

SPACE COAST THERAPY DOGS, INC.



BYLAWS

**Ratified by majority vote of membership, Annual Meeting,
January 25, 1997, Wickham Park, Melbourne, FL
Amended October 31, 2024**

BYLAWS OF SPACE COAST THERAPY DOGS, INC.

ARTICLE I. Name and Objectives

Section 1. Organization Name

The name of this Organization shall be "Space Coast Therapy Dogs, Incorporated," hereinafter "SCTD." SCTD may change its name by a majority vote of the Board.

Section 2. Objectives.

To promote charitable and educational objectives through its members using well-trained and obedient dogs for therapeutic contacts in hospitals, libraries, nursing facilities, schools, and other locations.

ARTICLE II. Membership

Section 1. Types of Members.

There will be two types of membership open to people who support SCTD. A member in good standing has paid annual dues (\$20), and has submitted the SCTD application form, a copy of their ATD membership card, and a copy of the completed ATD Health Verification form.

a. Single Memberships

Any dog handler 18 years of age or older may become a member of SCTD. Members must have current health records for participating dogs and proof of current ATD membership on file. Active members are entitled to vote and hold office. Visitations for SCTD shall be performed within the jurisdiction of the Space Coast (i.e. Brevard County) where the member resides. However, members on temporary travel outside of the county may perform visits at their discretion.

A husband-and-wife team where both members are certified through ATD are considered two teams. If only one person handles their therapy dog on visits, then the other person may continue as a guest. Per ATD, both teams may alternate handling their dog. However, in order to wear the SCTD red shirt, each person must be a member of SCTD.

b. Supporting Memberships

Anyone who supports SCTD without a dog may be a supporting member (\$10 annual fee). However, the supporting member may not vote or hold office on the board. Supporting members may live outside of the county or anywhere in the country.

c. Dues

The Board of Directors will set membership dues for each of the two types of membership, single and supporting. Dues are to be paid by January 31 of each year. Prior to the due date, members will be notified via email with a reminder to submit dues and paperwork. Membership will terminate on February 1 if member dues are not received by January 31. Applicants accepted for membership in the month of December, having paid applicable dues, will be considered paid in full through December of the next calendar year.

Section 2. Membership Requirements.

- a. All potential candidates for SCTD membership must undergo a required background check in compliance with requirements of ATD. This background check will be accomplished prior to contacting an ATD T/O to begin the testing/observation process.
- b. *Visits.* All members must comply with ATD rules and regulations. SCTD's primary focus with regards to visits is in sanctioned facilities only and not in visits to individuals in their homes due to limited SCTD resources. If a member wishes to make an individual visit to a private home, that member must notify the SCTD Board of the specific day, time, and location, and a second member must accompany the first member to ensure safety for both parties.

Members who take photos on visits must follow ATD guidelines for photos. An ATD photo release form must be obtained for every person in the photo, including background people; otherwise, their faces must be blurred.

- c. *SCTD Shirts.* SCTD members are required to wear red shirts with the SCTD logo embroidered on the front, left side. Embroidering the member's name opposite the logo is recommended so as to easily identify themselves with the clients they serve.
- d. *ATD Insurance Form.* ATD provides liability insurance that protects SCTD members from claims by others who may be injured and property damage during facility visits. Further definition can be found in the ATD handbook. Each SCTD member must obtain a copy of this insurance form from ATD via email request. The SCTD member's name will then be documented on the form as the claimant.
- e. *Resignation.* Any member in good standing may resign from SCTD upon written notice to the President.
- f. A member may be removed from SCTD by a majority vote of the board. Grounds for termination include: misconduct, harassment, or other behavior disruptive to the mission of SCTD in serving the public and working with other SCTD members; failure to comply with ATD's Code of Ethics; suspension of the member by ATD.

Section 3. New Membership Welcome Process

- 1. The new member's application is received.
- 2. Notification to the President will be made via email.

3. Notification is made to the new members acknowledging receipt of their membership application.
4. The President will perform a welcome call to the new member congratulating them on joining the organization. The President will explain the Bylaws and the calendar to the new member.
5. The President will notify the public relations contact who then emails the new member the *Space Coast Therapy Dogs Membership Guide*.

