

# PRAAT Volunteer Contract

## **Patchogue Rotary Animal Assisted Therapy, Inc. Volunteer Contract**

Patchogue Rotary Animal Assisted Therapy, Inc. (hereinafter "PRAAT") is a not-for-profit corporation founded by members of the Rotary Club of Patchogue, Inc. The mission of PRAAT is to enhance the physical and mental well being of people residing in long and short-term residential health care facilities by promoting and fostering the human/animal bond. Critical to the operation and success of PRAAT is participation by volunteers. Volunteers are the life of PRAAT and without volunteers and their dogs, PRAAT will not be able to fulfill its mission. PRAAT does charge a fee for visits made to various hospitals, nursing homes, rehabilitation facilities, and assisted living quarters (hereinafter "facility") and accepts tax-deductible contributions. PRAAT is a charitable foundation in which some of the net proceeds generated by PRAAT will be donated to charities and other worthy causes within the community in accordance with 501 (c) 3 of the Internal Revenue Code.

All PRAAT volunteers and their dogs must participate and pass in the following.

### **SCREENING**

Dogs are put through different situations and obstacles to determine how they will respond to stressful situations they might encounter at facilities.

### **TRAINING**

Basic obedience lessons are required before becoming active with PRAAT. The volunteer will pay for this training. Training takes eight weeks and the commands taught are: sit, stay, down, heel, come and leave it as well as basic house manners. Dogs learn to recognize their owners as the boss and to respect his/her authority. The volunteers are evaluated by the trainer and a PRAAT coordinator throughout these lessons and must demonstrate steady progress and control of their dog. If at the end of the 8-week training period the volunteer is not able to demonstrate control of his/her dog, the volunteer may need to continue training at his/her own expense. PRAAT offers training evaluations to the owners that have proof of completing obedience classes with their dog. If they can demonstrate they have fully mastered the skills, they will be permitted to bypass the training class.

### **FINAL EVALUATION**

One of the PRAAT coordinators will escort the volunteer and their dog into one of the participating facilities and evaluate them in a real life situation visiting with residents.

### **HEALTH MAINTENANCE**

All volunteers must have their dogs in good physical condition and their health care must be maintained on a regular basis in accordance with the guidelines set forth by PRAAT. At the present time the guidelines are as follows but are subject to change:

1. Volunteers must keep their dogs groomed and in good health. They must be examined once a year by a New York State licensed veterinarian. Volunteers must give PRAAT access to the relevant medical information from whichever veterinary facility they choose to use. Only dogs whose health care is administered by a hospital that has a regular doctor patient relationship will be accepted.

## 2. Vaccinations:

- Rabies
- Distemper, Parvo
- Kennel Cough (*Bordetella bronchiseptica*)
- Annual Heartworm Test
- Annual Fecal (intestinal parasite examination)
- Preventative Parasite Control (fleas, ticks, heartworm, intestinal parasites) 12 months a year

In order to insure that all participating dogs meet the guidelines with PRAAT, every volunteer must initial the release (on the bottom of this page) allowing PRAAT to have access to their dog's health/medical records. Volunteers are also required to advise PRAAT in writing, any time that their dog has changed veterinarians, any instance of a major illness, or any incident of major misconduct by the dog immediately upon learning of the same. PRAAT in its sole discretion will have the authority to determine whether a dog's health or behavior will allow the dog to continue to participate with PRAAT.

### **VISITS**

All volunteers and their dogs will be required to make two visits per month to a PRAAT approved facility for one year. Failure by a volunteer and his/her dog to make the appropriate visits without the consent of PRAAT will be grounds for expulsion from the program.

When making visits to PRAAT approved facilities, the following is expected of the volunteer team:

1. Dogs must be well groomed, well mannered, and must wear the appropriate training collar and PRAAT vest at all times.
2. Volunteers should dress appropriately and always hold on to the leash.
3. Child volunteers (11 yrs. +) must be accompanied by an adult and be with that adult at all times during the visit. A volunteer must get approval from the facility and PRAAT before taking a child to the facility.

No volunteer shall be permitted to solicit any facility (whether associated with PRAAT or not), or make any independent visits without the consent and approval of PRAAT. All visits by a volunteer and his/her dog, must be approved and scheduled by PRAAT staff. Failure to abide by this requirement shall be grounds for immediate termination from the program.

If PRAAT feels that a particular volunteer jeopardizes the integrity of the program or represents a danger to the residents we are entrusted to serve, PRAAT has the right to terminate this agreement and to terminate a volunteer's participation as a PRAAT volunteer.

I, \_\_\_\_\_ hereby agree to the terms and conditions of this contract.

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Volunteer signature

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Volunteer signature

I give my permission for PRAAT to have access to \_\_\_\_\_ records. \_\_\_\_\_

Initials \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
PRAAT Representative signature