

Logo for Algoma Manor	Origination	04/2019	Owner	Metzie Lacroxi
	Last Approved	05/2025	Area	LTC Infection Prevention & Control
	Effective	05/2025	Applicability	LTC Infection Prevention & Control
	Last Revised	05/2025		
	Next Review	05/2026		

Animal Visitation (Pet Therapy Program), IX-M-10.10

POLICY:

The importance of pets is recognized, and residents will be provided with the opportunity for interaction with pets and animals.

Appropriate infection prevention & control measures will be implemented to prevent transmission of pet-related communicable disease or infection.

PROCEDURE:

Administrative Approval:

- Administrative approval for animal visitation will be granted on an individual basis. Consideration will be given to the type of animal(s), the effect on safety, other residents, team members, and the environment.
- The Executive Director will have the right to review, at any time, the acceptability of any animal and will have the right to have the animal removed from the premises if the animal is found unacceptable.
- The Executive Director will ensure the animal owner is aware of the terms and conditions of this policy.

Restrictions:

- The following animals are not permitted to visit the community (dependent upon provincial/regional requirements) (these examples are not all-inclusive):
 - Reptiles and amphibians (lizards, snakes, iguanas, turtles, frogs, and salamanders)
 - Non-human primates

- Rodents (hamsters, gerbils, mice, rats)
 - Wild (exotic) animals whose behaviour is unpredictable
 - Hedgehogs, prairie dogs, or any other recently domesticated animal species
 - Other animals not litter trained or for which no other measures can be taken to prevent exposure of residents to animal excrement
 - Other animals with behavioural or disease risks such as raccoons, skunks, ferrets, and bats
 - Young animals (under 1 year of age) may be considered in consultation with Infection Prevention & Control Lead
- Designated home areas/neighbourhoods where animals are permitted will be established per administrative approval. No animals are allowed in areas where food is being prepared or served.
 - Residents who do not wish to have contact with visiting animals will have documentation in their plan of care to indicate their choices.
 - Every reasonable and practical effort will be made to keep visiting animals away from residents with allergies, phobias, and/or dislikes.
 - It is recommended that animal visits will be scheduled for not longer than one hour to reduce animal fatigue.
 - Incorporating young animals (under 1 year of age) into the pet therapy program is not encouraged because of issues regarding unpredictable behaviour and fecal/urinal elimination control. Also, the immune systems of very young puppies and kittens are not completely developed, placing the health of these animals at risk. Exceptions may be considered in consultation with the Infection Prevention & Control Lead.

Infection Prevention & Control Measures:

- Animals must not visit the community if they are experiencing the following symptoms from onset to at least one week beyond the resolution of:
 - Episodes of vomiting or diarrhea
 - Urinary or fecal incontinence
 - Episodes of sneezing or coughing of unknown origin
 - Open wounds
 - Ear/eye infections
 - Skin infections/lesions
 - Enteric parasites
- A team member will be designated to provide support to animal handlers and ensure all procedures are met by the owner/handler during each visit.
- The animal handler should be in good health, know the animal(s) and their behaviour, and be trained in the pet therapy activity.
- The animal handler should be provided with a bottle of alcohol-based hand rub (ABHR) to carry

with them during the animal visit to encourage residents and team members to perform proper hand hygiene before and after contact with animals.

- It is recommended that animals be registered with a recognized pet therapy program.
- Animals not registered should be observed on a continuous basis by the visitation liaison to ensure the animal is well-trained and well-behaved. If there is any evidence of aggressive behavior, the animal will be removed from the community.
- Animals will be kept on a leash at all times during the visit.
- Visiting animals are not allowed in dining rooms, medication rooms, resident bathrooms, or food preparation areas.
- Pets are restricted from visiting residents in isolation rooms, and with residents who have open draining wounds, pneumonia, or blood stream infections.
- Visiting animals will not be fed food treats by the residents. This is the responsibility of the animal handler.
- Where possible, the animal handler will make every attempt to discourage the visiting animal from licking the resident's skin. If an animal licks a resident, ensure the affected area is washed and hand hygiene occurs.
- Team members, residents, family members, visitors, and volunteers will report any bite or scratch sustained from the animal and obtain appropriate first aid.
- Injuries caused by an animal will be assessed and first aid delivered by a medical team member. Injuries will be reported to the local Public Health Unit (as per regional requirements).
- Incidents of injuries will be reviewed by the Executive Director and the Residents' Council.

The Animal Owner/Handler will:

- Abide by the terms and conditions of this policy.
- Provide proof of the animal's yearly check-up and documentation from a veterinarian before entering the community. Documentation will verify that the animal has been:
 - a. Fully vaccinated for zoonotic diseases, including rabies, accordingly to provincial regulations and preventative medications (e.g. heartworm prevention) as determined by a licensed veterinarian.
 - b. Examined and found to be free of hookworm and other parasites, fleas, and any skin lesions that could be associated with bacterial, fungal, or viral infections.
 - c. Declared to be healthy and free of diarrhea.
 - d. Found to be obedient, good tempered, and house trained.
- Ensure the animal is clean (e.g. bathed within 24 hours of a visit) to remove allergens in saliva, dander, and/or urine, and well-groomed to remove dead hair to minimize allergic responses.

Attachments:

N/A

Approval Signatures

Step Description	Approver	Date
	Kelly Seow: Manager, Resident Experience & Service Excellence	05/2025
	Tamara Ross	04/2025
	Metzie Lacroxi	04/2025

Applicability

Algoma Manor, Arnprior - The Grove, Bruce County, Camilla, Chester Village, Enterprise, Golden Dawn, Golden Plough Lodge, Grey County, Lanark Lodge, Leamington Mennonite Home, Long Term Care (BC), Long Term Care (ON), Maple View Lodge, Stirling Manor

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