ARTICLE III Directors and Officers

Section 1. Board of Directors

The Board of Directors, hereinafter “Board,” comprises four (4) Officers and three (3) Directors. Directors and Officers will be single members in good standing who actively support SCTD through therapy dog visits, committees, and special events. General management of SCTD’s affairs will be entrusted to the Board. The immediate past President may become an automatic member (Director) on the incoming Board.

Section 2. Officers

SCTD’s Officers, consisting of the President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer, will serve in the following capacities:

President

- The President will prepare the quarterly and annual meeting agendas for all meetings including any necessary tag up meetings. (Tag up meetings are coordination meetings and do not require minutes.) The President will preside over all quarterly meetings and the annual meeting, ensuring timeliness of meeting notifications to the board and the SCTD membership for the annual meeting.
- The President will perform a welcome call to all new members. This greeting will include an inquiry into the new member’s background regarding previous therapy dog efforts. The President will inquire how the new member discovered SCTD and document this for the board’s future reference. The President will then introduce the new member via email to the SCTD membership.
- The President will lead the determination of annual awards to be presented at the annual meetings.
- The President will verify the SCTD domain name via Hover upon notification. The domain name *spacecoasttherapydogs.com* is required by the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) to be maintained properly in that all owners verify email address and first and last name of the owners is accurate. This verification is performed via Hover every five years at <https://www.hover.com/spacecoasttherapydogs.com>.
- The President will receive requests for new facility visits and initiate the new facility process (Article VII, Section 1)
- The President, along with the Treasurer, will maintain an SCTD credit card and will have signature authority on all SCTD checks.

- The President will ensure the transfer of debit cards to the next president as well as other officers, as required.

Vice President

- The Vice President will serve in the President's absence, for all quarterly and annual meetings.
- The VP will chair a nominating committee for the purpose of determining SCTD members willing to serve as board members.
- The VP will maintain ATD membership records, verification and health records, and the membership list, which is discussed at each quarterly meeting.
- The VP will manage the storage of SCTD property.

Secretary

- The Secretary will prepare and send the final quarterly meeting agendas once they have been developed by the President. These agendas are emailed to the board members at least one week before the meeting date. The Secretary will keep minutes of the meetings and then email minutes to the Board for review. All meeting agendas and minutes will be kept according to the records retention requirements.
- The Secretary will maintain the membership monthly visit calendar and email it to all members by the first of each month.
- The Secretary will send a thank you card to members who retire from service and mention the member's retirement in the quarterly meeting minutes. If a member's dog passes, the Secretary will send a condolence card and mention the dog's passing in the quarterly meeting minutes.
- The Secretary will maintain all board members' terms of office.
- The Secretary will create the Annual Participation Award certificates for the annual meetings.

Treasurer

- The Treasurer is responsible for all money received and dispensed by the board. No member of SCTD will incur any unbudgeted expense or liability without the proper consent of board majority.
- The Treasurer, along with the President, will have signature authority on all SCTD checks. All officers will have SCTD debit cards.
- All officers with debit cards are limited to a \$50 spending limit without board approval. All receipts must be submitted to the Treasurer.
- The Treasurer will ensure the organization has the latest tax-exempt form for all SCTD expenditures and will provide this form to the Secretary for archiving. At the time the tax form is set to expire, the Treasurer will apply for a new updated form via the IRS website.
- The Treasurer will report the monetary status at each quarterly meeting. Money will be deposited in the name of SCTD into a bank account.

- The Treasurer will prepare a financial report and a proposed annual budget for the annual meeting.

Section 3. Directors.

SCTD's Directors will attend and serve as voting members at Board meetings, participate in creating policy and operating procedures, and chair Special and Standing Committees.

Section 4. Term of Office.

The term of office for all Board members is two (2) years or until their successors are elected. The term of office for all Board members except the Treasurer will begin at the close of the Annual Meeting. The term of office for the newly elected Treasurer will begin on April 1 or on day one of the month following the general election of the Board. No one will serve more than two (2) consecutive terms in the same office with the exception of the President when there is not an Executive Board member (Vice-President, Secretary or Treasurer) willing to take that office at the time his/her term is over. In that case, the term may be extended one more year if a willing Executive Board member accepts the position but prefers a year's training before being considered for that office. Or the term may be extended two years if an Executive Board member accepts the position in the one-year extension but wants a year of training.

Section 5. Vacancies

A vacancy in the office of President will be automatically filled by the Vice President. Any other vacancies occurring on the Board will be filled to the end of the term by a majority vote of the Board.

Article IV. SCTD's Fiscal Year, Annual Meeting, Elections and Records

Section 1. SCTD Fiscal Year

SCTD's fiscal year will begin on February 1 and end on January 31. SCTD's Official year will begin immediately at the conclusion of the Annual Meeting and continue through the next Annual Meeting.

Section 2. Annual Meeting

SCTD's Annual Meeting will be held by the last Sunday in March, at which time the Board for the ensuing official year will be elected from those nominated, in accordance with Section 3. of this Article. Each retiring Officer will turn over to the successor in office all properties and records relating to that position, within 30 days after the election. A quorum for the Annual Meeting will be 30 percent of the members in good standing. If a quorum is not met, the Annual Meeting will be rescheduled within thirty (30) days, and members will be notified of the new date by phone, mail, e-mail, or through the website.

Section 3. Board Nominations

By November 15, the Vice President, acting as Chair of the nominating committee, will select two additional members in good standing. This committee will nominate candidates for the Board. The committee Chair will submit a verbal report to the President for the Board by February 1 so that the slate of nominees can be published at least one (1) month prior to the Annual Meeting and election. Any Single Member *[as*

described in ARTICLE II, Section 1, subsection (a)] in good standing is eligible to be a candidate on the ballot or from the floor, and may be elected to the Board under the following conditions:

- a. Any single member may be elected to the position of Director.
- b. Single members who have never served on the Board, and who have been in SCTD for six (6) months or longer at the time of the Annual Meeting and election, may be elected to the Board positions of Secretary and Treasurer, but not President and Vice President.
- c. Current and past Board members may be elected to any position.

No person may be a candidate in the SCTD election who has not been nominated. Nominations may also be made from the floor at the Annual Meeting, provided the person so nominated, is eligible and consents. No person may be a candidate for more than one Officer position. However, any person who runs for an Officer position but is not elected may request that his name be added to the list of candidates for Directors.

Section 4. SCTD Annual Awards

Several awards are given to SCTD members at the annual meeting that represent achievements earned during the year for visits and volunteer time served. These awards include:

- *New Rookie Teams* ribbons signify new members who joined that year.
- The *Louise Curry Longevity Award* is a trophy signifying the longest serving active team. This award cannot be given in consecutive years.
- *Most Active Team* trophy signifies the team serving the most hours in the year. This award cannot be given in consecutive years.
- *The Annual Participation Award* is a certificate signifying the participation of each team with the number of hours served.
- *Rainbow Bridge certificate and medallion* are awarded to those members whose therapy dogs have passed away during the year.

Section 5. Organization Records

All materials created by SCTD shall belong to SCTD.

All SCTD records relating to financials including IRS, banking receipts, etc., will be retained for a period of seven (7) years. All remaining operational records, i.e., applications for new membership, new therapy dogs, membership renewals, health records, incident reports, calendars, meeting agendas and meeting minutes will be retained for a period of three years.

If and when a member resigns, all associated records are promptly deleted.

Article V. Meetings and Voting

Section 1. Board Meetings

The President will plan and schedule quarterly board meetings that are acceptable to a majority of the board members. The annual meeting, including the SCTD membership is held typically the third week in March. Notification of the board meetings is one week prior along with the meeting agenda. A quorum for the quarterly meetings is a simple majority of board members. Members who cannot attend will notify the president in advance of the meeting. Special tag up meetings with board members may be called as needed to discuss specific topics or coordinate events for planning purposes. Meetings may be held in person or via teleconferencing methods.

Section 2. SCTD Membership Voting

Each SCTD member *[as described in ARTICLE II, Section 1, subsection (a)]* in good standing is entitled to one vote in any general membership meeting. Voting may be made by a show of hands where a simple majority determines the vote outcome. Proxy voting is not permitted at any SCTD meeting.

