**A logo of a dog and a child

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**Spirit Cove**

**Volunteer Orientation Manual**

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How to Reach Spirit Cove

(828) 367-9004

Info@newfietherapy.org

Contact People

Lisa Schiller…….. Founder/President [lisa@newfietherapy.org](mailto:lisa@newfietherapy.org)  
Jerrica Ammons Volunteer Coordinator [jerrica@newfietherapy.org](mailto:jerrica@newfietherapy.org)

Jennifer Williams Safety Committee & First Responder [jennifer@newfietherapy.org](mailto:jennifer@newfietherapy.org%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20)

Kelly Benton Marketing Director kelly@newfietherapy.org

Program Holidays

**Holidays and Closure Days:**

New Years Day January 1

Memorial Day Last Monday May

Independence Day July 4

Labor Day First Monday September

Thanksgiving Fourth Thursday and Friday November

Christmas Day December 25

Office Hours

Monday - Friday 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Saturday & Sunday Special Events as scheduled/announced

All times listed are EST. This is flexible based on special events and organization visiting hours**Welcome**

**Welcome Volunteers**

Spirit Covewelcomes you as a volunteer member and hopes your association with our Animal-Assisted Activities & Therapy Programwill be a mutually positive experience. This handbook has been designed to acquaint you with Spirit Coveand to serve as a guide to the operation and procedures of the volunteer program.

As a volunteer, your help and dedicated support enable us to reach a diverse population of community heroes and people overcoming illness or trauma. We need you to help spread hope and healing to as many people as possible.

The information in this handbook will help explain the background and purpose of our program, answer some frequently asked questions, and describe what you might encounter as a volunteer. Also included are the responsibilities that go beyond volunteering. Feel free to discuss program concerns with our staff. There is also helpful information in resources on our website. We know you will benefit from your volunteer experience. We welcome you as a member of the growing community of individuals whose lives have been enriched by their efforts to help others.

Spirit Cove encourages maximum involvement of volunteers. Your involvement helps us promote good community relations and allows us to enhance our programs. As a volunteer, you can share your knowledge about Spirit Cove and the “Newfie Therapy” program with your community.

This handbook will provide information to help you get started as a volunteer in our Animal-Assisted Therapy program. There may be certain volunteer job titles which have additional responsibilities and expectations beyond what is included in this Handbook. Those are detailed in the individual job descriptions which apply to that position.

As a volunteer in Spirit Cove, you are special. You are willing to give time and energy to someone needing a little hope and healing. You are helping people in your community lead more joyful lives. Your efforts will bring happiness to others, and a sense of personal fulfilment you will find hard to beat.

Thank you for serving!

**Non-Discrimination Policy**

It is the policy of this organization that there will be no discrimination or harassment in its programs, activities or employment based on race, color, sex, sexual preference, marital or parental status, religion, national origin, age, mental or physical disability, Vietnam era or veteran status. Questions or concerns related to affirmative action, nondiscrimination or equal opportunity should be directed to your program leader.

Mission Statement

**Spirit Cove**

Spirit Cove is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit providing trauma-informed, animal-assisted therapy programs to individuals and communities in crisis. Rooted in compassion and powered by our team of rescued and specially trained Newfoundland therapy dogs, and Gypsy Vanner horses, we deliver emotional support, suicide prevention resources, and healing experiences to underserved and high-risk populations. Our work reaches survivors of natural disasters, first responders, healthcare workers, and families through outreach, education, and customized programming. As a trusted ally in mental health and emotional recovery, Spirit Cove is committed to turning pain into purpose—one paw at a time.

The Spirit Cove VOLUNTEER PROGRAMencourages maximum involvement of volunteers with its programs, activities and operations. This involvement promotes good community relations and allows us to maintain a high quality program. The involvement of volunteers helps to do the following:

\* Provide a greater amount of emotional support, spreading hope and joy through Animal-Assisted Activities (AAA), Animal-Related Engagement (ARE) and Animal-Assisted Therapy (AAT) to Veterans, Military, First Responders, HealthCare workers, Teachers, their families and people overcoming trauma and illness.

\* Help Spirit Cove reach more geographic communities

\* Provide information about Spirit Coveand its programs to the community.

