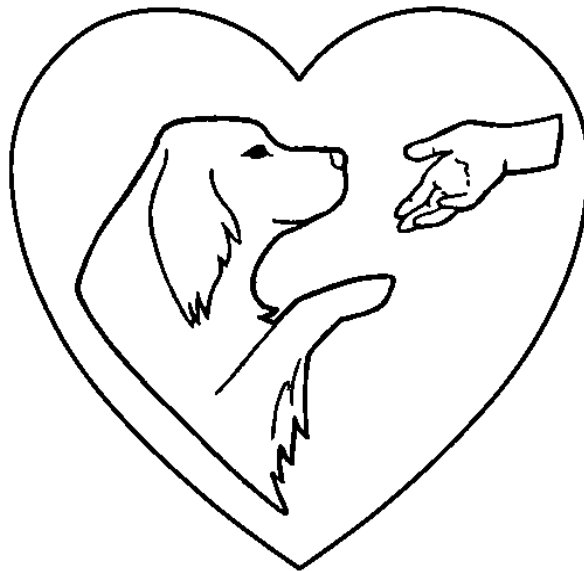


Lend A Heart ♥ Lend A Hand
Animal-Assisted Therapy



Membership Guide

www.lendaheart.org

PO Box 60617, Sacramento CA 95860

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Introduction

Our History

Lend A Heart ♥ Lend A Hand Animal-Assisted Therapy (Lend A Heart / LAH) was founded in March of 1987. The organization was established through the involvement and dedication of local dog club members. This group shared a common interest in providing the Sacramento area with stable, well-trained animals to be used in therapeutic settings. Soon after its inception, LAH was incorporated as a nonprofit, 501(c)(3) charitable organization and continues to hold this identification.

Today, Lend A Heart is a celebration of a variety of individuals and their animal companions making a difference in the greater Sacramento area. Our primary objective is to provide our community with the benefits of animal-assisted therapy through ongoing programs in a wide range of facilities and settings.

Our Mission Statement

Lend A Heart is comprised of volunteers dedicated to sharing hope and understanding through our well-trained, certified handlers and animals. The goal of every interaction is to contribute to the improvement of the client's overall well-being.

Our Values

Integrity—Demonstrating commitment, responsibility and honesty in all of our activities.

Quality—Treating all with respect, dignity and sensitivity while continually striving to improve our services to the community.

Commitment—Maintaining a constancy of purpose to improve both ourselves and our organization through training and teamwork.

Purpose of the Membership Guide

The guidelines compiled here are based on years of involvement and experience in the field of animal-assisted therapy. The information within this guide has been assembled to aid volunteers throughout their association with this organization, and help them and their pets to have the most positive experiences possible.

**We welcome each and every one of you to Lend A Heart
and the joys of animal-assisted therapy.**

1. LAH Membership Requirements

LAH is dedicated to making a difference in the lives of individuals in our community. If you are interested in being a volunteer who touches hundreds of lives each year, bringing smiles, joy and much needed communication, unconditional love, and friendship while interacting with your pet, then this is the organization for you!

We want our volunteers and pets to feel comfortable and secure in the therapy setting. LAH membership requirements are designed to benefit the handler, the pet, and the facilities we serve. While the following steps toward active membership may seem extensive, the time and activities pass quickly:



1.1 Meet Basic Criteria

Becoming an animal-assisted therapy team requires time and commitment. Our commitment to the facilities and clients we serve necessitates that each LAH volunteer, in turn, assumes responsibility for maintaining his/her commitments to LAH. Consider the commitments you are about to make, including the time to prepare you and your pet for each animal-assisted therapy visit; driving to and attending visits regularly; participating in LAH meeting and events; and fundraising.

Take an objective look at your pet:

- Does your pet have the correct temperament for animal-assisted therapy? Does your pet calmly accept and enjoy petting from a variety of people? This trait is the foundation of a candidate for animal-assisted therapy.
- Does your dog listen to your commands? Can your dog heel on a loose leash as well as sit, down, and stay? Obedience is important and demonstrates that you and your dog work as a team—that you are aware of and in control of your dog at all times and that your dog pays attention to you.
- Does your dog exhibit behavior that could give the appearance of aggression? Does your dog bark uncontrollably, growl, lunge, snap or bite? Such behaviors are not acceptable in Lend A Heart.
- Is your pet tolerant of other animals? Can your pet be in the company of other animals and remain calm without becoming overly excited, fearful or aggressive?

