


<b>CHAPTER</b> Recipient Rights	<b>CHAPTER</b> 04	<b>SECTION</b> 003	<b>SUBJECT</b> 55
<b>SECTION</b> Individual Rights		<b>DESCRIPTION</b> Therapy Dogs	
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**APPLICATION:**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CMH Staff	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Board Members	<input type="checkbox"/> Provider Network	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Employment Services Providers
<input type="checkbox"/> Employment Services Provider Agencies	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Independent Contractors	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Students	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Interns
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Volunteers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Persons Served		

**POLICY:**

Lapeer County Community Mental Health (LCCMH) recognizes the beneficial use of therapy dogs in the therapeutic setting and will consider use on a case-by-case basis with proof of need provided by the person served and American Kennel Club (AKC) documentation.

**STANDARDS:**

- A. LCCMH will consider the admittance of a therapy dog with AKC registration, therapy dog certification, and If applicable, AKC training level title.
- B. LCCMH recognizes only therapy dogs certified through the AKC or are in training for certification through the AKC.
- C. Handlers are financially responsible for any damages caused by therapy dog.
- D. All therapy dogs will be housebroken. LCCMH is not responsible for any care, supervision of, or clean up after the dog.

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- E. LCCMH requires all therapy dogs to be vaccinated in accordance with state and local laws.
- F. Therapy dogs must be harnessed, leashed, caged, or tethered unless otherwise approved by the Health and Safety Chairperson.
- G. Therapy dogs do not receive protections by the ADA and it is unethical and illegal (under the ADA) to attempt to pass a therapy dog off as a service animal.

**PROCEDURES:**

- A. LCCMH will require the handler to present documentation at the time of the visit, including current vaccination records.
- B. LCCMH will require the handler to present documentation of either the AKC registration number, a Purebred Alternative Listing (PAL) registration number, or a canine partner's registration number assigned by the AKC, at the time of the visit.
- C. LCCMH will collect documentation of the therapy dog's certification if applicable. The therapy dog may have one of the following AKC therapy dog titles:
  - 1. AKC Therapy Dog Novice (THDN): Dog has completed 10 visits
  - 2. AKC Therapy Dog (THD): Dog has completed 50 visits
  - 3. AKC Therapy Dog Advanced (THDA): Dog has completed 100 visits
  - 4. AKC Therapy Dog Excellent (THDX): Dog has completed 200 visits
  - 5. AKC Therapy Dog Distinguished (THDD): Dog has completed 400 visits
- D. It is the responsibility of the handler to keep the therapy dog under control through restrictive devices, voice commands, signal commands, or other effective control mechanisms. The handler must supervise their animal at all times.
- E. LCCMH will accommodate individuals with pet allergies or fear of animals by relocating the handler and therapy dog to a separate area of the facility.
- F. LCCMH staff transporting therapy dogs in agency vehicles will assure the pet hammock is used in order to eliminate pet hair and dander in the vehicle.

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G. LCCMH reserves the right to remove a therapy dog from the premises if the animal is out of control and the handler does not take effective action to control the animal or the animal is not housebroken.

**DEFINITIONS:**

Therapy Dogs: Dog registered with the American Kennel Club and having obtained AKC registration, therapy dog certification, and training level title.

Handler: Person in charge of and responsible for the therapy dog.

**REFERENCES:**

American Kennel Club

**EXHIBITS:**

Handler's Responsibilities

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## HANDLER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

### DEFINITIONS:

Therapy Dogs: Dog registered with the American Kennel Club and having obtained AKC Therapy Dog training, certification, and title.

Handler: Person in charge of and responsible for the therapy dog.

### HANDLERS'S RESPONSIBILITIES:

- All therapy dogs shall be vaccinated in accordance with state and local laws and the handler must provide current proof of such at the time of the visit. Documentation should not be more than 1 year old.
- The handler is responsible for the care and supervision of his/her therapy dog at all times.
- The therapy dog shall be under control of the handler at all times in public or community environments through the use of restrictive devices such as a cage, harness, leash, or tether.
  - Examples of animals out of the handler's control include, but are not limited to, uncontrolled barking, growling, jumping on other people, and running away from the handler.
- A business has the right to deny or revoke access to a therapy dog that disrupts business.
  - Examples of disruptive behavior include, but are not limited to, repeated or excessive barking, disrupting other's enjoyment, growling at others, and posing a threat to the health or safety of others.
- Therapy dogs must be housebroken. Cleaning up after the therapy dog is the sole responsibility of the handler.
- Handlers are financially responsible for any damages caused by the therapy dog.

### REFERENCES:

Fair Housing Act 1998, Reasonable Accommodations