



Effective: January 1, 2021
Last Revised: March 3, 2023

Responsible University Office:
*Compliance Office
Business Services*

Responsible University Administrator:
*Senior Advisor to the Chancellor
Vice Chancellor of Business and Finance*

Policy Contact:
See Additional Contacts

Pet Therapy Program Policy

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Scope

This policy applies to all employees, students, and visitors of the University of Nebraska at Kearney (“UNK”).

Policy Statement

This policy will provide guidelines and procedures for pet therapy programs on the UNK campus.

Reason for Policy

UNK strives to provide a safe environment for students, faculty, staff, and campus visitors while also promoting events that not only assist with stress and anxiety but add to the overall campus experience. A pet therapy program is one example of these beneficial events. This policy will provide guidelines in order to safely conduct and mitigate the risk associated with these programs.

Procedures

Pet Therapy Program

- All pet therapy programs must be in collaboration with a pet therapy organization which is recognized by UNK.
- A pet therapy program event must be sponsored by a UNK department.
- The UNK department sponsoring the event is responsible for any costs related to the event and any damage caused by any UNK employees, students, and visitors of the pet therapy program event.
- The UNK department sponsoring the event must assign a Representative to be present during the entire pet therapy program event to monitor, ensure all applicable policies and guidelines are followed, make certain any Therapy Pet excrement has been cleaned and the area disinfected, and to clean and remove any hair as a result of the Therapy Pets shedding.
- The Representative is responsible for immediately contacting UNK Police for assistance, to report an injury to a UNK employee, student, volunteer, or visitor, or to report any damage to UNK property during a pet therapy program event.
- All pet therapy program events must be clearly marked and provide adequate notification to individuals passing by to ensure their own health and safety.

Therapy Pet Criteria

- All Therapy Pets must be officially registered and certified with a pet therapy organization recognized by UNK.
- Each Therapy Pet must be up-to-date on their respective vaccinations and have a completed Certificate of Vaccinations form.
- Therapy Pets must be on leashes and under the control of their Handler the entire time they are on UNK property and/or at the event location.
- Authorized Therapy Pets are limited to dogs and cats.
- Therapy Pets must be at least one year of age.
- Therapy Pets must be well-groomed (including trimmed, filed toenails and clean teeth) and cleaned prior to each event which shall include proper bathing and/or being wiped with a wet washcloth to remove dander and saliva from the Therapy Pet's coat.
- A UNK employee or student's personal pet is not classified as a Therapy Pet unless the individual and their pet are officially registered and certified with a pet therapy organization recognized by UNK.

Handler Criteria

- Handlers must be a member of a pet therapy organization recognized by UNK, agree to follow all applicable UNK Policies, and agree to the terms and conditions contained in the University of Nebraska Pet Therapy Services Agreement.
- Handlers must be clean, well-groomed, and without the influence of alcohol and drugs while participating in a pet therapy program event.
- Each Handler may handle only one (1) Therapy Pet at a time while participating in a pet therapy program event.
- Handlers must transport Therapy Pets in a pet carrier or kept on a four (4) foot or

- shorter leash at all times when on UNK property and/or at the event location.
- Handlers must accept full responsibility for the pet therapy program animals including but not limited to proper disposal of excreta (i.e. double bagged and placed in a waste container outside the building or transported off UNK property), cleaning and removal of hair as a result of Therapy Pets shedding, and up-to-date and accurate information on their Therapy Pet's Certificate of Vaccinations form.

Pre-Event Requirements

- Prior to each pet therapy program event, the sponsoring department must ensure with Business Services that the respective pet therapy organization has been recognized by UNK and Handlers have contracted with the University and provided all necessary documentation including an approved certificate of insurance and an executed contract.
- At least ten (10) days prior to the potential pet therapy program event and after receiving all required contractual documents, the sponsoring department shall schedule the event in accordance with the "Use of University Property Policy."
- Prior to each pet therapy program event, the sponsoring department must provide the following to UNK Police:
 - Date and time of the event;
 - Location of the event;
 - Agreement reference number for the applicable Handlers;
 - Certificates of Vaccination for each Therapy Pet that will be present at the event; and
 - Verification of all Handlers as members of a recognized pet therapy organization.

Exclusions

This policy shall not apply to service animals or emotional support animals as defined under the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Fair Housing Act, and any other applicable federal or state law. Employees or students seeking to have service animals or emotional support animals on campus should contact the UNK Compliance Office.

Definitions

Certificate of Vaccinations – a form provided by UNK to Handlers for their completion which provide proof of updated vaccinations for each Therapy Pet

Handler – the individual responsible for a Therapy Pet at the pet therapy program event

Representatives – a UNK employee that serves as the designated individual for a sponsoring department during a pet therapy program event

Therapy Pet – animals that are allowed to be a part of UNK-sponsored, pet therapy programs on UNK property or other designated locations; this shall not include service animals or emotional support animals as defined under the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Fair Housing Act, and any other applicable federal or state law

Additional Contacts

Subject	Contact	Phone	Email
Employees	Compliance Office	308-865-8400	straatmanna2@unk.edu
Students	Academic Success Office	308-865-8798	lukerdt@unk.edu
Contract and Insurance Documents	Business Services	308-865-8448	contracts@unk.edu
Event Reservations	Facilities	308-865-8692	warrenbn@unk.edu
Safety and Damage Reporting	UNK Police	308-865-8911	davisjf@unk.edu

Forms

Certificate of Vaccinations (UNK Police will maintain this documentation for four years following each event)

- [Cats](#)
- [Dogs](#)

[UNK Standard Therapy Pet Services Agreement](#)

Related Information

[Use of University Property Policy](#)

[UNK Pet Policy](#)

History

Policy updated on March 3, 2023, to reflect changes in pet therapy organization structures and policies

Original policy was effective January 1, 2021