	Corporation-Wide	0843-0700-0097 Policy #
	Infection Control Folder	9/21/2015 Orig. Effective Date
	Pet Visitation in the Hospital Policy Title	10/31/2016 Revised Date

Policy:

1. Pet visitation to specified patients at MDMH is allowed according to the following procedure.
2. Only dogs over the age of six months are allowed.
3. Birds and reptiles are specifically prohibited.
4. Seeing-eye or hearing dogs, or designated service dogs are exempt from the guidelines of this program.

Procedure:

1.0 Prior to the Visit


- 1.1 Before a pet can visit the hospital, the owner must obtain permission from his/her physician and a nursing manager/house supervisor.
- 1.2 The owner must designate a handler for the animal.
- 1.3 The owner and handler must read these visitation guidelines and sign a waiver before the first visit.
- 1.4 Pets are not allowed to visit patients who are on isolation or other special precautions.
- 1.5 Pets are not allowed in the following units: Emergency Department, ICU, Birthing Center, Surgery/OR, Recovery Room, and Clinical Decision Unit (CDU).
- 1.6 No more than one dog is allowed per visit.
- 1.7 Verification of current vaccination needs to be received before the first visit. The pet's veterinarian can fax the animal's vaccination record to the Nurse's Station at 375-4672, preferably prior to the animal's visits.
- 1.8 The owner/handler must complete and return to the House Supervisor prior to the scheduled pet visit the Consent for Participation and Release from Responsibility in the Pet Visitation Program (Appendix A).
- 1.9 Visits are limited to 30 minutes a day and must be scheduled with the House Supervisor after verification of vaccinations is complete.
- 1.10 Pets must be under the control of the handler with a leash or cage when entering the hospital.

2.0 On the day of the visit, the handler will:

- 2.1 Groom and/or bathe the animal within 24 hours of the visit. Dog nails should be trimmed short.

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- 2.2 Check the overall health of the animal: No sniffles, no sign of worms, no open sores, no change in appetite, and/or no abnormal drainage from anywhere. The pet should be free of fleas/ticks.
- 2.3 Call the nursing manager/House Supervisor before leaving for the hospital and verify the visit can still occur (i.e. no change in patient status that prohibits the visit).
- 2.4 Remember to bring a leash or cage.
- 2.5 Walk the animal and allow it to urinate and/or defecate before entering the hospital. The handler is responsible for cleaning up after the animal while on hospital grounds.

3.0 During the visit:

- 3.1 The pet must be leashed or in a cage before entering the hospital and at all times while being escorted to the patient's room.
- 3.2 The handler is to enter and leave the hospital via the exit designated by the House Supervisor.
- 3.3 The handler is to avoid excessive contact between the animal and other patients, staff and visitors.
- 3.4 Keep the door to the patient's room closed during the pet's visit.
- 3.5 Dogs must be kept under control at all times. Do not tie the pet to equipment or furniture or hand the leash to other people.
- 3.6 If the pet is going to be placed on the bed, wait for the patient's nurse to place a sheet on the bed.
- 3.7 If an accident occurs while inside the hospital, the handler should clean it up immediately:
 - 3.7.1 Soak up pet urine using paper towels, and pick up the soaked paper towels or feces using a plastic bag. Invert the bag, tie securely and place in the trash.
 - 3.7.2 Wash hands.
 - 3.7.3 Immediately notify the House Supervisor. Housekeeping staff will complete the cleaning process.
- 3.8 In the event of an injury to the patient, a visitor, staff, or the pet, immediately end the visit and notify the House Supervisor.

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**Appendix A
(Title)**



**Consent for Participation and Release from Responsibility
MDMH Pet Visitation Program**

The undersigned does hereby request the visitation of his/her pet as noted below:

Name of Pet _____ Dog Cat on _____.
(circle one) (Date)

The undersigned and pet handler have read and understood the Pet Visitation policy of Marcus Daly Memorial Hospital and agree to comply with all procedural requirements. The undersigned and handler do hereby release MDMH, its volunteers, agents, officers and directors, from any and all liability, actions, or claims for damages arising out of this pet visit.

The undersigned and handler warrant and confirm that they shall use best efforts to ensure that, during the periods of visitation at MDMH, both the welfare of the visiting animals and the person being visited shall be properly safeguarded.

The undersigned and handler do hereby further indemnify and hold harmless MDMH, its volunteers, agents, officers and directors, from any and all claims whatsoever arising out of or in any way connected with the visitation of this pet at MDMH.

Patient Signature Date

Nursing Signature Date

Place Patient Label Here

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