



www.morningstartherapydogs.org

MORNINGSTAR THERAPY DOGS (MTD)
Application for Full-Time Membership

Dear applicant for Full-Time Active membership,

We are delighted that you wish to become a member of Morningstar Therapy Dogs. We are here to support you on the wonderful journey of working with your dog to bring “smiles and joy” to members of the Montrose community and the surrounding areas.

Also, congratulations on obtaining certification from a nationally recognized therapy dog association. That certification demonstrates that you have met the requirements to be a successful therapy dog team and are ready to begin visits on behalf of Morningstar.

A copy of our current Bylaws is attached. Please review the Bylaws before filling out the application, paying particular attention to Item # 5.1 Full Time Active Membership, so that you are aware of the requirements to be considered a “full time active member.” Along with making the required number of visits as set forth by your national certifying organization, a full-time active member must attend at least 6 Morningstar meetings or functions per year.

After your application for Morningstar is approved, upon your request, you will receive a Morningstar Therapy Dogs vest with your dog’s name on it that can be worn during visits. You are not required to take advantage of this free vest nor is your dog required to wear a vest. Some members use vests ordered online. Please note the provisions of Item #5.7 Vests in the Bylaws.

We also provide you with 40 bookmarks with your dog's picture on it and information about your team. These are nice mementos to leave with organizations or people you visit to remind them of the joy your dog brought to them.

Thank you for your interest in therapy dogs, and we look forward to having you as a member of 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



www.morningstartherapydogs.org

Application for Full Time Active Membership

Handler's Information

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Dog's Information

Name _____

Breed, if known _____

Age _____ M _____ F _____ Spayed/Neutered Y _____ N _____

Name of Certifying Organization:

ID or Member # _____

Valid from _____ to _____

I attest that my dog and I are certified by the nationally-recognized therapy dog organization listed above, and I have attached a copy of my dog's current membership card in a national certifying organization. I agree that I will attend at least six (6) Morningstar Therapy Dog meetings or events annually.

I have been given a copy of Morningstar Therapy Dogs By-Laws and I have read and understand the duties and responsibilities of being a member of this group. If I fail to abide by these By-Laws, I will return the provided dog vest to MTD and cease to represent myself and my dog as a member of MTD.

Dated this _____ day of _____, _____.

Printed Name

Signature

Please return to MTD Membership Officer:

Joy Styer
59715 Spring Creek Road
Montrose, Co 81403
Phone 970-240-1561
Email sbboh4432@gmail.com



MORNINGSTAR THERAPY DOGS (MTD) VEST

A gift for you from Morningstar

As an active member of Morningstar, your dog can be issued a vest to wear when making visits. There is **no charge** to you for the vest. You are not required to get a Morningstar vest if you'd rather not, but know that it is available if you wish to have one. The vests are yellow with the Morningstar logo on the side and your dog's name on the back. Please note the provisions of Item #5.7 Vests in the Bylaws.

If you would like to have a vest made, please call Susan Vinson at 404-312-6148 to make arrangements to have your dog measured.

Thank you for your interest in therapy dogs, and we look forward to having you as a member of Morningstar Therapy Dogs.

Joy Styer
MTD Membership Officer

Email sbboh4432@gmail.com

Phone 970-240-1561



Topper proudly wearing her MTD Vest



www.morningstartherapydogs.org

MORNINGSTAR THERAPY DOGS (MTD) BOOKMARK
A gift for you from Morningstar

Dear active member,

Morningstar Therapy Dogs offers an opportunity for all MTD members to have a bookmark made with their dog's picture on it to pass out on visits. If you visit the library for "Read to Rover", the caption on the front would read "I read to (dog's name and photo)". If you don't visit the library, the caption reads "Look who visited me today!"

Morningstar Therapy Dogs will pay for the first 40 bookmarks. After that, if you wish to have more bookmarks, they can be printed at your own expense. We usually use Scott's Printing, but that would be your choice.

I have attached a sample of two of our recent bookmarks. As you can see, the dog's picture is on the front with a caption, and on the back is a short bio of the dog and the team.

Cathy Crim, one of our Morningstar members makes the bookmarks for us. She needs a close-up photo of your dog's face, and a short bio for the back.

She explains: "We want an individual picture of your dog. Faces are the best for the bookmarks. Face photos make the bookmarks more personal for the people receiving them. I can crop for a face, but the photo has to be high enough resolution that cropping doesn't take the face out of focus."

If you are interested, send a clear close- up HEAD SHOT of your dog, along with a brief bio for the back to me at sbboh4432@gmail.com and I'll forward them to Cathy. Let me know if you want a "Read to Rover" (library) bookmark or the more generic one.

Thanks,

Joy Styer
MTD Membership Officer

Email sbboh4432@gmail.com

Phone 970-240-1561



I read to...



River



River was born on March 13, 2021. He is a border collie, but is a little different from most border collies. They have long hair, but River has a short, smooth coat. He also has tan markings.

River loves agility. He runs a course with tunnels, jumps, teeter totters, weaves, and other fun obstacles! He is very fast!

He also loves scent work. He finds certain odors that are hidden inside or outside or also odors on cars!

River is now also a therapy dog. He loves kids and all people!!



Look who visited me!



Marley

Marley was born September 30, 2022, and was the "runt of the litter," meaning the shyest, smallest, and weakest of the puppies. Due to Marley's shyness, no one wanted him. He was offered to me, and he came to Montrose from Los Angeles, California.

Marley has worked extremely hard to overcome his difficulties, and as you can attest, he is one of the bravest, happiest, and most lovable dogs you will ever meet and pet.

Marley's favorite toy is a BIG rubber ring that squeaks and which he tosses in the air. He loves to go to the park and chase a tennis ball as far as I can throw it. He returns at the command "Come Marley, fetch the ball."

Marley also loves his girlfriend, a large golden retriever who is three times his size. They play, run, and roll in the grass. Marley then comes home to the EXCEPTIONALLY soft dog bed where he can snuggle down and sleep for a couple of hours.

Even though Marley was weak as a new puppy, he is now a strong 30-pound dog who protects our home at night by barking very loudly if someone approaches our house.

Marley says, "THANK YOU, you are now one of my best friends."