All pets must be taught to wait and take treats gently. Your pet should never lunge or snap for goodies. Small dogs and cats should be taught to lie quietly in someone's lap without wiggling. Cats should be encouraged not to knead with their claws. Towels, blankets, or lap pillows are to be used whenever an animal is placed in a client's lap or on a bed, so teach your pet to use these items.

Medium sized dogs may be taught to sit on a box, low step stool or chair when visiting with patients that have little mobility. By utilizing such items the pet's head is brought within easy touching range for the patient. The stool should be lightweight, covered in a non-slip material and large enough for the pet to sit comfortably.

Large dogs should be taught to sit by a person and gently place their head in the lap.

The following criteria must be met to move forward in the LAH membership process:

1. We require that all teams meet all LAH membership requirements, regardless of other certifications the team or animal may already have.
2. Your pet must be a dog, cat or rabbit.
3. Your pet is required to be at least one year of age.
4. Your pet must be spayed or neutered.
5. You must have personally owned your pet for a minimum of six months.
6. All pets must possess a sound temperament and be people-oriented.
7. All dogs must have basic obedience training.

1.2 Apply and Observe

Once you have met the basic criteria and believe you are ready, it's time start the official LAH membership process.

1. Complete the Volunteer Questionnaire on the LAH website. We'll add your contact information to our database to make sure you're notified of upcoming monthly General Membership Meetings, Orientations and Evaluations.
2. Attend a General Membership Meeting with your pet. We meet once a month, usually on the last Thursday of each month at 7:00 pm. You are welcome to come at any point in this process, or if you just want to see what we're about. Your pet should come to the General Membership Meeting as well, and if you're still in training this provides an additional location for you to work on obedience and/or socialization skills with your pet.
3. Review our Facilities Calendar and choose a facility to do a Shadow Visit. You may attend any visit with the exception of those that require clearance before visiting as noted on the calendar. When you've selected a visit of interest, complete the Shadow Visit Request form on our website. Your request will be routed to the Team Leader at that facility and he/she will contact you with any specific information that would be helpful to you in attending that visit, such as directions or parking instructions.
4. Attend a Shadow Visit, and observe how animals are utilized in animal-assisted therapy and how handlers respond to program conditions. You may attend as many Shadow Visits as you like. Do not bring your pet to the Shadow Visit.

1.3 Attend LAH Orientation

LAH Orientations are held three to four times each year. You will receive an email notification of an upcoming Orientation. Follow the instructions on the Orientation notification and RSVP to reserve your spot. Seating is limited and is filled on a first-come, first-served basis. Prior to evaluating, you and your pet must attend an Orientation together.

1. Dogs Only: Once you have reserved a spot for Orientation, make arrangements with your trainer to complete the Lend A Heart Obedience and Behavior Verification form

available on our website. You may use any qualified trainer or animal behaviorist to complete this form. This form **MUST** be completed in person with the trainer working you and your dog through each exercise and recording the trainer's impressions. The trainer is to sign, date and attach their business card to the Verification form. Bring the completed form with you to Orientation or mail it to the LAH mailing address: PO Box 60617, Sacramento CA 95860. The form is valid for one year, or as determined by the LAH Vice President.

2. Attend the scheduled Orientation with your dog, cat or rabbit. During the Orientation, we will cover various aspects of animal-assisted therapy work as well as the organizational structure and required membership obligations. The Orientation also provides us with an opportunity to observe you and your pet's interactions to make a general assessment of your readiness to be successfully evaluated. At the end of the Orientation presentation, the teams that demonstrate obedience, socialization and teamwork will be given the opportunity to schedule an Evaluation.
3. Your pet must clean, brushed and free of fleas. His/her eyes, ears and teeth must be clean and nails trimmed.
4. Small, discreet, kibble-sized treats are permitted at Orientation, but not during Evaluations. No bones, rawhides or chew toys are allowed.
5. We recommend that handlers bring a mat or towel for your dog to lie on. Cats and rabbits must be brought into the Orientation in carriers.
6. Dogs must be on lead at all times. Cats and rabbits must be in harnesses and on leads at all times. Do not allow other people to hold your pet's lead.
7. Handler's overall appearance must be clean and appropriate. Shirts, pants and shoes must be clean and free from dirt, stains, rips or holes.

