

University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point Therapy Dog Policy and Procedure

Purpose:

This policy and procedure addresses the process under which UWSP employees and sponsored visitors may request the use of therapy animals as a part of a University program. Therapy dogs are trained and certified by qualified handlers who use the dogs for comfort and companion enrichment of others and may be used during a program or event.

A. Definition

Therapy dogs are trained and certified by qualified handlers. The primary objective of a therapy dog and handler is to provide comfort and companionship to others by sharing the animal with students, faculty, and staff of the University. This is done in a way that increases emotional well-being and improves the quality of life for the people being visited. For the purpose of this policy, therapy dogs are not defined as service dogs or assistance animals, which are governed by policies linked under Resources below.

B. Therapy Dog Requirements

Therapy dogs on the UWSP campus must be registered with Therapy Dogs International (TDI) or any therapy dog registry that provides proof of insurance and training, and be in good standing with that organization. Therapy dogs must comply with all provisions under this section.

1. Therapy Dog Health Requirements

All Therapy dogs must meet the basic health requirements, minimally defined by TDI. Because the registration through TDI requires these documents, the University does not need additional documentation. Other certifications may require proof of health. TDI requirements include:

- Annual Check-up attested to by your Veterinarian within the past year.
- Mandatory Rabies Vaccine (1, 2, or 3 Year – Must be given by a veterinarian)
- An initial series of core Distemper, Hepatitis, and Parvovirus Vaccinations.
- A negative Fecal Exam must have been done within the past year.
- A negative Heartworm test must have been done within the past year if the dog is not on a continuous heartworm preventative medication. A negative Heartworm test must have been done within the past two years if the dog is on a continuous heartworm preventative medication.

2. Registered with the University

Therapy dog handlers must submit a copy of active registration with Therapy Dogs International or equivalent therapy dog registry with the University Administration as identified below in the Request Procedures.

Handlers must comply with all TDI or similar dog identification requirements during visits on campus, including:

- Dog tag on collar
- Dog/Handler identification card indicating certification
- Dog bandana/vest indicating certification

3. Notification and non-retaliation policy

Notification of the presence of a therapy animal must be posted 10 days prior to the event. If the therapy animal is being used in a classroom, students must be notified 10 days prior to the animal being brought to the classroom.

If a student chooses to not participate in class due to the presence of the animal, the student will be excused from class and given the opportunity to make up any missed work without penalty.

4. Regulations applied to Therapy Dog visits

- Therapy dogs are only allowed in common areas/entrances of a University building, and possibly in other specified areas (such as a classroom) with advanced approval.
- Therapy dog visits are not allowed in food preparation areas, laboratories, or research areas where the animal is in potential danger of any form of contamination.
- Therapy dogs are not allowed in classes unless the visit is approved in advance, the class's subject matter pertains directly to the study of therapy dogs and their work, and the dog and handler are not disruptive to the learning environment.
- During visits, handlers are expected to protect works made by students, faculty, staff, and the general public wherever those works are on display and could be damaged.
- UWSP employees who act as handlers during a therapy dog visit must completely separate from any other University-related work. While the dog and handler are on campus, the handler's sole responsibility is to the therapy dog work. UWSP employees acting in this capacity are not acting within the scope of UWSP employment, and therefore will not be covered by UWSP/State of Wisconsin Worker's Compensation coverage or liability coverage.
- Handlers are allowed to bring personal items to an office/designated area for storage during a therapy dog visit, but are not allowed to leave the dog alone in an office/designated area. Further, handlers may not keep the dog as a companion in their office during University-related work time on the day of the visit.
- Handlers must keep the dogs on leash and under control at all times.
- Handlers are responsible for providing water while working.
- Any pet waste deposited on university lands shall be removed and properly disposed of by the handler.

5. Liability and Insurance

The handler shall provide proof of insurance for the therapy dog and handler, naming the Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System, its officers, employees and agents as additional insured. The owner shall be responsible for all liability related to the therapy dog and all insurance requirements related to the therapy animal. UWSP/State of Wisconsin provides no indemnification to the therapy dog or owner. UWSP/State of Wisconsin provides no personal property insurance coverage.

C. Procedures for Requesting a Therapy Dog on campus

All programs involving therapy dogs must follow procedures established for requesting or sponsoring a program on the campus of UWSP. In addition, authorization for therapy dog visits must be approved in advance of their visit in writing through the Director, Disability and Assistive Technologies Center and the management of the area that is to be visited (e.g. College Dean, Director of University Centers (Health Enhancement Center, Dreyfus University Center, Allen Center), Director of Residence Life, or Director of Facilities).

Any qualified handler of a therapy dog, be it a UWSP employee or otherwise, who would like to request a therapy animal on campus must do the following:

- Receive authorization in writing prior to 10 days before bringing the animal on campus through the Disability and Assistive Technology Center and management of the area to be visited.
- Submit a copy of active registration with Therapy Dogs International or equivalent therapy dog registry to the Director of the Disability and Assistive Technology Center with authorization request.
- The Disability and Assistive Technology Center will send a copy of approved requests and registration paperwork to Risk Management and the area to be visited.

D. Complaint Involving the Use of Animal on Campus

If any person on campus has a question about the certification of a therapy animal, they should contact the Disability and Assistive Technology Center (715-346-3365) or Risk Management (715-346-3901). If a person has a dispute, disagreement or complaint as to an individual's use of a therapy animal and/or it's handler/owner under this policy, or said person suspects or has observed animal abuse or neglect of an animal, the Dean of Students and/or UWSP Police and Security Services should be contacted immediately for appropriate action (see 4.8.2 and 4.8.6). An individual who intentionally distracts, disrupts, antagonizes or harms an animal protected under this policy may be subject to the University student conduct process and presents a standard of behavior for the owner and animal.

E. General Restrictions on Animals on University Lands under UWS Ch.18

For all other uses and/or presence of animals on University property or lands that are not specifically provided for in this policy, the provisions of UWS Ch. 18.08 shall apply (see Appendix B).

F. Campus Resources/Stakeholders

- Counseling Center (715-346-3553) <http://www.uwsp.edu/counseling>
- Dean of Students Office (715-346-2611) <http://www.uwsp.edu/dos>
- Disability and Assistive Technology Center (DATC) (715-346-3365) <http://www.uwsp.edu/disability>
- Equity and Affirmative Action (EAA) / ADA Coordinator (715-346-2002) <http://www.uwsp.edu/equity>
- Facility Services (715-346-2124) <http://www.uwsp.edu/facsv>
- Police and Security Services (715-346-3456) <http://www.uwsp.edu/protsv>
- Residential Living (715-346-3511) <http://www.uwsp.edu/resliving>
- Risk Management (715-346-2618) <http://www.uwsp.edu/rmgt>
- Dining and Summer Conferences (715-346-3434) <http://www.uwsp.edu/dining>
- University Centers (715-346-3201) <http://www.uwsp.edu/centers>

Resources

State Resources

[Wisconsin State Legislature UWS 18.08\(1\)](#) Personal conduct with animals on university property

[Wisconsin State Legislature 36.12](#) Student discrimination prohibited

University of Wisconsin System Resources

[University of Wisconsin System Board of Regent Policy 14-10 Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability](#)

University of Wisconsin Stevens Point Resources

[University of Wisconsin Stevens Point Animal Policies](#)

[University of Wisconsin Stevens Point Discrimination Policy](#)