

HJR 6



Pet Partners

WHAT ARE THERAPY ANIMALS?

- Therapy animals are not the same as service animals or emotional support animals.
- Along with their handler, they visit a wide variety of people including veterans in hospitals, children with learning disabilities, and women in domestic shelters to provide research-based interactions that result in demonstrated positive outcomes.
- In addition to strong obedience skills, these animals have a special aptitude for interacting with members of the public and enjoy doing so.
- Therapy animals are often dogs, but can be other species as well, such as cats, equines, rabbits, guinea pigs, birds, llamas, miniature pigs, and even rats.
- Therapy animals have no special rights of access, except in facilities where they are welcomed. They do not ride in airplane cabins and must abide by - no pets - policies in housing.



Read more about the benefits
[www.petpartners.org/
 benefits-human-animal-bond](http://www.petpartners.org/benefits-human-animal-bond)

About Pet Partners

Pet Partners, formerly known as the Delta Society, is the national leader in demonstrating and promoting the health and wellness benefits of animal-assisted therapy, activities, and education. Since the organization's inception in 1977, the science proving these benefits has become indisputable. With more than 13,000 registered teams making more than 3 million visits annually, Pet Partners serves as the nation's most prestigious nonprofit registering handlers of multiple species as volunteer teams.

Therapy Animal Standards

- Standards are necessary for both the safety of the people involved as well as the therapy animal's welfare.
- Training is just as necessary for the handler. Handlers need working knowledge of relevant best practices, from infection prevention and HIPAA to working with the needs of specific populations.
- Handler-animal teams should be re-evaluated regularly to ensure therapy animals remain suitable as they age.
- Recognizing that animals are asked to participate, their welfare is prioritized; they should enjoy, not simply tolerate, therapy work.
- Safety standards are critical, including requirements for vaccination, diet, and health conditions. Learn more at www.petpartners.org/standards

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Connect with us

PetPartners.org |      

Therapy Animals of Utah Pet Partners serves people of all ages and abilities. Our services are provided by volunteers, with no charge to clients or facilities, so we are able to serve people from every economic level. Because of the size of our modest but growing number of therapy animal teams and our commitment to quality, we focus our activities along the Wasatch front and back. We look forward to a time we are able to develop the infrastructure of mentors and area coordinators to support teams in other areas of Utah that are already requesting our services.

Hospitals

We are proud to have a contract with Intermountain Health Care for service in hospitals throughout Utah, and our teams serve in Ogden Regional Medical Center, Promise Hospital, and Landmark Hospital. Patients and visitors in medical and surgical units, ICU, CCU, orthopedics, pediatrics, oncology, and stressful waiting areas experience the calming, empathetic, and compassionate presence of our therapy teams.

Rehabilitation and Skilled Nursing

Elderly people, adults, and sometimes even adolescents need specialized care after severe accidents and illnesses in rehabilitation and skilled nursing facilities. Visits by our therapy animal teams break up the monotony of challenging physical and occupational therapy sessions and bring motivation, hope, relaxation, and sometimes even the relief of pain.

Assisted Living, Long Term Care, Memory Care, Hospice

As older adults enter specialized care facilities, they often experience loneliness and disconnection. Our therapy animal teams come ready to listen to their stories and reminiscences with interest and quiet attention. Interesting visitors with dogs and cats become friends, lifting isolation and depression.

Adult Mental Health

Adults with mental illness, PTSD, or battling substance use disorders may struggle with anxiety, damaged self-esteem, and depression. Our therapy teams bring them unconditional acceptance, and the physiological changes that occur in the presence of calm, loving animals help them feel more sociable, more verbal, and more able to do the hard work of recovery.

Adolescent and Children's Mental Health

Children and adolescents experience mental illness, and often a lack of trust in adults as well. Therapy animals can assist in the establishment of rapport with therapists, help teach important coping skills, and provide safe and loving touch. Their handlers are important models in listening, caring, and support of their animal partners.

Shelters

Men, women, and children who are displaced and in shelters because of homelessness or violence need a reminder of how uniquely important they are. Our therapy animal teams come to visit and bring back a sense of normalcy and respect, some smiles and laughter to people who might not have a lot to smile about in their daily lives.

Services for People with Disabilities

Our therapy animal teams help to reduce the anxiety of people with disabilities and provide mental and sensory stimulation, as well as concrete examples of successful emotional regulation. People who don't often get a chance to be on the giving end of caring get a chance to nurture the animals in a variety of satisfying ways.

Correctional Facilities

People who are in prison or detention facilities can benefit from the acceptance and rapport that come with our therapy animal teams. They are often motivated to work with their therapist and our therapy animals to understand their past behaviors. Learning how animals are trained can bring insight into the origin and change of human conduct.