The goal of the volunteer program is to enable us to expand our volunteer support in the following areas::

Animal-Assisted Interventions (AAI) Including, Animal-Assisted Activities (AAA), Animal-Related Engagement (ARE) & Animal-Assisted Therapy (AAT) Teams

Fundraising

Social Media/Marketing/Public Relations

Grant Research/Donor Research

Grant Writing/Donor Attraction & Retention

Community Outreach

Animal Care

Event Support

General Administrative Assistance/Data Entry

Accounting/Bookkeeping

As you can see, there are many ways your commitment benefits our mission!

Spirit Cove History

**History**

TimberKnolls Spirit Cove began with a brain tumor and a promise.

In 2015, some headaches landed our founder Lisa Schiller in urgent care, where she was told that she needed emergency brain surgery to remove a massive, life-threatening brain tumor. A nurse asked if she could do anything to help, and all Lisa could think to ask was, “Is there a dog in the hospital?” A volunteer brought in a small therapy dog, and for a few minutes, Lisa found peace and could escape the fear and anxiety of her situation. Lisa promised that if she survived, she’d pay that gift forward by getting a therapy dog. A few months later, when she realized she had a future, she thought, “If a small dog can do that, imagine what a giant one could do.” Chewie, her first Newfoundland, came into her life. After seeing the incredible impact he had on patients he met with, and in 2018, Lisa teamed up with Chewies breeders Benita Edds, Patti Sutherland, as well as Lisa’s daughter Kajal Schiller (a therapy handler) and they launched TimberKnolls Spirit Cove, a 501c3 nonprofit organization dedicated to helping people overcome illness and trauma through animal therapy. Benita focused on TimberKnoll Newfoundlands breeding and competing in dog shows, Patti cared for their 10 plus Newfoundlands and Lisa focused on growing the organization and volunteer team. This allowed the organization to remain completely separate from anything to do with TimberKnoll’s breeding program, and remain a fully focused, dedicated and independent therapy organization.

In August of 2025, the organizations name changed to Spirit Cove and Benita Edds and Patti Sutherland went their separate ways, to focus on their personal family and health.

Lisa remains the vision behind Spirit Cove and is supported by a talented and experienced board of directors.

Spirit Cove provides Animal-Assisted Activities (AAA), Animal-Related Engagement (ARE) & Animal Assisted Therapy (AAT) services, completely on a volunteer basis. We rely heavily on volunteers and are committed to fulfilling the majority of our staffing needs this way.

Our therapy teams are made up primarily of Newfoundland Dogs and a small, but growing Gypsy Vanner horse team. When the ranch is established, (more about that in the future) the animal teams may be expanded to include other gentle therapy animals.

**Program Overview**

Animal-Assisted Activities (AAA), Animal-Related Engagement (ARE) & Animal-Assisted Therapy (AAT)

Spirit Cove deploys our Newfoundland therapy dog teams directly into the field where healing is most urgently needed. Our mission is grounded in meeting people where they are—emotionally, mentally, and physically—whether that’s at schools recovering from tragedy, hospitals and clinics treating burnout, disaster-impacted communities, or first responder units under intense pressure.

Our gentle giants, the Newfoundland therapy dogs, are uniquely suited for this role. Their calming presence, deep emotional intuition, and immense size offer both comfort and a tangible sense of safety during moments of acute stress or long-term trauma.

Our team structure includes certified handlers and trained volunteers who accompany the dogs into these environments, creating what we call “pop-up Cove experiences”—mobile safe havens filled with warmth, comfort, and compassionate connection. We are deeply committed to suicide prevention, emotional resilience, and reducing isolation, especially among vulnerable populations like youth, healthcare workers, first responders, and survivors of natural disasters.

At the same time, we are in the midst of a capital campaign to build Spirit Cove Ranch—our future national home base and sanctuary. This ranch will be the first of its kind: a place where therapy dogs are rescued, trained, and deployed, and where individuals and families can come to heal alongside them. It will serve as a training center, retreat location, and healing hub all in one, allowing us to expand our reach and deepen our impact.

In essence, we are a boots-on-the-ground (or paws-on-the-ground) operation with a vision of one day offering both mobile and on-site healing experiences. We're honored by the opportunity to share this journey through your documentary project, and we look forward to showing how compassion on four paws is transforming lives.

