

More Than Words Counseling Services, PLLC

CONSENT AND RELEASE OF LIABILITY FOR ANIMAL ASSISTED THERAPY

Therapy animals can be a vital part of the treatment team; Susie Curtis hopes that you are comfortable with Chomper's presence in your sessions. However, because she is an animal, and not a human, we are responsible for her welfare. In addition, because she is an animal, her behavior cannot always be predictable. Therefore, it is important to discuss in advance the risks and rules needed to insure Chomper's and your safety and health, and try to create as safe a working situation as possible. In addition, it is important to provide you with diligent warning about the potential harm that could be present when working with animals.

Chomper has passed the American Kennel Club's Canine Good Citizen Exam. Susie Curtis has completed Animal Assisted Therapy Certification through the Delta Society. While some of these risks are listed below, we cannot foresee all potential problems that may occur. Therefore by signing this form you are releasing Susie Curtis, MA, LCMHC from any liability should any injury occur as part of your treatment here.

RISKS:

1. Chomper is given on going training to participate in therapy sessions as a therapy dog. You may opt to not have her as a part of your session by giving Susie Curtis 24 hour advanced notice, so that Susie Curtis can arrange for Chomper to not be present the day of your session.
2. Animals have their own natural defenses. While Susie Curtis will do everything possible to prevent any injury, it is possible that someone will get scratched or bitten.
3. Animals often use their mouths in play. Therefore, even when playing, it is possible for light biting to occur. When playing with a toy with Chomper, she may miss the toy and get your finger. When she realizes this, she releases and does not bite down, but you may still feel her teeth.
4. While Chomper has been screened by a veterinarian before commencing to work as a therapy animal, animals do sometimes carry disease. Because your contact is minimal, this risk is very small. Chomper is up to date on all of her vaccinations.
5. Chomper is not a "hypoallergenic" dog therefore there may be risk for allergic reaction. Please let me know if you typically have allergies to animals.

RULES:

1. Animals have individual rights, just as each client has rights. Therefore, Chomper is allowed to determine if and when she participates with others. While it may be planned to have her in session, she will never be forced to do so.
2. Chomper has her own quiet space in the office where she can rest, sleep, or just take a quiet break. She should not be disturbed when she is in this area.
3. Chomper should always be treated gently. She should never be hit, have her tail or any other parts pulled, be carried or treated in any other way that is uncomfortable to her.
4. Chomper will always need Susie Curtis present in any therapeutic situation.
5. If Chomper becomes irritated, scared, or in any way acts in a negative manner, I will put her in a safe place. No other person should touch her at these times.
6. Because of the unpredictability of animals in unfamiliar situations, clients may not bring their own animal to be involved in their therapy session.
7. Parents or guardians of children under the age of 12 must remain on the premises during their child's session.

By signing below you are stating your acceptance of these rules and risks and agree to accept full liability in the event that Chomper harms you or your child in any way in the course of treatment or you or your child is harmed in any way as a result of being on the property of 539 Calef Highway Suite 206 Epping, NH 03857 or at any other place while in the presence Susie Curtis, MA, LCMHC and Chomper.

Individual

Date

Parent/Guardian

Date