



www.morningstartherapydogs.org

MORNINGSTAR THERAPY DOGS (MTD)
Application Associate Membership

Dear applicant for an Associate Membership,

We are delighted that you wish to continue as a member of Morningstar Therapy Dogs although you are no longer able to do visits with your therapy dog. There is always a spot in our organization to leverage your talents and know you will be a valuable resource for our therapy dog teams.

As an Associate Member, you will continue to have voting rights and may be an officer as long as you attend at least 6 Morningstar meetings or functions per year per Item #5.3 Associate Membership. A copy of our current Bylaws is attached.

Thank you for your continued participation as an Associate Member in Morningstar Therapy Dogs.

Joy Styer
MTD Membership Officer

Email sbboh4432@gmail.com
Phone 970-240-1561

Morningstar Therapy Dogs Bylaws

April 11, 2006 and revisions adopted 6/13/2006, 2/09/2010, 3/09/2010, 12/14/2021, 05/09/2023, 11/14/2023, 4/8/2025, 8/12/2025

1. Name

The name of this organization, located in Montrose, Colorado, will be “Morningstar Therapy Dogs,” hereafter referred to as MTD.

2. Mission

The MTD mission is to:

- Promote and provide therapy dog visits to area nursing homes, hospitals, hospice, rehabilitation centers and other medical and mental health facilities
- Promote and provide therapy dog visits to schools, libraries, and other educational facilities and cooperate with them in providing therapy dog assisted reading and literacy programs
- Promote the philosophy of therapy dog programs, animal assisted activities, and animal welfare in general
- Provide, when possible, monetary and/or non-monetary contributions to facilities served

3. Registrations and Conduct

All dogs and handlers participating in MTD-sponsored therapy dog visits must be registered by a nationally recognized therapy dog program where dog/handler teams are observed in person as part of the registering process of that program. The teams must follow that program’s recommended practices during visits. The national therapy dog organization must provide insurance for sponsored visiting activities; teams are responsible for understanding and following their program’s requirements for maintaining insurance coverage.

Participation in MTD-sponsored community events such as parades and fundraisers will require registration of therapy dog teams.

MTD members and their dogs engaged in any MTD-sponsored visit or event will conduct themselves in a manner that reflects positively on their registering organization and MTD. Members will also abide by volunteer policies, if any, of the particular facility they wish to visit.

If a member is found guilty of conduct contrary to the ideals and purposes of MTD, that person may be asked to resign or may lose membership following a recommendation by the Executive Committee sitting as the MTD Board of Directors. Loss of membership would require a majority vote of the membership providing a quorum is present.

4. Not for Profit Operations

MTD is considered a public charity under section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code.

5. Membership

5.1 Full Time Active Membership

MTD voting membership is open only to registered handlers with dogs except as stated under Section 5.2 herein. A person who lives in the Montrose, Colorado area or nearby surrounding communities served by Morningstar Therapy Dogs, who desires to participate with MTD in accomplishing its mission as set forth in these bylaws, and is registered or certified by a nationally recognized therapy dog program as set forth in Section 3 may apply for membership. All active members will have voting status and may be MTD officers.

Full time active members or those applying for active membership must agree to attend six (6) MTD meetings or functions annually, and make the number of team visits required by their national registering/certifying organization.

Full time active members are responsible for keeping their own records and renewing their membership in a national organization in a timely manner before their membership expires. Members are required to provide a copy of their national organization's annual membership card to the membership officer upon each annual renewal.

5.2 Part Time Membership

A part time non-voting membership is available to registered or certified handlers who desire to participate with MTD in accomplishing its mission while they are living in the area served by MTD. Due to their part time status, these members will not have voting rights, hold office, or be issued a free Morningstar vest. They may make visits, attend meetings and functions, and serve on committees.

In order to be considered active, part time members must attend three (3) MTD meetings or functions annually, and make the number of team visits required by their national registering/certifying organization.

Part time active members are responsible for keeping their own records and renewing their membership in a national organization in a timely manner before their membership expires. Members are required to provide a copy of their national organization's annual membership card to the membership officer upon each annual renewal.

5.3 Associate Membership

MTD voting membership may be retained by members without active dogs under some circumstances including but not limited to:

- Loss of dog through death
- Retirement of dog through disability or development of a condition which makes it unable or unsuitable to participate in therapy dog activities

Members in this category will be excused from the visiting requirement but must continue to meet the foregoing requirement regarding meeting/activity attendance in order to maintain voting status. Members in this category must notify MTD of their status and desire to continue to participate with MTD by completing an Associate Member Application. Associate Members will have voting status and may hold office.

5.4 Inactive membership

MTD members will be considered inactive if one or more of the following circumstances occur.