**Since our formal inception as a 501c3 in 2018, Spirit Cove Newfie Therapy teams have helped over 250,000 people!**

As we continue, we will grow the number of teams, increase the number of people we reach and expand our geographic presence. Along with the expansion into other states, our goal is to purchase or build a small ranch that will be based in Hendersonville, NC where our core team of Newfoundland therapy dogs and Gypsy Vanner horses will be based. On-site, we will:

Helping Veterans & First Responders

Veterans and First Responders who truly bond with the Newfies and participate in training activities, may find themselves wanting their own Newfoundland. In these cases, we will encourage them to adopt a Newfoundland from one of the Newfoundland Club of America’s (NCA) official Newfoundland rescues. Spirit Cove will work with these individuals' introductions to the rescue organization in their area, and support them through the evaluation and adoption process, by providing training and references. In return, we’ll ask for a commitment to ‘pay forward’ the gift of healing by becoming trained and registered as therapy handlers themselves. For those service members interested in volunteering and working with dogs, but who are not interested or in a position to adopt their own, they may apply to work directly with a member of the Spirit Cove Newfoundland Team. Training in water rescue activities and draft activities will also be provided to these new therapy teams to help provide support through community activities and additional bonding with their partner Newfoundland. These activities will help reduce isolation, stress, anxiety, and depression.

Why this work is so important

Research shows that positive interactions with animals increase endorphins, oxytocin, prolactin, and dopamine. These are the hormones associated with blood pressure regulation, pain relief, stress relief, and joy. Visits from therapy animal teams can normalize stays away from home for hospital patients, improve motivation to participate in treatment protocols, and lessen worry, anxiety, unhappiness, and pain.

In addition, we have structured this program to have maximum impact.

Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities

**Volunteer Rights**

Volunteers are viewed as the most valuable resource of this organization, its staff, and its clients. Volunteers have the right to be given meaningful assignments, the right to be treated as equal co-workers, and the right to effective supervision. Volunteers have the right to full involvement and participation, and the right to recognition for work done. In return, volunteers shall agree to perform their duties to the best of their abilities. They will remain loyal to the goals of the organization and operate according to its procedures.

**Volunteer Responsibilities**

* To be open and honest regarding intent, goals, and skills.
* To accept and have a clear understanding of the job.
* To carry out duties promptly and reliably.
* To document visits and provide records of volunteering activities.
* To practice good personal hygene (as outlined below)
* To dress professionally and appropriately for all volunteer activities.
* To refrain from using foul language (swearing, etc.) while volunteering or participating in

organizational activities or representing the organization in any and all ways.

* To maintain professional and positive communication skills on all social media in

relation to activities relating to the organization.

* To accept the guidance and direction of volunteer leadership.
* To participate in any training required.
* To respect confidentiality.
* To discuss satisfactions, dissatisfactions, and suggestions for upgrading or changing of

volunteer assignments with the Director of, or support person of volunteers.

* To be punctual, and notify your support person of absences as much in advance as

possible.

* To be alert, sober, and drug-free while volunteering.
* To be kind, compassionate and respectful of all volunteers, staff, sponsors and clients

at all times.

**Responsibilities for Volunteers working with Spirit Cove Newfoundlands**

(Where registration costs are supported by Spirit Cove and/or the Newfoundlands utilized are owned or managed by Spirit Cove. )

All of the above responsibilities

Must wear Spirit Cove uniform (Newfie Therapy branded shirt, vest or jacket. Black pants, white or turquoise shirt (if branded jacket or vest is used).

Perform at least 2 animal therapy visits per month

Help groom, maintain and train therapy animals that are registered with.

Fill out and submit Therapy Visit Record online form within 48 hours of each therapy visit

Return emails received from Spirit Cove leaders, staff or other volunteers within 24 hours (this is considered common professional courtesy)

Children or other individuals who are not registered therapy handlers or approved by Spirit Cove leadership as ‘in training’ should never attend a therapy visit. The only exception of this is when a therapy team attends a large community event such as a parade. In these cases family members and friends may attend, but therapy handlers must always have their hands on their therapy dog leash as their primary focus. Attending children must have dedicated and assigned adults, separate from the handler, present.

Treat every person that the volunteer comes in contact with warmth, friendliness, respect and kindness.

**All Animal-Assisted Activities and Animal-Assisted Therapy handlers are also responsible for adhering to the rules, regulations, and policies of the organization for which they were registered. They will be expected to maintain their registration in active status and be up to date on all required veterinary health certificates and vaccinations.**

**The preferred animal therapy organizations for registration are the Alliance of Therapy Dogs, Pet Partners, Bright and Beautiful. If these organizations are not available in your geographic area, then approval from Spirit Cove Leadership team will be required.**

**These organizations provide critical insurance to cover Spirit Cove volunteers and their animals during official therapeutic visits.**

**We strongly encourage all volunteers to carry an umbrella policy with their renters or homeowners policy. These are very inexpensive and will cover volunteers and their animals when they are not on ‘official visits’ as determined by their registered animal therapy organization.**

Volunteer Policies

This manual explains our policies and procedures. It will help you understand how to carry out your duties and give the best service to Spirit Cove clients. This manual is also designed to assist you in answering questions you may have regarding operations at SPIRIT COVE.

Thank you for the time, devotion and caring you are willing to share. We appreciate your efforts.

**RECORD KEEPING**

**Animal Therapy Visits:**

You will complete a [THERAPY VISIT RECORD](https://www.cognitoforms.com/TimberKnollsSpiritCove/volunteertherapydogvisitrecord) for each visit. You can do this on your phone or computer using the link provided. You can also keep a paper list and a copy of that log is included in the “FORMS” section of this handbook. It is very important that you return the form by the last day of each month. Monthly report forms provide information for the following:

\* Statewide statistics.

\* Total time on record for job recommendations and personal recognition.

**Reimbursement for Expenses:**

If you have been pre-approved for reimbursement of registration related expenses or other reimbursable expenses, you will be required to submit an expense form which will be provided to you and a receipt within 60 days of the expense being incurred unless you have specific approval, in writing from one of the organizations leaders specifying otherwise.

If you would like to make an in-kind donation to Spirit Cove, for any expenses, including mileage, please complete the [IN KIND VOLUNTEER DONATION FORM](https://www.cognitoforms.com/TimberKnollsSpiritCove/InKindDonationForm)

**Other Related Volunteer Time:**

There are other ways to volunteer your time and we want to make sure these opportunities are captured. These activities include training, grooming, helping the team with data entry, cleanup of the property, parades…well the list is endless. You can enter this information on your phone or computer using this link: [VOLUNTEER TIME TRACKING](https://www.cognitoforms.com/TimberKnollsSpiritCove/volunteertimetrackingrecord) or you can complete a paper list and a copy of that log is included in the “FORMS” section of this handbook. These forms must be completed by the last day of the month.

**Onboarding**

People come to Spirit Cove with a variety of experience and knowledge. Your orientation will be individually constructed to prepare you for the volunteer work you have agreed to at the time of onboarding. You may be assigned to a more experienced volunteer/mentor or staff member for this introduction. If this is the case, an introduction meeting will take place and then you can begin your work. There is also an online orientation program, which covers the role of the volunteer, record keeping and other pertinent activities related to volunteering with Spirit Cove.

**Volunteers As Volunteer Supervisors**

A volunteer may act as a support person for other volunteers after appropriate training for the position has been completed.

**Volunteer/Staff Relationships**

Volunteers and staff are partners in fulfilling the mission and programs of Spirit Cove*.* Each has an equal but complementary role to play.

**Limitations On Volunteer Service**

Volunteers serve Spirit Cove at the sole discretion of the organization. Volunteers may leave or be asked to leave at any time.

**Age Limitation**

The minimum age for volunteers is 15 years. Volunteers under the age of 18 are not allowed to work with equipment prohibited by state law. Volunteers under the age of 18 may be registered pet therapy handlers but the rules and regulations of therapy handling are governed by the organization that the volunteer is registered.

**Interviewing**

All volunteers must be interviewed by the volunteer coordinator before any volunteer service. The interview will determine volunteer interests and skills, and appraise volunteers of agency needs. The interview will either be in person or by video call, and preferably include the support person(s) who will be working with the volunteer.

**Orientation**

All volunteers receive an orientation. It will include information about Spirit Cove, our policies and procedures for volunteers and requirements for the position they are accepting. An online orientation program is offered and required for all Animal Therapy Teams.

