WAGS Visitation Policies and Procedures - revised

1. Regular visitation may commence upon successful completion of both the WAGS ambassador team evaluation and mentored visit.
2. An audit of a facility is required by the handler prior to committing to a facility or team. The audit is performed to ensure the facility is appropriate for his/her teams’ skill level, size, and temperament and to become familiar with the layout of the facility.
3. Only WAGS members shall participate in visitation. If an individual requests to observe a visit for educational purposes, who is not a WAGS member, approval from the facility is required.
4. Visitation begins the moment you and your pet arrive on the property of the facility (approximately 15 mins prior and ends 15 mins after the time allotted for the visit).
   1. Visits should not exceed two hours.
5. WAGS members must wear their WAGS ID Badge on all visits.
6. WAGS members are expected to wear “business casual” attire.
   1. Dress must also adhere to the facility’s dress code policy.
   2. Exceptions may be required on certain visits (ie. jeans may be appropriate for an event that requires getting on the floor or being outside).
7. Pets should be clean, groomed, and wear proper collars (buckle, snap, or quick-release closures, and limited-slip collars such as martingale collars if they do not include metal links).
   1. Harnesses, halters and head collars (such as Gentle Leader, Snoot Loop and Halti) should be worn based on the animal’s skill level as determined by the WAGS evaluation.
   2. Leashes should be 4 foot leads and all leather or all fabric. 6 foot leads may be permitted in rare circumstances for activities that require more freedom.
   3. Small animals such as cats, rabbits, guinea pigs, etc. should be in proper containers/cages or may be carried on a towel or waterproof pad. All animals that leave their cage must be in a harness/collar and on a lead at all times.
8. Dogs on a leash should be walking at your side in a well-controlled manner (no pulling or lunging).
9. There may be a brief “meet and greet” between the pets prior to the visit.
   1. A meet and greet is described as a quick look (5 seconds or less) from a distance of approximately 4 feet or more. Sniffing should be discouraged. The pets should then return to the handlers with a happy call back.
10. There should be no play sessions between pets prior to or during visits and at membership gatherings. Interactions between the pets should be discouraged during visits and at membership gatherings.
11. Pets are never to be off lead on the property of the facility or during visitation. In rare circumstances, a facility may approve/request an animal to be off-lead. A permission form for ‘off lead work’ is required.
12. During visits handlers should not hand over their leash to another individual. A written permission for ‘handing off the leash’ is required and approved by the evaluation committee.
13. Each team member is required to carry a WAGS Incident Report Form and documentation of the pet's current health record.
14. WAGS members must carry clean up materials.
    1. It is expected of all members to clean up any and all messes that their pet makes (such as urine, feces. crumbs, sloppy drinking, drool, hair clumps).
15. If a WAGS team is unable to meet their commitment for visitation, it is their responsibility to find a replacement and to notify the team leader.
    1. Failure to do so may result in removal from the team.
       1. If withdrawing from a visitation team, the team leader and/or facility chairperson should be notified.
16. WAGS visiting team members must document the number of visitation hours.
    1. Requirement for registration renewal.
    2. WAGS tracks the total number of visitation hours and volunteer hours annually with the fiscal year.
17. All visiting teams will participate in continuing education/training twice a year, one of which must include hands-on exercises with the pet (this may include, but not limited to, WAGS continuing education sessions).
18. Any animal on an antibiotic, antifungal, oral medication (other than maintenance medications), or with open wounds should not visit.
19. Dogs trained in bite work, such as but not limited to Schutzhund, may not be registered as therapy dogs.
20. WAGS visiting privileges:
    1. Will expire on the expiration date listed on the ID Badge. Visitation privileges will be reinstated once the registration is renewed.
    2. Are revoked if a member is in arrears. Visitation privileges will be reinstated upon payment of fees due.
    3. Maybe revoked in the event of a violation of membership duties and privileges or gross misconduct.
21. ‘Express Renewal’ is an observed visit in lieu of WAGS Ambassador Evaluation.
    1. To be eligible for an express renewal, the member is required to have completed 10 visits within the fiscal year, must meet continuing education/training requirements as listed in #17.
22. WAGS liability insurance covers WAGS Ambassador teams visiting in approved facilities.
    1. Exceptions to the approved facilities rule shall include visits to Hosparus patients in facilities and homes.
23. WAGS Pet Therapy of Kentucky, Inc. carries general liability insurance on registered teams performing visits and any other WAGS activities as a volunteer - insurance is invalid if you are being compensated monetarily while representing WAGS.

I hereby acknowledge that participating as a WAGS member, whether as a therapy animal

handler or a trained aide, or by attending any event involving WAGS, or in any other way,

carries inherent risks to myself and my animal, including but not limited to accidents and contagious

diseases. I have read this paragraph and accept these risks as part of WAGS’ mission.

I understand the above policy and procedure and agree to follow them while participating in all WAGS Ambassador Teams

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