- Failure to attend at least 6 meetings or events per year as stated as a Requirement for active membership. (Section 5.1)
- Missing scheduled visits without notifying the agency or attempting to find a substitute
- Failure to follow the rules and regulations established by the certifying agency.

- Lapse in membership with national organization
- Conduct unbecoming (See Section 3, Registrations and Conduct)

Inactive members will not have voting privileges and may not hold office. Inactive members cannot conduct any visits on behalf of MTD while in inactive status. After a period of one year, during which the requirements of active membership have not been fulfilled, inactive members will be notified that their MTD membership will be dropped unless they request reinstatement as an active member. In this case, they must fulfill their duties as an active member as outlined in Section 5.1 under Active Membership.

Any inactive member may reactivate membership if the MTD Board of Directors feels the circumstances in question have been addressed. Reactivation of members would require a majority vote of the membership providing a quorum is present.

5.5 Honorary Membership

Honorary memberships are given as an honor and in recognition for contributions to MTD without the individual having to fulfill the usual requirements or duties of membership. Honorary members may receive notices and announcements for MTD meetings and activities if they wish to be kept informed.

5.6 Exceptions

Should extenuating circumstances exist that are not addressed in these bylaws, any member of MTD may request a waiver of these membership requirements. Such waiver may be granted by a majority vote of the membership providing a quorum is present.

5.7 Vests

If they wish, all full time active members with dogs who have fulfilled the requirements for active membership (see Item #5.1) will be provided a yellow vest at no charge for their dogs, indicating their membership in MTD. In order to keep the vest, a member must remain active as defined in Item #5.1.

In addition, a member who stops making therapy visits due to conditions listed under “Associate Membership” may keep the vest. Any members leaving MTD for other reasons must return the vest or refrain from having their dog wear it in public.

6. Dues

No dues are required.

7. Governing Board, Officers, and Standing Committees

7.1 Governing Board

7.1.1 General authority: The governing board of directors of MTD is responsible for setting policy for the organization, monitoring the organization’s operations and services, overseeing fundraising and reporting, serving as public figures for the organization, advocating for the organization, and fulfilling other board responsibilities as needed.

7.1.2 Composition of the Board: The MTD Board of Directors shall be composed of the members of the Executive Committee and shall hold concurrent terms of office. As the membership grows, additional representation may be desired or needed; therefore, the membership may elect up to 4 directors at large, with a simple majority vote provided

there is a quorum present. Terms shall be for one year, with elections coinciding with the annual election of officers. If a vacancy occurs, the membership may fill the vacancy by the affirmative vote of a majority of the membership; a director elected to fill a vacancy shall hold office until the next annual meeting.

7.1.3 **Resignation or Removal:** A director may resign by delivering a written notice to Board or President of MTD. Any MTD member may propose the removal of a director by making a motion to that effect at a regular MTD meeting. A second will be required. The proposed removal will be voted upon at the MTD meeting following the meeting at which the motion was made. Provided that a quorum is present, the motion will be carried by a simple majority.

7.1.4 **Compensation:** There will be no compensation of the directors.

7.1.5 **Meetings:** All meetings of the MTD Board of Directors shall be held in Montrose, Colorado, at such place as they may determine.

7.1.6 **Manner of acting:** If a quorum is present when a vote is taken, the affirmative vote of a majority of directors present is the act of the Board.

7.2 **Officers**

7.2.1 **Number and term:** MTD will annually elect the following officers, of whom at least 50% should be active members: President, Secretary, Treasurer, Membership Officer, Publicity Officer and Liaison Officer. Elections will occur at the December meeting and officers will serve for one year from January to December. One person may hold more than one office. Should an office be vacated, a special election may be held at any regular MTD meeting.

7.2.1.1 **President:** The President will conduct meetings and be one of the authorized signatories for the MTD checking account. The President will provide overall leadership of MTD and delegate additional duties as needed, such as the appointment of standing and ad hoc committee members.

7.2.1.2 **Secretary:** The Secretary will keep and distribute the meeting minutes. The Secretary will also keep a log of the number of visits provided by members, meetings attended, and activity participation. The Secretary may conduct the meeting in the absence of the President.

7.2.1.3 **Treasurer:** The Treasurer will monitor and report the status of the MTD checking account at each meeting, including income, expenses, and balance. The Treasurer will be one of the authorized signatories for the MTD checking account. The Treasurer is responsible for yearly reports as required to maintain State papers of incorporation and Federal 501(c)3 status. The Treasurer may conduct the meeting in the absence of the President.

7.2.1.4 **Publicity Officer:** The Publicity Officer will provide news releases that describe MTD activities to local print and electronic media and will advertise MTD meeting dates and times. The Publicity Officer will chair the Publicity Committee.

7.2.1.5 **Membership Officer:** The Membership Officer will be the main contact for prospective members. The Membership Officer will recruit new members and will maintain membership applications, membership roster and contact list.

