

STEVEN A. LAZARUS, PSY.D., INC.

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Consent Form For Animal-Assisted Therapy (AAT) & Animal-Assisted Activities (AAA)

AAT is a goal directed intervention, in which an animal that meets specific criteria is an integral part of the treatment process. This intervention will include a professional working within their scope of competency. The animal will be certified through an organization such as Professional Therapy Dogs of Colorado. This process will be documented and evaluated. According to Delta Society, "AAT is designed to promote improvement in human physical, social, emotional, behavioral, and cognitive functioning.

AAA's provide opportunities for motivational, educational, recreational, and therapeutic benefits to enhance quality of life. They are delivered in a variety of environments in association with animals that meet specific criteria.

Although every person is different, people who have participated in AAT have experienced the following benefits:

- Animals help improve motivation and engagement in therapy.
- Animals help build trust and provide a sense of security.
- Animals offer unconditional acceptance.
- Animals can act as symbols and metaphors in the client's life.
- Animals help in the areas of focus and attention.
- Animals act as agents of de-arousal as they help clients learn soothing and calming skills.
- Animals can be a source of social and emotional support.
- Animals can act as objects of attachment.
- Animals can be instruments of learning.
- Clients may project their own problems onto the animal.
- Animals offer humor and fun in the session as they help facilitate play.
- Animals help promote the character traits that include; caring, cooperation, compassion, empathy, gratitude, humanity, nurturance, patience, perseverance, respect, responsibility, self-control, self-esteem, and service.

Although AAT comes with many benefits, it also comes with inherent risks. When working with therapy animals we **cannot be 100% sure** that their behavior will always be predictable. We will follow Steven A. Lazarus, Psy.D. and Professional Therapy Dogs of Colorado's (PTDC) standards of practice as well as their policy and procedures in regard to animal participation. The companion animals participating have been medically screened and passed the nationally recognized Canine Good Citizen Test and PTDC's test. Knowing this, **I, and anyone who might claim on my behalf, release Steven A. Lazarus, Psy.D. and his staff from liability of any kind arising out of personal injury, and property damage resulting from my participation in AAT/AAA's.**

I assume all the foregoing risks and **accept personal responsibility** for all expenses, medical or otherwise, following any such damages or injuries, which may in any way be associated with my participation in AAT/AAA while working with Steven A. Lazarus, Psy.D. This may include but is not limited to injuries that the therapy animal or client sustains.

Any known aversions to animals or acts of animal abuse and/or neglect? Please explain:

Any known allergies _____

Emergency Contact name and number _____

Name of Client _____

Signature _____ Date _____