

Planning a Group Event with Pets & People

Pets & People wants your group event to run smoothly. We developed this guide to help you through the steps and considerations when planning your group event at your school or workplace.

Key elements for a successful group event:

SPACE: An accessible, comfortable open area that will allow at least 6-7 feet between each participating therapy team. This area should be visible but not interfere with foot traffic. Outdoors during good weather is fine BUT a back-up location indoors should be planned. Sitting areas with furniture that can be moved to the perimeter of a room or just off the lobby of a centrally located entrance or meeting area are ideal as there could be as many as 5 to 6 animals and their handlers in the area at one time. When requesting cat therapy teams, kindly provide a slightly separate area to accommodate them.

TIME: Events are usually 90 minutes in length, though longer ones are possible by staggering teams and times so that the animals do not become overtired. For schools, a date and time just prior to the start of the exam or study period when students are generally on campus and not at a major sports or other event works best. Boston-based schools are likely to have more therapy teams able to participate if the event is scheduled for late afternoon, early evening or weekends.

ACCOMMODATIONS: Providing parking within easy access to the event site is essential. Parking should be not more than a 5 minute walk to the event location. Pets & People requests that the event sponsor cover all costs of parking and provide parking passes to the nearby lots or garages.

PROMOTION: Remember to promote your event. Let folks know that the pet therapy teams are coming. Use web portals, campus and/or internal bulletin boards, social media, etc., to let everyone know of the event and its details.

PRESENCE: A designated staff member or employee must be on-site throughout the event.

What are the steps for planning a group event?

1. Be sure to have your proposed event approved by your own administration or management staff before requesting the event through Pets & People.
2. At least 6 weeks before your desired event date, complete and submit a Pets & Event Request which can be found [here](#). Be sure to have an alternate event date in mind should there be a conflict with other Pets & People events.
3. After submission, the Pets & People Event Coordinator will be in touch with you to confirm detail of your event.
4. Following confirmation of your event details, the Pets & People Event Coordinator will post and circulate news of the event to our membership and request sign-ups. Pets & People maintains calendar of events. The earlier your Event Request is submitted, the more time that it will be “advertised” to our therapy teams.
5. Once an event is posted, Pets & People will designate a volunteer to be the Team Leader who will act as the liaison between our volunteers and the designated staff member or employee during planning and on the day of the event.
6. As the event date draws closer, be sure to increase the event promotion. Community web portals, intranets, student activities news and events sites and blogs as well as Facebook and Twitter are all excellent avenues to create awareness. Pets & People respectfully requests that our name and logo be present on all promotional materials.
7. Cancellations/last minute changes happen. If weather or other unforeseen factors require that you cancel your event or change the location of your event, please communicate those changes as quickly as possible by mobile phone to the Pets & People Team Leader and Event Coordinator. One of them will be back to you to confirm the details and to determine next steps.
8. Liability Insurance: Pets & People carries general liability coverage that protects Pets & People volunteers and board members. A copy of our Certificate of Insurance (COI) coverage is available upon request. ***This Liability Insurance coverage does NOT extend to those organizations and participants where Pets & People teams visit.*** If your organization wishes to be added to the policy as a named insured for the Event you can do so by submitting your request along with a check for \$100 payable to Pets & People and mailed to the address below at least three weeks prior to the Event.
9. Water Bowls: Therapy pets get thirsty doing their jobs. So, while not essential, having two or three large water bowls nearby for the dogs or having accessibility to water will be greatly appreciated.