

Therapy Dog Guidelines

Metropolitan Library System

Adopted September 2008

- 1) **Keep a copy of each dog's Therapy Dogs International (TDI) membership card at your library, and forward a copy to DVS – Volunteer Services with the Adult Volunteer Application and Background Check Authorization of the owner.** TDI cards have the dog's name and expiration date of TDI membership. If there is any question of whether the membership is current or not, the library has proof. Note: to be current with TDI, dog owners have had to provide TDI with a current Veterinary form indicating the dog is current on shots.
- 2) **Also, keep a copy of the TDI letter with their insurance coverage, and forward a copy to DVS – Volunteer Services.** Trainers are sent a letter from TDI with the insurance coverage; the letter comes with their renewal packets after the first of the year.
- 3) **TDI rules must be followed;** if there is an incident with a dog and it was proven they were violating the TDI rules, then there is no insurance coverage by TDI. .
- 4) The **leashes** are kept on the dogs, unless the trainer is having the dog perform tricks.
This enables the trainer to gain control of a situation, should the need arise.
- 5) **Dog treats** can be given to the dog during "demonstrations" but **ONLY** by the handler. Trainers are not to give treats to children or adults to give to the therapy dog. This creates a higher bite risk (some dogs are rather "excited" to get a treat and could bite a finger in the process of getting the treat).
- 6) Keep a copy of the **TDI incident form** and have it in your files "just in case" it is ever needed.
- 7). Therapy dogs are usually used with our "Children Reading to Dogs" program. There may be a time that a therapy dog and trainer visit a **story time** for pre-school children (but not toddlers; the definition of "toddlers" is children aged 13 months - 23 months.)