**Placement**

Volunteer interests and desires, and organization needs must be weighed in the interview process to insure the best match possible. When possible, the volunteer will have the final say in determining which volunteer position best fits his/her needs.

**Position Description**

You will receive a written position description before you begin your volunteer assignment. Your position description includes a description of the purpose and duties of the position, a designated support person and work site (if applicable). Also included is a time frame for the completion of the job, a listing of job qualifications, and a description of job benefits. Every effort is made to place you in an assignment matching your abilities and interests. This position description will be used in evaluation efforts. Most Animal Therapy Team schedules are more fluid and will require flexibility.

**Volunteer Position Acceptance**

The volunteer will be notified in writing/in person/by telephone of their acceptance as a Spirit Cove volunteer within 10 days of their interview. Before starting your volunteer duties all forms and paperwork given you at the interview must be completed and returned to the volunteer coordinator. Upon receipt of the paperwork you will receive the equipment,

**Assignment**

You are considered on an official assignment when the volunteer coordinator or program leader has requested that you provide a service. It is important to remember that only the volunteer coordinator, program leader or other volunteer program staff can make official assignments. Other staff, clients, or organizations cannot authorize an assignment. Many therapy teams make their own arrangements for visitation and this is supported and encouraged. This is different than teams being deployed or committed to serve a particular event or visit request.

**Volunteer Probation**

Volunteers will be placed for a probationary period of 90 days. Following the probationary period a second interview will be held with the volunteer coordinator. They will decide permanent placement in the volunteer position, reassignment to a new position or suitability of service with Spirit Cove.

**On-The-Job Training**

Besides our formal training procedures, volunteers receive on-the-job training to help them with information and tools to perform their duties. On-the-job training may be provided by your support person, a qualified volunteer or our volunteer coordinator as appropriate. Registration with a AnimalTherapy organization may take the place of this training.

**Absenteeism and Punctuality**

In general, if you are scheduled to provide a therapy visit, you should notify the agency where you were expected of any change in your schedule including late arrival or absence for any reason. If your volunteer work is related to Spirit Cove, you should contact the Director of Volunteer Services or the individual you were assigned to work with for that day.

You are expected to arrive on time for your scheduled session.

Do not volunteer in any capacity if you are ill. Notify the appropriate party as soon as you are aware you will

miss the assignment.

**Definition of a Animal Therapy Team**

A team consists of an Animal Therapy Handler and a therapy registered animal. At no time, should a handler be responsible for more than one animal. The animal will be on a leash, held by the handler at all times.

**Volunteer Performance Evaluation**

Volunteers will receive periodic feedback by the Director of Volunteer Services or their designee. The evaluation will include discussion of quality of work, work habits, and areas of growth. The evaluation will provide an opportunity for the volunteer to make suggestions on how best to improve their position and the tasks involved.

**Performance Problems**

When a volunteer’s performance is below the standards required by Spirit Cove, or when rules are violated, the Director of Volunteer Services may issue a verbal or written warning outlining the problem. Spirit Cove has identified two categories of inappropriate behaviors and their consequences—performance problems and serious violations. Examples cannot be listed to cover every situation. The director may deal with problems and violations not specifically mentioned here.

The following are considered performance problems and are not acceptable:

\* Conducting personal business while volunteering.

\* Excessive personal telephone use.

\* Littering or otherwise creating unsanitary conditions.

\* Safety violations.

\* Repeated Tardiness for scheduled volunteering.

\* Unauthorized operation of equipment.

\* Unfriendly or uncooperative attitude in dealing with clients, staff members, or volunteers.

\* Unsatisfactory work performance.

\* Waste, misuse or damage of property.

Having non-volunteers accompany Animal Therapy Visits. This includes bringing along children or friends to visits. The only ‘non therapy handlers’ who are allowed to accompany teams on visits are volunteers who have completed our application process and are of age and in training to be therapy dog handlers themselves. All ‘guests’ must be pre-approved in writing by Mary Bylone, Director of Volunteer Services, Patti Sutherland, Director of Therapy Services or Lisa Schiller, President.

