

Date: _____

ANIMAL ASSISTED THERAPY CONSENT AND RELEASE OF LIABILITY

Therapy dogs are a vital part of our counseling team, and we want you to be comfortable with their presence in our office and in your sessions. However, it is important to remember that they are dogs and that we are all responsible for their welfare. We must also remember that their behavior cannot always be predictable. Therefore, it is important to discuss the rules needed to insure yours and the dogs' safety and health and try to create as safe a working situation as possible. We want to provide you with a diligent warning about the potential harm that could be present when working with dogs.

OFFICE RULES REGARDING THERAPY ANIMALS

- The dogs are allowed to determine if and when they participate with others. While it may be planned to have a dog in session, the dog will never be forced to do so.
- The dogs have their own quiet space in the offices where they can rest, sleep, or just take a quiet break. The dogs should not be disturbed when they are in this area.
- The dogs are always treated gently. They should never be hit, tails or any other parts pulled, carried or treated in any other way that is uncomfortable to them.
- The dogs will always need their handler present in any therapeutic situation.
- If a dog becomes irritated, scared, or in any way acts in a negative manner, the handler will put the dog in a safe place. No other person should touch the dog at these times.
- Dogs will only be carried by their therapist handler.

RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH ANIMAL ASSISTED THERAPY

- Dogs have their own natural defenses. While the therapist handler will do everything possible to prevent any injury, it is possible that someone will get scratched or bitten.
- Dogs often use their mouths in play. Therefore, even when playing, it is possible for light biting to occur.
- All of our dogs have been certified as therapy animals and screened by a veterinarian before joining our therapy team. Because your contact is minimal, this risk is very small.

By signing this form you are releasing Regent University, Counseling & Disability Services, and its counselors from any liability should any injury occur as part of your work here.

By signing below you are also stating your acceptance of these rules and risks and agree to accept full liability in the event that a dog harms you in any way in the course of treatment.

Client Name (Please Print)

Client Signature

Clinician Name (Please Print)

Clinician Signature