

### **CONSENT AND RELEASE OF LIABILITY FOR ANIMAL ASSISTED THERAPY**

Therapy animals can be a vital part of the treatment team. I hope that you are comfortable with Juno's presence in your sessions. However, because he is an animal, and not a human, we are responsible for his welfare. In addition, because he is an animal, his behavior cannot always be predictable. Therefore, it is important to discuss in advance the risks and rules needed to insure Juno's and your safety and health and try to create as safe a working situation as possible. In addition, it is important to provide you with diligent warning about the potential harm that could be present when working with animals. While I have listed some of these risks below, we cannot foresee all potential problems that may occur. Therefore by signing this form you are releasing Debra Eng, LCSW, PLLC from any liability should any injury occur as part of your treatment here.

**Potential Risks:** 1. Juno is not formally licensed to do Animal Assisted Therapy. He is enrolled in puppy training and will be taking classes as age appropriate to be trained to be a therapy dog. Should you prefer not to work with him, I am happy to put him on a leash to restrain him from interacting with you.

2. Animals have their own natural defenses. While I will do everything possible to prevent any injury, it is possible that someone will get scratched or bitten. Juno is teething and tends to want to bite clothing and hands. It is important to redirect him by putting toys and biting treats in his mouth.

3. Animals often use their mouths in play. Therefore, even when playing, it is possible for light biting to occur. When playing with a toy with Juno, he may miss the toy and get your finger. When he realizes this, he releases and does not bite down, but you may still feel his teeth.

4. While Juno has been screened by a veterinarian before commencing to work as a therapy animal, animals do sometimes carry disease. Because your contact is minimal, this risk is very small. Juno is up to date on all his vaccinations. However, he will not receive his Rabies vaccine until he is 16 weeks old.

5. Please let me know if you typically have allergies to animals. I will make every effort to thoroughly clean my office to remove dog hair and dander. However, if you are allergic to dogs, I am probably not the best fit for you.

#### **Guidelines for working with Juno:**

1. Animals have individual rights, just as each client has rights. Therefore, Juno can determine if and when he participates with others. While it may be planned to have him in session, he will never be forced to do so.

2. Juno has his own quiet space in the office where he can rest, sleep, or just take a quiet break. He should not be disturbed when he is in this area.

3. Juno should always be treated gently. He should never be hit, have his tail or any other parts pulled, be carried or treated in any other way that is uncomfortable to him. If he does not want to be held, he should not be forced to.

4. Juno will always need me present in any therapeutic situation.

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5. If Juno becomes irritated, scared, or in any way acts in a negative manner, I will put him in a safe place. No other person should touch him at these times.

6. Juno is on a restricted diet. Do not give him any treats that are not provided by Debra to give to him.

By signing below you are stating your acceptance of these rules and risks and agree to accept full liability in the event that Juno harms you or your child in any way in the course of treatment.

Client:

Date:

Witness: