



Informed Consent Documentation for the Inclusion of Therapy Animals in Professionalized Settings

If you're a professional who aims to unleash the power of the human-animal bond within your vocational offerings, you'll need to have an informed consent document that is specifically inclusive of your animal-assisted intervention (AAI) offerings. As you create that document for your practice, consider including these important components.

1. Description of Services:

Briefly describe the kind of AAI you incorporate into your work. Is it AAT, AAE, ARE? Provide your client with details about the services you offer.

2. Therapy Animal Registration:

Provide information about the therapy animal organization with whom you are registered. Briefly outline the corresponding standards of practice of the organization.

3. Therapy Animal Background:

Provide information about your therapy animal. Details you might include in this section are: species, breed, age, size, training background, and personality traits.

4. Expectations and Risks:

What steps have you taken to minimize the risks associated with AAI? How will you respond to risks in session? List the risks associated with your type of AAI offerings. Inform clients that they are to closely follow all directives when working with therapy animals.

5. Release of Liability:

You may wish to include a release of liability for your client to sign as a portion of your informed consent documentation.

6. Signature:

Once you have reviewed the information with your client, obtain signatures and provide clients with a copy of the consent document. If your client is unable to provide consent for the intervention, be sure to obtain a signature from their caregiver.

*To learn more about key considerations and documentation for AAI Professionals, check out our Animal Welfare and Well-being Course.