ARTICLE VI. Committees

Committees, Standing or Special, will be appointed by the President or by a majority vote of the Board. The President will be a member ex officio of all committees except the Elections Committee.

ARTICLE VII. SCTD Visits

Therapy dog visits may include but are not limited to hospitals, nursing homes, rehabilitation centers, assisted living facilities, libraries, schools, etc. Additional events include parades and community sponsored events where our organization is represented. ATD guidelines must be followed on all SCTD visits, and any incidents or accidents should be reported using proper ATD forms found on the ATD website, therapydogs.com. SCTD strongly recommends that therapy dogs be spayed/neutered.

Section 1 New Facility Visit Process

New SCTD Visits will be added in accordance with the following process:

1. The Board President will screen any requests for new facility visits, including requests received directly from ATD or through members.
2. The President issues a request for a prospective facility coordinator. The coordinator serves at the discretion of the board.
3. The newly identified facility coordinator works with the facility to determine a suitable date/time for visits and may perform a screening visit, if deemed necessary.
4. The date and time of the visit will be based on the current SCTD calendar and the facility's needs.

5. Visit information will be sent to the membership. If members are interested, the date and time will be finalized with the facility.
6. Visit information will be distributed to SCTD members and added to the SCTD calendar.

Section 2 Facilities Visit Coordinator

- The facility visit coordinator is the primary SCTD member liaison with the facility staff. The coordinator is responsible for ensuring that the SCTD teams visiting a particular facility are aware of any specific requirements defined by the facility. The coordinator will be aware of any special events occurring at the facility and make adjustments in schedule, notify SCTD of any date or other pertinent changes.
- The coordinator will be aware of any significant weather issues that may preclude team visits and make notification to the teams.
- The coordinator will inquire as to any medical conditions that would preclude facility visits and notify the teams.
- The coordinator will inquire as to any personal dogs making visits and declare to the facility contact that there will be no co-mingling of personal dogs with SCTD therapy dogs.

Section 3 Public Relations Contact

- The Public Relations Coordinator is responsible for the coordination of outreach between the public and the SCTD organization. Any community requests for SCTD participation in public events will be made via the PR contact. When a request is made for SCTD any events, the PR contact will notify the President who will then perform the new visit process but for only a onetime event (i.e., identifying a visit coordinator).

ARTICLE VIII. Amendments

The board may make amendments to the bylaws by simple majority vote of the board. Once approved, the change will be submitted to membership for review. If the change is rejected by 30% of the membership within a period of two weeks following notification, the change is not approved.

ARTICLE IX. Parliamentary Authority

Section 1. Governing Bylaws

SCTD will be governed by its Bylaws (which are guided by ATD), Board of Directors, and Standing Rules.

Section 2. Governing Rules

The rules contained in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* will govern SCTD in all cases to which they are applicable or in which they are not inconsistent with these Bylaws and any special rules of order that SCTD may adopt.

ARTICLE X. Records Retention

Members' pet health records and membership applications will be maintained for six years and then destroyed. If a member resigns or retires their dog, the member's records will then be destroyed. Supporting members' applications will be retained for three years then destroyed. All IRS records and bank records will be retained for seven years and then destroyed.

ARTICLE XI. Donations

The Board may approve donations for charitable canine purposes, within budgetary constraints, beneficial to both dogs and people connected to dogs (i.e., memorials, injury, illness, service dog rehab, etc.) by vote of email ballot or by show of hands at any regular Board meeting. The majority of the Board members present constitutes an approved vote.

ARTICLE XII. Endorsements

SCTD does not endorse businesses, products or services. No unauthorized ads for solicitations will be allowed on SCTD's website or social media platforms.

ARTICLE XIII. Dissolution

Should Space Coast Therapy Dogs, Inc. cease operations, the Board, after satisfying all liabilities, may elect to hold any assets for three (3) years in contemplation of resuming. SCTD will be distributed to other organizations exempt under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code. The Board may elect to distribute these assets to one or more organizations with preference for organizations with the same or similar purposes, or for any public purpose.