

Animal-Assisted Therapy Consent and Release of Liability Form

Animal-Assisted Therapy (ATT) is a type of therapy that incorporates human-animal interactions into a therapeutic treatment process. It is considered an adjunct to existing therapy, and is led by a mental health professional trained to work with a certified animal. ATT is incorporated as an integral part of the treatment process by using the human-animal bond in goal-directed interventions.

Benefits of AAT:

- Emotion recognition/regulation
- Reduction of anxiety/stress
- Decrease depression
- Ability to address grief/loss issues
- Reduction of blood pressure
- Self-esteem enhancement
- Emotional and behavioral problems
- Improved socialization
- Decrease abusive behaviors
- Improve ability to trust

About Benji:

Benji is an Emotional Support Animal certified through the ESA Registration of America. He is a neutered, fully vaccinated, male Hound mix. He goes to the veterinarian yearly for shots, check-ups, and heartworm tests. He receives regular grooming and flea/tick prevention treatments. Benji is currently in school training for the American Kennel Association Canine Good Citizen test.

Risks Related to AAT:

- Animals have their own natural defenses. While the therapist handler will do everything possible to prevent any injury, it is possible that someone could get scratched or bitten.
- Animals often use their mouths in play. Therefore, even when playing, it is possible for light biting to occur.

Rules Related to AAT:

- Benji has individual rights, just as each client does. Therefore, he is allowed to determine if and when he participates with others. While it may be planned to have Benji in session, he will never be forced to do so.
- Benji should always be treated gently. He should never be hit, have their ears pulled, carried, or treated in any other way that is uncomfortable.
- Benji will always need their handler present in any therapeutic situation.
- If they become irritated, scared, or act in a negative manner, the handler will put the animal in a safe place. No other person should touch the animal at these times.

Patient Screening for AAT:

Please identify if the statement/s pertain to you:

1. I am afraid of dogs. Yes No
2. I have allergies to animals. Yes No
3. I have an autoimmune disease. Yes No
4. I have cancer or I am going through cancer treatments Yes No
5. I have been diagnosed with a medical ailment that may compromise my health if I am in close proximity to a dog. Yes No
6. I am not aware of any ailments or medical condition that would prohibit physical interaction such as handling, touching, and kissing the dog. _____ (initial)

Consent and Release of Liability:

By signing below you are stating your understanding and acceptance of these risks and rules. You accept full liability in the event that an animal harms you or your child in the course of treatment.

Client/Guardian Signature

Date

Witness

Date