

Paws For Support



PAWS FOR SUPPORT HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

Type of Policy	PFS
Version Number	1.0
Date Revised	N/A
Review Period	2 years
Date for Review	October 2027
Signed by	

Links to other policies:

Paws For Support – Health and Safety Policy

1. Policy Statement

Paws For Support is committed to ensuring the health, safety, and welfare of its volunteers, members, therapy dogs, and the individuals and communities we serve. We aim to provide a safe and supportive environment during all activities, visits, and events involving our PFS dogs (Assistance and Therapy).

As part of the overall risk management process and culture, good health and safety management will help reduce injury, ill health and loss, help promote good mental health and help protect all who access our services.

2. Policy objectives

The objectives of this policy are:

- We comply with relevant health and safety legislation, including:
 - Health and Safety at Work (General) (Guernsey) Ordinance, 1987
 - Animal Welfare (Guernsey) Ordinance, 2012, which has been amended by the [Animal Welfare \(Guernsey\) \(Amendment\) Ordinance, 2025](#).
 - The Equality Act 2010
- To ensure assessments of risk are completed for all activities undertaken by the charity, and assessments are reviewed / revised as necessary, and records are maintained in accordance with legal requirement;
- To promote and maintain the health and safety of all members and volunteers whilst undertaking activities with PFS.
- To avoid unnecessary injury, illness or loss of well-being.
- To provide environments that ensures, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of all members and volunteers;

- To ensure all Trustees, members and volunteers are aware of their responsibilities regarding health and safety;
- To secure the support and commitment of all members and volunteers

3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All Paws For Support Members and volunteers - including therapy and assistance dog handlers, trainers, supporters, etc.
- All clients e.g. nursing home staff and residents, office workers, schools staff and children, Court staff and attendees, 1-1 service users, Hospital staff and patients, Day centre staff and attendees, groups, clubs, charities and organisations (including youth) attendees etc.
- Members of the public interacting with our dogs
- Venues used by PFS e.g. Office at grow, UnLtd, Friquet Garden Centre, Saumarez Park, Cafe's, Nursing Homes, Adhoc additional venues etc.

4. Responsibilities

- **Trustees:** Ensure health and safety is embedded in membership paperwork, governance and risk management.
- **Members and Volunteers:** Taking reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their work activities and ensure they follow safety procedures and report hazards or incidents
- **Trainers and Assessors:** Ensure the dogs are trained to PFS standards and suitable for public interaction.
- **Dog Handlers:** Ensure dogs are healthy, trained to PFS standards and well handled.
- **Venues used by PFS:** Provide safe environments for visits and events.

5. Risk Assessment

- Risk assessments are conducted for all venues and activities.
- Assessments include:

- Bi-annual therapy Dog assessment process - which includes temperament and suitability.
- Annual Public Access Assessments for all Qualified Disability Assistance Dogs.
- Environmental hazards -
 - All regularly used venues e.g. UnLtd, Grow Office, etc. to be included
 - Generic assessments for all other venues e.g. Beau Sejour, Waitrose, Aladdins Cave, Community Centres, Huts/Clubrooms, Church halls etc.
 - Schools conduct their own risk assessments
 - Events e.g. West Show, Sea Front Sunday, Annual Pet Dog Show, Charities Fayre etc.
- Annual Vet check form to help prevent Infection control dog to dog and dog to person.
- Allergies and phobias
 - Schools - opt out letter for all parent Guardians to inform of allergies/phobias
 - All other visits - permission is gained before interaction happens - encouraging individuals to report on allergies or phobias
 - Nursing homes and Hospital where those being visited are unable to express themselves - staff judgement would be sort for permission.

6. Dog Welfare

- Dogs must be:
 - Regularly health-checked by a vet - Form completed annually
 - Vaccinated and parasite-free - Form completed annually
 - Either trained for therapy work and assessed for suitability or trained and assessed for Disability Assistance Public Access.
 - Therapy Dogs Re-assessed every 2 years for continued standard of suitability
 - Assistance dog re-assessed every year for continued standard and suitability

- Handlers must monitor dogs for signs of stress or fatigue - dog body language taught to all handlers and understanding checked in assessments and re-assessments
- Assistance Dog handlers must make sure water, water bowl, specialist shoes and any other relevant equipment is provided and used.

7. Infection /Control

- Hand hygiene encouraged before and after interactions
- Dogs groomed regularly and towels provided by PFS to all members.
- Raw fed dogs closely monitored for any signs of illness and would not go on visits.
- Any incidents of bites or scratches must be reported and documented

8. Safeguarding

- All members working their therapy dogs with vulnerable groups (both adult and children), undergo DBS checks
- Safeguarding training is provided for all trainers and Trustees and members
- Verbal consent is obtained for all interactions with children or vulnerable adults by supervising adult or parent / guardian.

9. Incident Reporting

- All accidents, injuries, or near misses must be reported to one of the trustees.
- All incidents will be entered onto the incident register document
- Policies are reviewed to improve safety measures and adjust risk assessments where necessary.

10. Training

- All members receive training covering:
 - Health and safety around other dogs and people
 - Dog handling
 - Safe Guarding
- All members are made aware of policies and procedures for:-
 - Health and safety
 - Privacy Policy

- Emergency procedures - e.g. fire alarm procedures

11. Review

This policy is reviewed every 2 years or following any significant incident or change in legislation.