

COURTHOUSE THERAPY DOGS

Helping victims and witnesses through a difficult time.

Studies have shown that dogs provide a calming presence for victims when they need to testify in a court of law. They also can help take away the fear a child feels when they must testify - especially if they are facing an abuser.

TMH and its predecessor Animal Therapy Teams have been used successfully in a number of environments - including hospitals, rehabilitation centers and schools - since 1985. Our experience has shown that, when applied in the court system, the dogs can make a tremendous difference as well. Children, especially, are able to give more clear and accurate testimony so the healing process can begin.

The Courthouse Therapy Dog program in the Second Judicial Circuit of Florida has organized teams of dogs and handlers that are "matched" according to the specific needs of the case. These dogs are calm, well mannered and specially trained to work within the controlled environment of a courthouse.

FURTHER ASSURANCE

All animal therapy teams are well screened and have passed national tests. Participating dogs are certified by a veterinarian to be in good health and all handlers have passed background checks. Any interactions with team members in the court system are kept confidential.



Here to help

The partners behind Courthouse
Therapy Dogs of the
Second Judicial Circuit of Florida.

CONTACT US

STATE ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

The Victim/Witness Assistance Program
301 S. Monroe Street, Ste. 475
Tallahassee, FL 32399-2550
850-606-6117 (p)
SAO2fl.org

OFFICE OF COURT ADMINISTRATION

301 S. Monroe Street, Ste. 225
Tallahassee, FL 32301
850-606-4445 (p)
LeonCountyFL.gov/2ndCircuit/

TALLAHASSEE MEMORIAL HEALTHCARE

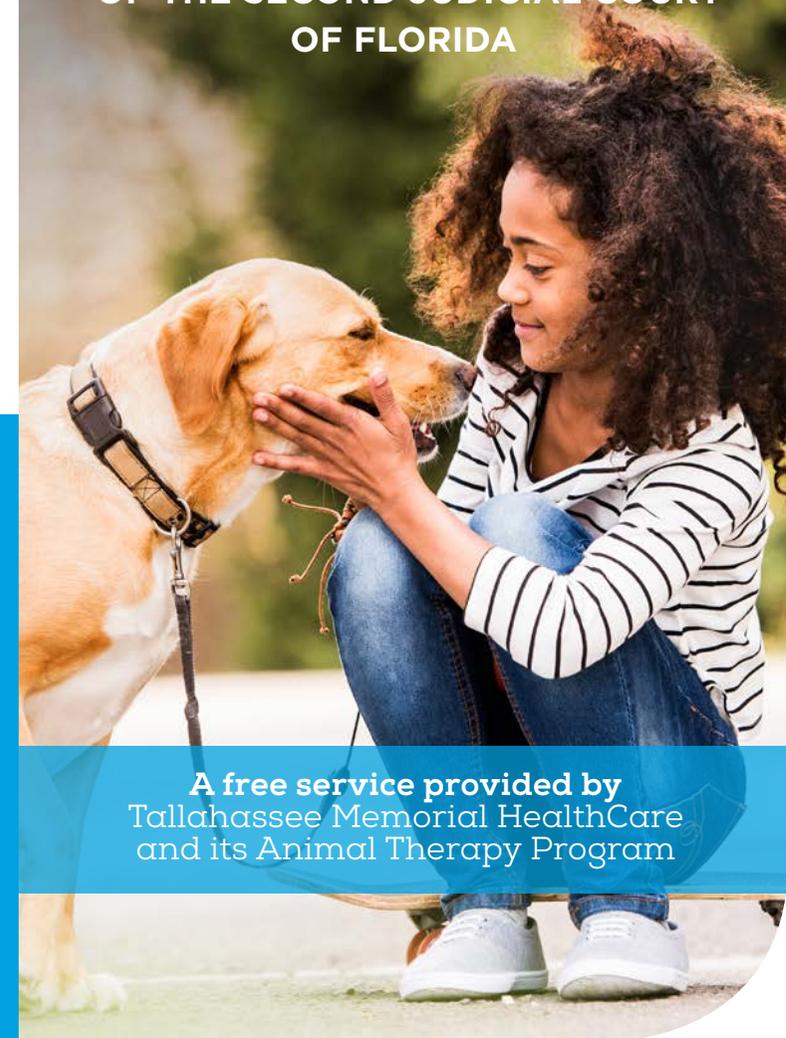
Animal Therapy Program
1300 Miccosukee Road
Tallahassee, FL 32308
850-431-5331 (p)
TMH.ORG/AnimalTherapy

FLCourtDogs.com

YOUR HOSPITAL FOR *life*

Courthouse Therapy Dogs

OF THE SECOND JUDICIAL COURT
OF FLORIDA



A free service provided by
Tallahassee Memorial HealthCare
and its Animal Therapy Program



A SPECIAL FRIEND FOR VICTIMS AND WITNESSES

Coming to court to testify can be traumatic for adults, and even more so for children. To help ease the tension, the State Attorney's Office has partnered with the Office of Court Administration to offer a Courthouse Therapy Dog program. This arrangement provides victims and witnesses comfort and reassurance during court appearances, including deposition, hearings and trial.

Interactions with Animal Therapy Teams can help by:

- Reducing anxiety
- Giving you a special "four legged" friend to talk to
- Providing a calming presence, so you can tell your story and provide a more accurate testimony



THE VICTIM/WITNESS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

We are here to provide information, support and guidance to you through the criminal and juvenile justice system.

We can help by:

- Explaining each step your case takes and what you can expect in the judicial system
- Keeping you informed about your case and important proceedings
- Preparing you for court appearances and accompanying you to court
- Providing crisis, bereavement and supportive counseling
- Providing information and referrals to community agencies
- Notifying your employer that your cooperation in this case may necessitate absences from work
- Notifying creditors of the reasons for financial hardship when it is a direct result of a crime
- Assisting with property return after completion of the case
- Explaining your rights as a victim and assisting you with writing a victim impact statement, restitution, or victim compensation
- Providing other services as needed such as transportation, separate pre-trial waiting areas and translator services

It is important that you keep our office advised of your current address and telephone number (work and home) at all times.

Please contact us with questions, concerns or if you just need to talk to someone at 850-606-6117.



If you think you or your child would benefit from the FREE program, please contact a Victim Advocate at 606-6117.

“

I don't think my child could have testified without the (courthouse therapy dog). I don't think she could have done the deposition without (the dog) and I just don't think she would be doing as well now without (this program) because that was her comfort; that (dog) was her friend.

- Mother of a child
victim of sexual abuse

”