

**CIRCUIT COURT
FIRST JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
STATE OF ILLINOIS**

CHRISTY W. SOLVERSON
Presiding Judge

Jackson County Courthouse
1001 Walnut Street
Murphysboro, Illinois 62966
618/687-7330 Fax: 618/ 687-7342

NEWS RELEASE

From: Jackson County Circuit Court

Contact: Patti Clark

Date: April 25, 2025

Re: National Therapy Animal Day

The Jackson County Courts will celebrate National Therapy Animal Day throughout the week of April 28, 2025, honoring the incredible impact therapy animals have in our community, particularly in the courthouse. Charlie, a certified therapy dog assigned to Jackson County, will appear at various hearings throughout the week including greeting a tour group of eighth graders and visiting drug court. Over the past few months, Charlie has become a familiar and welcome addition to the courthouse staff and the visiting public.

Therapy dogs play a unique and vital role in the judicial process by reducing stress and anxiety in court proceedings such as family court, juvenile neglect and abuse hearings, drug court and other emotionally charged hearings. Charlie also brings additional joy to special occasions such as long-awaited adoptions.

Benefits of Court Therapy Dogs:

Emotional Comfort – Children and vulnerable individuals often feel more secure when interacting with a calm friendly dog.

Improved Communication – A therapy dog’s presence can help witnesses and crime victims, especial youth, open up more easily during interviews and court hearings

Stress Reduction – For individuals struggling with substance abuse or trauma, the presence of a therapy dog can lower blood pressure and provide support

A calming presence for all – Even court staff and legal professionals find their days improved by as little as a few minutes with a therapy dog.

For more information, please contact Patti Clark, Director of Court Operations, at 618-687-7345 or email pec@jacksonco.net.