1.4 Pass LAH Evaluation

LAH Evaluations are scheduled two to four weeks after Orientation. Before your scheduled Evaluation, keep practicing to keep you and your pet's skills sharp and confident. Remember to practice in appropriate public places. Please note, therapy animals are not service animals covered by ADA regulations. You must observe all laws that exclude animals from food and medical establishments, indoor shopping malls, public transportation, public buildings, and public transportation. LAH therapy animals are considered pets and not working service animals. Posing a therapy dog as a service dog is illegal as well as a violation of Lend A Heart policy.

1. Come to the Evaluation as you would to a Lend A Heart client visit.
2. For dogs, the Obedience and Behavior Verification form must be completed before your Evaluation.
3. For a dogs, cats and rabbits, you must complete the LAH Health Screening Form with your veterinarian and bring it with you to the Evaluation.
4. Attend your scheduled Evaluation. You will either pass the Evaluation, or you may have some items that the LAH Evaluators will want you to work on to become a successful animal-assisted therapy team. You may be evaluated again if you and your pet are not ready to pass Evaluation.

1.5 Probationary Membership

If you and your pet are successfully evaluated, you will become a Trainee and enter the three - month probationary membership period required of all LAH therapy teams. This training period is a time for new handlers to ask questions and learn by example.

1. Trainees must wear a red shirt.
2. During this period of time, you and your pet must attend a minimum of six visits. You may attend as many visits as you like, but LAH requires a minimum of six.
3. For each program you attend while a Trainee, call or email each Team Leader at least 24 hours in advance to let him/her know you will be coming.
4. You will carry a training form that the Team Leaders at each facility will use to document your visit. Team Leaders will give both verbal and written positive feedback and constructive improvement suggestions or requirements. The LAH Officers, Board, and members will assist you in developing and improving your animal-assisted therapy skills and are following LAH guidelines. Keep in mind that LAH therapy teams endeavor to improve skills, regardless of how long they have been volunteering.
5. When your three months of trainee membership are complete, mail or give the training form to the LAH Vice President.
6. Trainees are encouraged to participate in LAH public education and fundraising events.

At the end of the probationary period, the LAH Vice President and his/her committees will review your visit form with Team Leaders' feedback and make a decision as to whether you and your pet are ready for active LAH membership. Some teams need an additional period of training to reach the required membership skill level.

1.6 Active Membership

Upon successful completion of all of the above, you and your pet are eligible for active LAH membership as an LAH certified animal-assisted therapy team. You will receive a Certificate of Membership stating that you and your pet are a Lend A Heart animal-assisted therapy team. **You are certified as an animal-assisted therapy team for official LAH functions ONLY. Official functions are found on the LAH calendars.** You will be able to purchase your LAH vest and/or polo shirt, and optional LAH Therapy Dog vest. Handler and dog vests are worn ONLY to LAH programs and events.

1. All active members are required to obtain LAH ID name tags, LAH pet ID tags, member's vest and/or LAH logo wear (red or white only) to wear at visits and public events. LAH vests, shirts, IDs, and pet scarves and pet vests are to be worn ONLY at official Lend A Heart functions. Official functions are those listed on the monthly calendars.
2. To remain an active member; a volunteer must participate with each LAH animal in a minimum of two therapy programs within each month, and work a minimum of four hours at events or fundraisers each year.
3. You must keep your pet healthy and current on all necessary vaccinations at all times. Members are required to provide proof of annual required veterinary examination of your pet, required vaccinations, and negative annual fecal examinations. Expiration dates must be recorded in the member's profile in our online membership management system, VolunteerMatters (www.volunteermatters.com/hendaheart). Proof of vaccinations and negative fecal results must be carried by LAH teams, and be provided to any Team Leader or LAH Board Members upon request. Such proof can be provided

by veterinary signature on the authorized LAH Health Screening form, or a printout of your veterinary records (usually provided by your vet). If you cannot show the required health information to a Team Leader or Board Member, your membership may be suspended until the information is obtained. Failure to update the required health information in VolunteerMatters within four (4) months of its expiration date will result in termination of membership and require reapplication to Lend A Heart.

