligation to perform visits at any location where the volunteer feels uncomfortable for any reason.

Visiting and Safety Guidance for CCC Therapy Dog Visits

- Handlers must be in good health, not tested COVID positive, and not recently exposed to the virus or to someone ill with the virus. Dogs must not be showing any symptoms of illness.
- Handlers who are fully vaccinated may forego the wearing of a face mask, provided the facility agrees. All other members must wear a facemask (over nose and mouth) and maintain a 6 foot distance from other people. Do not put a mask on the dog.
- Therapy dog/handler teams must not enter any “no contact” designated rooms.
- Before and after every interaction, the handler must wash hands or apply hand sanitizer. Anyone wishing to pet the dog should be encouraged to do the same.
- Likewise, between interactions the dog may be wiped with baby wipes or hand wipes. The dog should never be wiped with chemical disinfectants, alcohol, hydrogen peroxide, or other products, such as hand sanitizer, counter-cleaning wipes, or other industrial or surface cleaners.
- If the therapy dog will be placed on facility furniture, a barrier, such as a sheet or towel that is not shared between patients, must be used.
- If possible, visits should be conducted in outdoor spaces or in conference rooms that allow for greater air flow.
- Do not allow your dog to lick or give “kisses.”
- Do not let other people handle items that go into the dog’s mouth, such as toys and treats, leashes, harnesses, therapy vests and scarves, and food/water bowls.



Vaccinations

Some of the facilities may require proof of vaccination while others may not. We understand that some people have not yet chosen to get the vaccine, for a variety of reasons. That may be the case for some CCC members as well. While unvaccinated members may be able to resume therapy dog visits at facilities that do not require vaccination, we nonetheless strongly encourage all CCC members to get the vaccine. It is the best way to reduce the risk of inadvertent transmission of the virus.

All CCC members, particularly those who remain unvaccinated or who are immunocompromised, must evaluate on your own the scope and degree of risk of infection before you decide whether to resume therapy dog visits. Each member must decide for him- or herself, in consultation with their physician and the facility in question, whether they are willing to accept the risk of infection to themselves and their dogs. CCC assumes no responsibility, legal or otherwise, should a volunteer or therapy dog be involved in a COVID related incident as a result of making a therapy dog visit at any facility or event.

CCC Member's Responsibilities

In addition to becoming familiar with these guidelines, CCC members must also be familiar with the COVID guidelines, if any, of the facility to be visited. Upon the resumption of visits, members should request an opportunity to review the facility's guidelines prior to initial contact with the residents/patients. During subsequent visits, members should inquire as to any changes to the facility's guidelines from that which was previously reviewed.

Members must request each facility they visit to complete and return an updated CCC visitation request form which has a copy of CCC's COVID-19 guidelines attached. This form has been revised from previous versions and will be made available for members to provide to the facility. Completion of the revised form must be done only at the first visit following implementation of these guidelines. The facility may keep the CCC COVID-19 guidelines for their records.

For larger institutions, please contact facilityrequests@comfortcaringcanines.com to see if we already have a completed form on file. You can also check our online system independently under "Opportunities".

Members should be alert to significant revisions to CDC guidance as they pertain to COVID-19. Members are urged to periodically check the *CDC Guidance for Handlers of Service and Therapy Animals* for revisions. This guidance is available at www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/animals/service-therapy-animals.html

Finally, the Board of Directors considers CCC members to be the eyes and ears for what is happening in the facilities that they visit. Members should keep the Board apprised of any unusual situations, facility requirements, or other useful information for the Board to consider when it periodically updates these guidelines.