Consequences:

1. First Incident: The volunteer will be notified of the problem and the changes required.

2. Second Incident: The volunteer will be issued a second warning.

3. Third Incident: The volunteer will be placed on probation for a period of four weeks. During that time an evaluation will be done to determine if continued volunteering will benefit the volunteer. The volunteer will be provided goals that must be accomplished to resolve the situation. The volunteer coordinator may meet with the volunteer to provide feedback. If the problem is not corrected following this process, a dismissal notice will be given.

4. Cancellation of volunteer status.

For serious problems, steps 3 or 4 may be carried out immediately.

Note: It may be found that the performance problems of a volunteer are the result of the inappropriate placement. Every attempt will be made to help him or her find and train for another volunteer position.

Serious Violations

The following are considered to be serious violations and are grounds for cancellation of volunteer status:

\* Falsifying reports, records or expenses.

\* Physical or sexual harassment.

\* Negligent or willful damage of property.

\* Theft.

\* Unlawful discrimination.

\* Willfully endangering the safety of others.

\* Working under the influence of intoxicants.

Consequences:

Anything considered a serious violation may be cause for immediate action.

**Resignation**

If you plan to stop volunteering you are expected to give notice in advance of any scheduled volunteer assignments. This should be done in writing and sent to the Director of Volunteer Services.

**Termination**

If a volunteer needs to resign his/her volunteer position, the volunteer coordinator should be notified as well as his or her support person. Volunteers are asked to give at least one week notice when terminating their volunteer service. Volunteers are also asked to go through an exit interview upon termination. The exit interview is an opportunity for the volunteer to state reasons for leaving and for the agency to learn other volunteer concerns.

The services of a volunteer may be terminated by the volunteer coordinator for reasons including, but not limited to: violation of Spirit Cove policies and procedures, impaired ability to function in a safe and prudent manner, or violation of the privacy of the clients or staff of TIMBERKNOLLS SPIRIT.

**Exit Interviews**

An exit interview will be conducted with volunteers leaving volunteer service. Included in the interview will be questions about reasons for leaving, suggestions for improving Spirit Cove, and possibilities for future involvement with Spirit Cove.

Animal-Assisted Therapy Registration

All dogs scheduling therapy visits must have active registration with an approved Animal Therapy Organization. (i.e. Pet Partners, Alliance of Therapy dogs, etc.) Proof of active registration is required and is kept on file for each therapy team. Certain activities do not require this registration and the decision as to which activities this pertains to is made by the Spirit Cove leadership team.

**Confidentiality**

Volunteers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of information relating to a staff person, volunteer, client, or other person or program business. Failure to maintain confidentiality may result in termination of the volunteer’s relationship with the agency, or other corrective action. Violations of this policy also may result in personal liability. Each volunteer signs a CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT. A copy of this form is available in the “FORMS” section of this handbook.

**Dress Code Humans and Therapy Animals**

Volunteers are expected to dress in professional attire. Shoes should be close-toed, low-heeled and comfortable. Clogs, flip flops and similar shoe styles without heel straps and that are open-toed are prohibited. Shorts, cutoffs, short skirts, overly casual attire and sweat suits are prohibited unless the event requires this attire, such as water training. Clothes should always be clean and free of stains and rips or holes. Certain activities require the volunteer to wear the approved uniform. These activities are determined by the Spirit CoveLeadership Team.

Volunteers are expected to wear their Animal Therapy organization’s PHOTO ID when performing therapy visits. Dogs will wear the approved vest with patch unless instructed to do otherwise for the particular event. Dogs will be on a leash at all times, held by the registered handler or in cases of training, held by a volunteer who has been pre-approved by a leader as referred to above, when engaged in therapy visits.

Practicing good personal hygiene

Volunteers are expected to maintain good personal hygiene to maintain safe and positive interactions with the public and other volunteers or staff. This includes: bathe or shower regularly. It is important that hair be clean and well contained in a simple style. If beards and mustaches are worn, they must be short and neatly trimmed. Use of deodorants is recommended and use of heavily scented perfumes and lotions should be avoided. Brushing teeth every morning, cleaning nails and washing hands throughout the course of the day is important to maintain positive interactions. Volunteers need to carry hand sanitizer with them on all therapy visits or when out in public with a Newfie. In order to prevent the spread of germs and to protect dogs from infections, sanitizer should be used by Volunteers prior to and after contact with the public..