7.2.1.6 Liaison Officer: The Liaison Officer serves as a public relations contact to coordinate between members and the community to schedule therapy dog visits. The Liaison Officer will chair the Community Liaison Committee.

7.2.2 Provision for additional officers: The Executive Committee may consider additional officers should the need arise; the addition of proposed officers will be brought before the membership prior to the annual election meeting and will require a simple majority vote of the membership provided a quorum is present.

7.3 Standing committees:

7.3.1 Executive Committee: The Executive Committee will consist of the President, Immediate past President, Secretary, Treasurer, Membership Officer, Publicity Officer, and Liaison Officer. If additional offices are created per section 7.2.2, those officers will become part of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee will sit as the Board of Directors of MTD as described in Section 7.1.

7.3.2 Publicity Committee: The Publicity Committee serves to assist the Publicity Officer and to market MTD to the community. This committee shall be responsible for educating and informing the public regarding the mission and purpose of MTD.

7.3.3 Community Liaison Committee: The Community Liaison Committee serves to assist the Liaison Officer. The Committee will conduct community outreach activities and coordinate nontherapy activities such as fundraising, appearances and parades. The committee will identify opportunities for serving the community and organize implementation of therapy dog programs or animal assisted activities.

7.3.4 Additional Standing Committees: The Executive Committee may add or dissolve standing committees as the need arises.

7.3.5 Ad Hoc Committees: The President may appoint or dissolve ad hoc committees as the need arises.

8. Meetings

MTD will have one regularly scheduled meeting each month. Meetings may be canceled, rescheduled, or additional meetings called by the President or by a simple majority vote of the members present at a regular meeting.

9. Finances

The President and the Treasurer are authorized to establish a MTD checking account at a local financial institution. Checks written on this account will require the Treasurer's signature or the signature of the President. Approval to make expenditures from this account will be made by simple majority vote of the members present at any MTD meeting. Approval to make expenditures from this account for administrative purposes may also be made by majority vote of the executive committee sitting as governing board of MTD.

Members and/or officers of MTD have no contract rights and will receive no monetary compensation.

Members are responsible for payment of any fees required for membership in their registering organization.

10. Training

Obedience training and preparation for therapy dog work is the responsibility of the individual member or prospective member.

11. Conduct of Meetings

The President will prepare and distribute an agenda for each meeting.

Motions and seconds will be required for all questions put to the membership.

A simple majority of the voting members present will decide a question, provided that a quorum is present, unless otherwise specified in these bylaws. A quorum will consist of more than 50% of the voting members. A voting member unable to attend a meeting may be represented by a proxy if the proxy is designated in writing. Any written proxy designation must specify for which meeting or meetings the designation is being made. Proxies will count toward the achieving of a quorum.

12. General Provisions

12.1 Bylaw Adoption and Revision

These bylaws will be adopted by simple majority vote at a meeting following their introduction. The President shall designate the meeting at which these bylaws will be voted upon. Subsequent changes to these bylaws may be made by simple majority vote at a meeting following the introduction of such changes, provided that a quorum is present.

12.2 Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of MTD shall begin January 1 and end December 31 of each year.

12.3 Financial Reports

A financial report shall be prepared at the end of each calendar year and submitted to the MTD Board. The Treasurer shall be responsible for this report and any reports necessary for maintaining state papers of incorporation and maintaining Federal 501(c) 3 status as a non-profit organization. At the discretion of the Board of Directors, MTD may engage an independent certified public accountant to audit or review the financial statements.

12.4 Indemnification

Officers, directors, fiduciaries and agents of MTD shall be entitled to indemnification to the maximum extent permitted by Colorado law.

Date introduced: March 14, 2006

Date adopted: April 11, 2006

First Revision introduced: May 9, 2006

First Revision adopted: June 13, 2006

Multiple Revisions introduced: October 10, 2009 through February 9, 2010 (after attaining 501(c)3 status)

Revisions adopted: 2/9/2010, 3/9/2010, 12/14/2021, 5/9/2023, 11/14/2023, 4/8/2025, 8/12/ 2025



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Application for Associate Membership

Pursuant to Morningstar Therapy Dogs Bylaws Item #5.3, as an Associate Member without an active dog, you may retain voting rights and hold office in our organization.

You will be excused from the visiting requirement but must continue to meet the requirements regarding meeting or function attendance in order to maintain your voting status and eligibility for office.

I have been given a copy of Morningstar Therapy Dogs Bylaws, and I have read and understand the duties and responsibilities of being an Associate Member of this organization. If I fail to abide by these Bylaws, I will cease to represent myself as a member of MTD.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Dated this _____ day of _____, _____.

Printed Name _____

Signature _____

Please return to MTD Membership Officer:

Joy Styer
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Montrose, Co 81403
Phone 970-240-1561
Email sbboh4432@gmail.com