4. Communication between volunteers is key to the success of our organization. As a courtesy, sign up for each visit or event on VolunteerMatters, or email/call the Team Leaders of programs you plan to attend and let them know you are coming. If you are unable to attend a program you have signed up to attend, please withdraw using VolunteerMatters.
5. Active LAH members may purchase the LAH Therapy Dog vest. The LAH Therapy Dog vest is worn by your LAH-certified dog (no other pet may wear the LAH Therapy Dog vest) at official LAH visits and events ONLY. Team Leaders and Event Chairs will determine if it is appropriate for dogs to wear the LAH Therapy Dog vest at their programs. The LAH Therapy Dog vest must never be worn at any other times in public. The vest must be removed immediately after the LAH program or event.

Posing a therapy dog as a service dog is illegal as well as a violation of Lend A Heart policy. As stated previously, therapy animals are not service animals covered by ADA regulations. Never use the LAH Therapy Dog vest to gain access to store, restaurants and medical establishments, indoor shopping malls, public transportation, public buildings, public transportation or for any purpose other than LAH official visits and events. The proper use of the LAH Therapy Dog vest is of utmost importance. Any member violating the LAH Therapy Dog vest use policy will be terminated from membership.

1.6.1 Leave of Absence

If you or your pet will not be able to attend programs regularly for an extended period of time (more than four weeks), contact the LAH President to request a Leave of Absence. Those taking a leave over four months may need to be re-evaluated prior to attending programs, and may need to reapply. You should also notify the Team Leaders of the programs you regularly attend regarding your leave.

1.6.2 Active Member Concerns

Board Members, Team Leaders, and Event Chairs are responsible for handling active member concerns before, during, and after programs and events. Concerns include but not limited to: dirty animal; growling/hissing; urination; and handler not abiding by LAH Membership Guide or Bylaws. Board members, Team Leaders, and Event Chairs will discuss concerns with members and document concerns using the LAH Incident Report form.

Incident reports are filed with the President. A committee of at least three officers will review the Incident Report and meet with the parties named to determine the merit of the report. If the incident is resolved pursuant to the committee's meetings, no action will be taken. If the incident is found to have merit, the committee will take action. Actions may include warnings, recommendations, probation, or any other action the committee deems appropriate, up to and including a recommendation to the LAH Board for termination of membership.

After a four-month period of sporadic or no participation in regular therapy programs, LAH teams may be required to re-apply for membership and re-evaluate (this does not include those members who are officially on a Leave of Absence).

1.6.3 Puppies and Kittens

Only handlers who have previously been LAH certified with another animal and have been a member in good standing for six months or more are eligible to use animals younger than one year of age.

1. Puppies and kittens may not visit under any circumstances before they are four months old and are fully vaccinated.
2. Puppies and kittens must be evaluated by an LAH Evaluator prior to their first visit. Young animals may be re-evaluated at any time to determine their continued appropriateness to visit facilities prior to certification.
3. Young animals used in LAH therapy programs are eligible for LAH Evaluation after eight months of age, and must pass LAH Evaluation by 15 to 18 months of age. The appropriate age will be determined by the maturity of the pet and verified by an LAH Evaluator.
4. If the young animal does not pass LAH Evaluation by age 15 to 18 months, the animal will not be allowed to participate in programs until LAH Evaluation has been completed.
5. Puppies and kittens will not wear LAH ID tags until they pass LAH Evaluation.

1.6.4 LAH Members with Multiple Pets

LAH members may handle multiple pets in compliance with the following:

1. You must be an active member in good standing for six months or more, having demonstrated regular program attendance.
2. You must follow the membership requirements, beginning with completion of the Volunteer Questionnaire.
3. Under no circumstances may the member bring more than one LAH therapy animal to any program at any one time.

1.6.5 Junior Handler

LAH grants Junior Handler status to children between 10 and 17 years of age. Junior Handlers are considered members and must go through the regular LAH membership process. However, Junior Handlers are required to attend four regular LAH visits in the three-month training/probation period. Once passed into Active Membership, Junior Handlers are required to attend therapy programs a minimum of once (one visit) per month and contribute at least two hours per year at fundraisers and events. Each Junior Handler must be accompanied by an adult at all times; both are expected to follow LAH guidelines.