Dogs should be clean, having had a recent bath and should be brushed out and mat free. Nails should be trimmed and ears clean. Dogs with open sores will not be permitted to participate in therapy visits. Therapy vests, leashes and bibs worn by the dogs must be clean and free of stains and dirt.

**Smoking, Eating, Alcohol and Drugs**

**Smoking**

To help ensure a healthy environment for clients, visitors, volunteers, employees and staff, SPRIT COVE is a “smoke-free” site. To accommodate visitors, clients, volunteers and employees who must smoke, designated outdoor smoking areas may be established.

Volunteers will abide by the smoking policies of the organization in which they visit. Most of the places where therapy visits take place are smoke-free.

**Food, Drugs, Tobacco, Alcohol**

Never bring unauthorized articles such as drugs, tobacco or alcoholic beverages onto Spirit Cove properties or event spaces. If a volunteer is a smoker, it is requested that their clothing and hair be free of heavy smoke when volunteering.

**Drug and Alcohol Use**

Volunteers are subject to immediate dismissal if they are under the influence of drugs or alcohol while performing their volunteer duties.

**Waiver of Liability**

**Spirit Cove Volunteers (SCV) agree to comply with all of the rules and regulations which may be established from time to time by the NewfieTherapy, including that all volunteers age 18 and under must be accompanied by a parent/guardian. SCV acknowledge services are provided strictly on a volunteer basis, without any pay or compensation of any kind, and without liability of any nature on behalf of Newfie Therapy. All services will be performed at SCV own risk, recognizing, in handling animals and performing other volunteer tasks, there exists a risk of injury, including physical harm caused by the animals. SCV agree on behalf of their heirs, personal representatives and executors, to release, discharge, indemnify, and hold harmless Newfie Therapy, its directors, officers, employees, agents and volunteers, from any and all claims, causes of action, or demands, or any nature or cause, including costs and attorney’s fees incurred by Newfie Therapy in connection with the same, based on damages or injuries which may be incurred or sustained by a SCV in any way connected with services for Newfie Therapy, including, but not limited, to animal bites, accidents, or injuries. Insurance: SCV, understand that, except as otherwise agreed to by Newfie Therapy in writing; Newfie Therapy does not carry or maintain health, medical, or disability insurance Coverage for any Volunteer. Each Volunteer is expected and encouraged to obtain his or her own medical or health insurance Coverage in addition to upholding Pet Partners or Alliance of Therapy Dogs commercial general liability insurance, or as noted below, and in specific circumstances where a volunteer is registered with another pet therapy organization that provides the same and where a legal representative of Newfie Therapy has approved in writing the therapy organization.**

**Accident Reports**

If a volunteer is injured while performing volunteer activities, the accident must be reported at once to the agency where the activity is taking place and to the Director of Volunteer Services. Follow the procedures of the agency for appropriate documentation and follow up. The agency will instruct you related to injuries requiring medical care. An ACCIDENT REPORT must be completed within 24 hours and a copy of this form can be found in the “FORMS” section of this handbook. Volunteers must also follow the procedures for reporting ‘incidents’ as their Animal-Therapy Registration organization requires.

**Infection Control**

Hand washing and the use of hand sanitizer is the single most important preventive measure! Volunteers must wash their hands:

\* Before preparing food or assisting with lunch and snacks.

\* After toileting.

\* After handling “contaminated” articles (Kleenex, handkerchiefs, etc.).

\* Upon entering and exiting all therapy sessions

Clean uniforms, clothing and good personal hygiene must be maintained to safeguard the health of our clients. Volunteers are requested to call when ill or when a contagious illness is suspected.

Volunteers will use “Universal Precautions” on all clients. All clients will be treated as potentially infectious with a blood-borne pathogen disease, i.e., Hepatitis B, AIDS. Gloves will be worn for all contact with patient mucous membranes or body substances, i.e., blood, feces, urine, etc. These are available in all clinical areas.

Animals used in therapy visits should be bathed frequently, brushed out and mat free. Hair on the paw pads should be trimmed flush with the bottom of the pet’s foot. Ears should be clean and free of wax build up. No animal should visit if there are open areas or wounds present. All clients/patients must put on hand sanitizer before patting therapy dogs, and be given some hand sanitizer after patting.