Court Programs

Children and adolescents in court situations can begin to relax and tell their stories in the presence of a kind, gentle, well-behaved, and compassionate animal and its human partner. Even in difficult situations of describing abuse, the animal can help the child feel safe enough to talk with the judge.

Schools

The relaxing and empowering presence of therapy animal teams help students in regular and special education classrooms in many ways. Research shows that children reading with animals form positive and successful associations with books, and reading levels improve significantly. Our talented handlers collaborate with their animals and classroom teachers to teach a variety of lessons, from academic to social skills.

Libraries

Therapy animal teams in local libraries add to the joyful family experience of reading together. The animals are accepting, non-judgmental, and calming, while the handlers communicate the animal's interest, questions, and suggestions about the reading materials. Who knew that dogs could be such thoughtful literary fans?

Salt Lake City Airport

Without a doubt, an airport can be a stressful environment. Tired, stressed, or bored travelers with tired, stressed, and bored children are often overjoyed to see our airport therapy dog teams. Some visitors, terrified of flying or traveling for a sad family event, have gratefully written about their calming, reassuring experience with the therapy dogs.

Universities

The cumulative stress of young adults in universities, learning novel concepts, coping with developing relationships, and preparing for often make-or-break exams, can be almost overwhelming. Our therapy animal stress-relief events are always a hit. During almost every event a handler will report that at least one student sat near the animals for almost an hour, quietly stroking until they stood up, smiling, and obviously more relaxed.

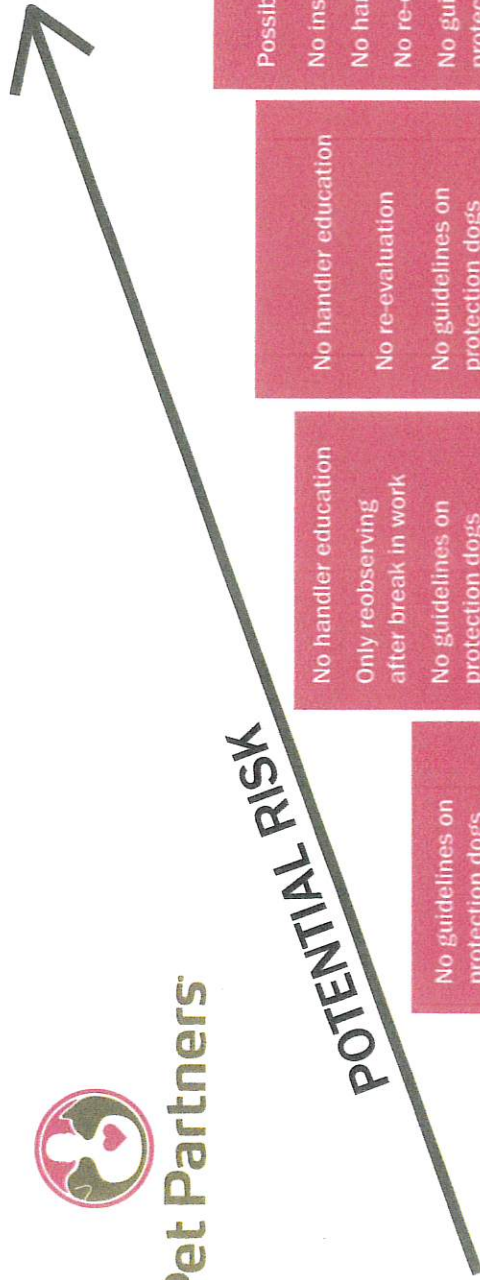
All Rolled into One

Our skilled and talented therapy teams are accustomed to working with a variety of clients in every setting. Many facilities have veterans; people with vision, hearing, physical, or cognitive disabilities; anxiety; and/or pain. No matter the needs of the people they meet, the animals are unperturbed, accepting, and kind. Their handlers act as their leaders and partners. As a team, they bring comfort, love, hope, and healing.

SUMMARY OF RISK: ANIMAL THERAPY PROGRAMS



Pet Partners



	Assessed Risk Tolerance at Major Health System			
	Regional Program	National Program 2	National Program 3	Local Programs
Pet Partners	Insurance \$2M Handler Education Re-evaluation every 2 years No protection dogs No multiple animals No raw diet Complex & predictable status Continuing Education	No handler education Only reobserving after break in work No guidelines on protection dogs No restriction of raw diet Insurance \$5M	No handler education No re-evaluation No guidelines on protection dogs No restriction of raw diet Insurance \$3M	Possibly: No insurance No handler/dog training No re-evaluation No guidelines on protection dogs No restriction of raw diet

The International Association of Human Animal Interaction Organizations (IAHAIO) published a White Paper in July 2014 that states animals in an animal therapy program: 1) should be registered with a national or international organization and 2) registration must include a requirement that the animal be re-evaluated periodically while in service.