1.6.6 Associate Member

LAH grants Associate Membership to individuals who support our organization's goals and wish to donate time during fundraisers, at events, and so forth. These individuals are not LAH pet handlers. Each individual desiring to become an Associate Member will complete the LAH Volunteer Questionnaire. An Associate Member may purchase the LAH vest (for humans) and/or logo wear for official LAH visits and events.

1.6.7 Children at LAH Programs

With permission from the Team Leader, active LAH members (those who have passed probationary membership) may bring children over the age of eight (8) to LAH programs and

events. The LAH member must sign a waiver and accept responsibility for making sure the child complies with LAH guidelines and facility requirements. Children at LAH programs may not directly handle a pet, nor interfere with the handler's attention to his/her pet. Team Leaders and members should use common sense in the types of programs that are appropriate for children to attend.

2. LAH Program Requirements

LAH maintains group insurance that covers participation in official Lend A Heart functions. This policy covers injuries incurred by others in connection with you and your pet's visit. LAH's insurance policy does not cover LAH teams themselves for any incidents occurring at programs and facilities outside of LAH.

The standard length of a pet therapy visit is one hour. Allow time before and after the visit for your pet to rest. All animals that attend must be on probation and/or active LAH therapy animals. Guest are always welcome to attend LAH programs without their pets and must follow LAH facility etiquette (refer to section 2.2 During the Program).

Remember that all LAH handlers are required to carry health records for their pets at every LAH program and event. Health records include proof of required vaccinations and a negative result for an annual fecal exam. Team Leaders will periodically check the health records of animals. If a handler cannot show up-to-date health records to the Team Leader, the handler and pet will not be able to visit until the records are provided.

Team Leaders record attendance in VolunteerMatters. This creates a record for insurance purposes as well as documenting that members are maintaining active status with LAH. It is a good idea to verify your attendance by going to the "Volunteering" tab in your VolunteerMatters profile.

2.1 Before The Program

Be certain of the time and location of the facility you are scheduled to visit. See the LAH calendars in VolunteerMatters for specifics about facilities. LAH regularly schedules programs and events months in advance so you are able to plan for these activities. Please be sure that the Team or Event Leader is aware that you are planning to attend a particular function so she/he can better prepare for a successful program. Sign up or call/email the Team or Event Leader.

Many animal-assisted therapy programs take place in health care facilities. It is imperative that both the handler and the pet be healthy and clean. The majority of residents in the facilities we visit have reduced immunity and we do not want to endanger them. If you and your pet are scheduled for an activity and one of you is ill, let your Team Leader know that you will not be attending and withdraw from the visit. If you have a question about how you or your pet's health would be perceived, contact your Team Leader immediately to determine whether you should attend.

2.1.1 General Program Guidelines

The following general guidelines are to be observed:

- Bring items that your pet will need or utilize during the program. The following items are recommended: 1) water and a bowl; 2) bags, "pooper scooper" or other equipment to clean up after your pet; 3) a towel - should the ground be wet

or to keep muzzle free of drool; 4) a brush for “sprucing up” before entering a facility; 5) lint or tape brush to remove stray animal hair from clients; and 6) hand sanitizer.

- Never allow your pet to be off leash at a facility. Be certain you have control of your pet at all times, including the parking and outdoor areas.
- Do not allow another LAH trainee or member to hold your pet’s leash.
- Arrive at the facility ten to fifteen minutes early, to meet with the Team Leader and prepare for the visit.
- Pets must be clean, brushed and free of fleas. The use of flea collars, powders, sprays or dips is not permitted. Any pet using flea drops must have the treatment applied a minimum of seven days prior to attending any therapy programs.
- Clean the pet’s ears, remove any drainage matter from eyes and check pet’s breath (if sour give the teeth a quick brushing).
- Do not cut or trim toenails within two or three days prior to a visit, as they will be rough and may scratch a resident. If you are planning to clip your pet’s nails within a day or two of a program, take extra time to file the nails as well or use a nail grinder.
- Assess overall health and attitude of the animal. DO NOT take your pet if he/she is feeling out of sorts; has hot spots or open lesions. If your pet is on any type of medication that could cause excessive urination, diarrhea or vomiting, please do not attend programs until the end of the treatment cycle.
- If you are a trainee, give your training form to the Team Leader (or designee).