**Liability Insurance**

Each volunteer is responsible to carry their own insurance. It is strongly advised that volunteers also obtain an umbrella policy rider to their homeowners or renters insurance policy. This is intended to address any liability that may occur due to an animal causing an injury, such as a scratch on a person’s arm, or knocking them over.

**Ongoing Education and Training**

Periodically, Spirit Cove will hold educational seminars or identify necessary ongoing education. It is expected that the volunteer will attend when directed. The costs for mandatory training will be covered by Spirit Cove. Should a volunteer identify an appropriate educational event, they may apply to have it approved and covered by submitting a written request to the Director of Volunteer Services for review.

Forms and Other Useful Links

Electronic Form Links:

[Volunteer Portal](https://newfietherapy.org/volunteer-portal)

[Volunteer Time Tracking Record](https://www.cognitoforms.com/TimberKnollsSpiritCove/volunteertimetrackingrecord)

[Volunteer Therapy Dog Visit Record](https://www.cognitoforms.com/TimberKnollsSpiritCove/volunteertherapydogvisitrecord)

[Volunteer Photo Release Form](https://www.cognitoforms.com/TimberKnollsSpiritCove/photovideoreleaseform)

[Pet Partners Therapy Organization](https://petpartners.org/)

[Alliance Pet Therapy Program](https://www.therapydogs.com/)

[AKC Therapy Dog Title Application](https://www.akc.org/sports/title-recognition-program/therapy-dog-program/apply-for-an-akc-therapy-dog-title/)

[IN KIND Donation Form](https://www.cognitoforms.com/TimberKnollsSpiritCove/InKindDonationForm)

[Volunteer handbook Acknowledgement and Agreement Form](https://www.cognitoforms.com/TimberKnollsSpiritCove/VolunteerHandbookAcknowledgment)

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# Spirit Cove

# Therapy Dog Visit Log

Volunteer Name DogName

Phone Number

Hours Donated Per Month Total: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_

Email\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Organization Registered/Certified With:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Hospital (patients & families/staff}

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Visit** | **Date** | **Facility Name/Type** | **Hours** | **Vets** | **1st**  **Resp.** | **Students** | **Adults** | **Children** | **Staff** | **Total**  **Served** |
| 1 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 5 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 6 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 7 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 8 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 9 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 10 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 11 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 12 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 13 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 14 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 15 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 16 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 17 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 18 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 19 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 20 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

A logo of a dog and a child

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY OF CLIENT INFORMATION

I agree to treat as confidential all information about clients or former clients and their families that I learn about during the performance of my duties as a Spirit Cove Volunteer, and I understand that it would be a violation of policy to disclose such information to anyone without checking first with the Director of Volunteer Services or her designee.

Signature of Staff Member/Volunteer \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

A logo of a dog and a child

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

**Photo/Video Release form**

I, the undersigned, do hereby consent of my own free will, without coercion or inducement of any kind, to grant to TimberKnoll's Spirit Cove, a Tennessee corporation, their partners and successors and those acting under their permission, to reproduce, copyright, publish, circulate or otherwise use photographic reproductions or likenesses or videotape segments of me and or my name. This authorization and release Coves the use of said material in any published form and any medium of social media, advertising, publicity or trade in any part of the world for ten years from the date of this release. Furthermore, I for myself, my heirs, executors, or administers, sell, assign and transfer to the organization and its successors all my rights, title and interest in and to all reproductions taken of me by representatives of the organization. This agreement fully represents all terms and considerations and no other inducements, statements or promises have been made to me. I fully understand that no monetary payment will be made to me for such uses as described above.

**Printed Name of Person in photograph/video**

**Signature**

**Signature Date**

**Does the photo feature a minor?**

⚪ Yes ◉ No

**Address or email address**

A logo of a dog and a child

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

**VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK**

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND AGREEMENT**

**I, the undersigned, have read and understand the Volunteer Handbook, version 1 15 2023. I agree to abide by all of the policies as stated. If, for any reason or at any time, I am no longer able to comply with the policies contained in this handbook, I will immediately cease all activities related to Spirit Cove and notify the Director of Volunteer Services or another member of the Leadership Team.**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Printed Name**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Signature of Volunteer**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Date of Signature**

**PLEASE SIGN AND DATE AND RETURN TO THE DIRECTOR OF VOLUNTEER SERVICES.**