

# Dress Code for FVTDC Handlers and Dogs

The Fox Valley Therapy Dog Club is a professional organization of trained dogs and handlers who work in a variety of venues and settings. We strive to present ourselves in a professional manner when we interact with the public. The way in which we dress should reflect pride in our organization and also provide a way for individuals in the community to easily identify us as dog handlers. In addition, we need to dress in a manner that allows us to respond quickly to any situation that might arise with our dogs. Clothing should be modest, comfortable and allow ease of movement.

**The following is the required dress code for FVTDC members when representing our club.**

1. **The club Identification badge should be worn at all times while in a facility.**
  - a. The only exception to this requirement is if a facility requires volunteers to wear the facility's ID badge. In this situation it is acceptable to wear the facility's badge only.
2. **A light to medium blue shirt embroidered with the official club logo on the front left side is required for all visits.**
  - a. The shirt should be a solid light to medium blue (no patterns), can be made from a variety of material (cotton, denim, fleece, etc.) and should be in good condition, free of holes or stains.
  - b. Shirts can be long or short-sleeved, pull-over, polo or button front.
  - c. A vest with the logo is permitted when worn over a long or short-sleeved shirt.
  - d. Shirts that are sleeveless, "tank" style, with a low cut front or "see-through" material are prohibited.
  - e. An exception to wearing a FVTDC logo shirt is if a facility requests us to be "in costume" for a special event such as Halloween. The club ID badge should still be worn.
3. **Pants may be either full length or mid calf length.** Pants may be of any material (including jeans) and any color but should be in good condition without holes, stains, or excessive wrinkling. Skirts, leggings and shorts are prohibited. Preferred colors are black, khaki or blue, but other colors may be worn as well.
4. **Shoes should be closed heeled and closed toed.** Many facilities have OSHA requirements that mandate closed toed and closed heeled shoes for employees or volunteers. This requirement is also for our own safety; open heeled or toed shoes could be a hazard in situations that require quick actions or movements. Sandals (with or without socks) and clogs are prohibited.
5. **Avoid strong perfume, cologne or scented lotion.** Many facilities discourage or prohibit the use of fragrances due to allergies. In addition, individuals with behavioral or cognitive disabilities or with an Autism Spectrum Disorder may find some scents upsetting, agitating or distracting.
6. **Dogs should be healthy, clean and well groomed during a visit.**
  - a. Dogs should wear their Fox Valley Therapy Dog Club collar tag at all times.
  - b. Dogs should be free of heavily scented shampoos or pet deodorant sprays.
  - c. Dogs that have any signs of illness such as diarrhea, vomiting, nasal or eye discharge, coughing, sneezing, skin abnormalities or disease such as open sores, skin parasites or recent surgeries should not go on a visit.
  - d. Dogs are required to wear a leather or fabric flat buckle or snap collar. Any other type of collar including pinch, chain, "martingale type", head-collar or harness is prohibited.
  - e. Dogs may wear a vest that indicates that he/she is a therapy dog if you like. The FVTDC logo may be displayed on the vest. They may also wear "festive" accessories whenever appropriate such as a bandana, decoration or holiday costume.
  - f. The leash should be from 4-6 feet in length. Retractable leads are prohibited.
7. **Failure to abide by the dress code.** Two or more reported incidents of failure to abide by the Dress Code may result in disciplinary action by the Board.

\*Special or unique visits or programs may call for different dress requirements (kids camp, parades, etc.). The facility leader or coordinator for the visit will make this determination.