2.1.2 Attire and Equipment

- At official LAH functions, all trainees and members must wear apparel identifying them as LAH teams or volunteers. Take pride in your team’s appearance—both you and your pet. LAH-approved equipment promotes the safety of our pets as well as those we serve.
- Dogs are to use a flat, non-slip quick release collar, a martingale with a plastic quick-release buckle, or a dog harness with a single, quick release mechanism, such as an Easy Walker. Choke chains, buckle, pinch or slip collars, Halties, figure 8s, chains or any other type of restrictive collars are not permitted. Headgear, Gentle Leaders, or muzzles are not allowed. Cats and rabbits are to use a harness and leash.
- All leashes are to be a maximum of 4 feet in length; larger dogs may be placed on shorter leashes such as a traffic lead. Flexi, bungee or coiled type leads are NOT permitted.
- The LAH Team Leader, Officer or Board member may require specific equipment for individual teams. If directed to use specific equipment, trainees and members must comply.
- Body piercing on animals, including spacers, are not to be worn during LAH animal-assisted therapy visits.
- The appearance of trainees and members must be clean and neat. Pet equipment must be clean as well. Attire must be professional and appropriate.

Since many of the facilities we visit keep the room temperature rather high, nice jeans or slacks are suggested with conservative shorts acceptable for hot weather. Members wear the LAH red vest with a white shirt, or LAH logo apparel. Members wear the LAH identification name tag. Trainees wear a red shirt or red LAH logo shirt and the trainee name tag. Shirts, pants and shoes must be clean and free of rips, stains, holes and dirt.

2.2 During the Program

First and foremost, our commitment to the clients we serve is our highest priority. Lend A Heart therapy teams strive to perform consistently at animal-assisted therapy visits. Please take time to read, understand, and follow these guidelines.

- NEVER drop your leash while visiting with a client, walking through a facility, or when socializing with LAH teams or facility staff after a visit. Under the direction of the Team Leader, some LAH programs have a demonstration of obedience or tricks at the start of group visits. With the Team Leader's permission, you may perform off-leash demonstrations with your dog at this time ONLY. No clients may visit with your therapy pet while he/she is off leash.
- NEVER assist a client getting in or out of a bed or chair. While it may seem cruel or heartless not to give aid, you are not trained or insured for this activity. Your best intentions in assisting could result in pain or injury to someone you truly want to help. Instead, call an authorized staff member for help.
- Take breaks as often as needed. If possible, inform the Team Leader or another LAH member when you are taking a break.
- Animals should not be allowed to relieve themselves near any entrance or on any lawn of a facility. Be sure to go to an area well away from the building and always clean up after your pet.
- Check with each Team Leader for the boundaries on the use of treats at each individual facility. Treats can distract a dog's ability to focus on pet therapy. Since our purpose is to provide animal-assisted therapy, we need to be mindful of how the use of food can prevent other dogs from being able to focus on visiting with clients. Use small, discreet, kibble-sized treats only. Bones, rawhides or chew toys are not allowed at visits, meetings or events. Plastic bags to hold treats can also distract the attention of other dogs.
- No one other than the LAH handler may work with his/her pet at any LAH function. Do not have another individual (including a client, LAH trainee/member, or facility staff member) handle your animal.
- Your pet's leash may not dangle or trail on the floor. This could cause a client or staff person to trip and be seriously hurt, as well as possibly injure the animal.
- Do not secure/tie your leash to a chair leg or leave your pet during a visit or event. Use a crate or X-pen during events, if needed.
- Take every precaution to help ensure that your pet does not urinate in a facility. If an accident does occur, clean it up immediately and take your pet outdoors. Inform the Team Leader and discuss possible causes and solutions to this situation so it does not occur again.

- Never let your pet lick the floor and discourage your pet from licking clients. Medications, disinfectants and human wastes/fluids can make your pet seriously ill or even be fatal.
- Your dog may not bark continuously. An occasional bark is acceptable, but constant barking is extremely disruptive and is not permitted. Larger dogs with deeper, louder voices should be more restrained from barking as their bark can scare an unprepared client or staff person.
- Growling, hissing, lunging, and/or snapping/biting at other animals or people is unacceptable. Such behavior will be reported on the LAH Incident Report form. If problems of this nature continue to arise, the team's membership may be terminated. Be aware if your pet is uncomfortable or stressed, and remove your pet from the visit. Do not put others at risk.
- Know visually where your pet is and what he/she is doing at all times during the visit, for the clients' safety as well as your pets'. You must be continually aware of any inappropriate behavior so that every client and LAH team is able to have a pleasant, safe, and successful visit.
- If you see a problem occurring or have a concern about another LAH team before, during, or after a visit, event or meeting, you are required to report it as soon as possible to the Team Leader, Event Chairperson, or LAH Board member. Problems and concerns include but are not limited to: dirty animal; growling; lunging; handler not abiding by LAH guidelines or Bylaws, etc.
- Correct your pet privately. If your pet makes a mistake during a demonstration, do not correct or repeat the exercise; programs are presentations, not training exercises.
- If possible, have a facility staff member accompany you on your room visits or group therapy programs. Their input and knowledge of residents can make our visit more productive.
- For room visits, look at entryways to ensure access to the client is not restricted due to medical needs, infectious conditions or other factors. Notices regarding room entry are commonly posted near room numbers or name plates.
- Always ask a client if he or she would like to have the pet visit before approaching them too closely. Some people could become frightened or feel threatened, and react adversely. Never enter an individual's room without knocking and asking permission first. Always respect the client's privacy!
- When a client is visiting with your pet, be ready to remove the animal at any sign of discomfort or stress. Never leave your pet anywhere unattended. Always hold the leash and remain in control.
- Always be alert to protect your pet's tail and/or paws from being accidentally run over by wheelchairs or walkers. Exercise extreme caution when around clients who appear frail, unsteady walking, on crutches, etc. Make certain that your pet does not throw them off balance or cause them to fall.
- If you move anything (bed table, bed rail, chair, etc.) during a visit, always be sure and return it to its original position before leaving.
- Refrain from discussing political, ethnic, religious, discriminatory or potentially discriminatory topics while representing LAH at any function.

2.3 After the Program

- Remove the LAH Therapy Dog vest if your dog is wearing one.
- Praise your pet and offer a favorite treat as a special reward for a job well done.
- Evaluate the visit with the other volunteers and your Team Leader, while considering ways to improve your next visit. For example, shorter or longer time frame, fewer clients to visit, more verbal reinforcement, breaks, and so forth.
- Realize and respect that most animals will be exhausted after your visit. The stimulation and excitement is more than most of us could imagine. Your pet should be offered water and will need a long, quiet rest period.
- If you are a trainee, the Team Leader (or designee) will fill out your training form. Team Leaders may not fill out the training form of their own pet on probation, but must be observed by another Team Leader or an LAH member of a year or more in good standing.
- No one may fill out the training form of any trainees or probationary pets that are part of their own family, or are deemed as familiar as family as designated by the Vice President. An appropriate alternative as described above should be in observance and completed on the training form for the visit.

3. LAH Organizational Policies

3.1 LAH Trainee and Member Information

The LAH Secretary maintains files containing each member's Volunteer Questionnaire, LAH Evaluation documents, and other pertinent information. The LAH Vice President maintains trainees' files.

Personal contact information for trainees and members is maintained on VolunteerMatters and is monitored by the LAH Secretary. No one may use the contact information of trainees and members for non-LAH business without the permission of individual trainees and/or members.

3.2 Proper use of LAH Website and Group Email List

Lend A Heart recognizes the use of the Internet and email as valuable communication tools. However, misuse of these tools can have a negative impact upon our organization. Please read, understand, and comply with the information that follows.

3.2.1 www.lendaheart.org

The LAH website is located at www.lendaheart.org. The public has access to information about LAH and may complete the LAH Volunteer Questionnaire, request a Shadow Visit, and view general information.

No for-profit or non-profit businesses or individual enterprises may provide links to LAH's website on their own websites or in electronic or written communications without permission of the Board of Directors. All text, materials, and images on the LAH website are controlled and managed by the LAH Board of Directors. Only individuals authorized by the Board and with ID and password may make approved additions, modifications, and/or deletions to the LAH website and its contents.

3.2.2 VolunteerMatters

VolunteerMatters is an online membership management service accessed at www.lendaheart.org/volunteermatters. Access to VolunteerMatters is restricted by unique username and password, and is for trainees, associate members, and members only. Access to VolunteerMatter is controlled and managed by the Board of Directors.

The LAH directory and calendars are available on the LAH VolunteerMatters website. Official LAH functions and meetings are listed on the calendars. You may sign up to attend functions using these calendars.

Each individual granted access to VolunteerMatters is responsible for keeping his/her profile up-to-date.

3.2.3 members@lendaheart.org

The email addresses of LAH trainees and members may be used as part of our group email list; members@lendaheart.org. Additions, modifications, and deletions to the LAH group email list are controlled and managed by the Board of Directors.

The group email list is for LAH business ONLY. Examples of LAH business include reminders of upcoming visits, announcements about events, and meeting notices.

The LAH group email list may not be used for transmitting any commercial or advertising material or messages, for personal messages, to send chain letters, for broadcasting views on social, political, religious, cross posting from other lists/organizations, nor for any other non-LAH business matters.

Policies for use of the LAH group email list include the following:

- All email must adhere to the LAH Code of Conduct.
- To use the LAH group email list, you must be a member of the list.
- Users of the LAH group email list should take precautions, such as the use of updated anti-virus software, to avoid introducing any form of computer virus or malware through use of the LAH group email list.
- You must address the email to members@lendaheart.org as the only recipient. If you add other email addresses, the email message may not be delivered.
- Email messages with attachments may not be delivered. If you need to email an attachment, send a copy with the attachment to lendaheart.aat@gmail.com for approval by the President or Secretary.

3.2.4 Lend A Heart on Facebook

LAH's Facebook page is administrated by at least two LAH Board Members or Officers. Since this is open for the public to view or join, all postings must adhere to the LAH Code of Conduct. Do not post photos that show clients' faces or identity unless you have a photo release form signed by the client.

3.3 Code of Conduct

LAH respects, values, and welcomes diversity in our organization, as well as in the facilities and populations we serve. We expect all LAH trainees and members to act with the highest standards of honesty and ethical conduct while volunteering with and representing our

organization. In all cases, if you are unsure about the appropriateness of an activity or action, seek assistance from the LAH Board of Directors.

LAH volunteers must treat LAH colleagues, clients, and the public with courtesy and respect. At LAH functions, all trainees and members must avoid behavior that creates an atmosphere of hostility or intimidation. Harassment includes verbal, physical, and visual conduct that creates an intimidating, offensive, or hostile environment or that interferes with LAH activities.

Seek to tolerate differences between other members and clients. Diffuse rather than escalate misunderstandings. Do not speak disparagingly about other LAH members, events, teams, facilities or clients. If there is a grievance that cannot be worked out, address it with a Team Leader, LAH Board Member or file an Incident Report with the President.

LAH members or their families shall not obtain financial gain from Lend A Heart. Members shall not use personal contact information to solicit business.

3.4 General LAH Volunteer Principles

DO live up to the responsibility and commitment of your volunteer service role. Service work is not something that can be done in a few odd hours when there is nothing else more exciting to do. Rather, service work is a responsibility that requires a definite allotment of time, energy, intelligence, and a real desire to prepare adequately for the job.

DO be present and on time for every commitment you make. People are looking forward to your pet's visit and the time you share. If you find yourself unable to meet an obligation, notify the Team Leader as far in advance as possible. Remember - if you don't come, someone will be disappointed.

DO respect the confidential aspects of your assignment, and the dignity and privacy of the people with whom you work.

DO show empathy to people; don't show sympathy. Empathy is the ability to relate to another and understand their feelings without condescension and over-involvement.

Do treat fellow LAH members respectfully and politely.

DO be responsible at all times for your animal. First consider the animal's needs and humane care. Always stay with your pet and in control of the situation.

DO become involved, in a warm and natural manner, with the people you meet. Don't become over-involved and, if in doubt, discuss your feelings with a Team Leader.

DO be optimistic about life in general and an individual's outlook in particular. But don't encourage unrealistic goals and attitudes.

DO be honest and genuine at all times. Be friendly while having fun yourself.

DO be part of the team. Be willing to accept supervision, instruction and guidance from the LAH Team Leader and/or facility staff member.

DO ask a staff member, Team Leader or coordinator about anything you do not understand. Don't harbor any doubts or frustrations.

DO keep on learning, training and working toward becoming the best therapy team possible!

Remember: Your time and commitment are appreciated by all who meet and work with you and your pet. You are part of a group that cares about the service it is performing in our community.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR EFFORTS!