Service Animals in Schools

The District acknowledges its responsibility to permit students and/or adults with disabilities to be accompanied by a service animal in its school buildings, in classrooms, and at school functions, as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act.

"Service animal" refers to any dog or miniature horse that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of someone with a disability. The provision of emotional support, well-being, comfort, or companionship does not constitute work or tasks for the purpose of this definition.

Use of service animals shall be subject to the following requirements:

1. The animal must be required for the individual with a disability.

2. The animal must be a dog or, in specific circumstances, a miniature horse. No other species of animal, whether wild or domestic, will be permitted in schools as a service animal.

3. Possible categories of possible uses:

    A. A member of the public who visits the District property may be accompanied by a service animal. Appropriate staff may ask the following questions only about the service animal if the answers are not obvious:

        I. Is this a service animal required because of a disability; and
        II. What work or task has the animal been trained to perform.

        Staff cannot ask about the person's disability, require medical documentation, require a special identification card or training documentation for the animal, or ask that the dog demonstrate its ability to perform the work or task.

    B. Any student who seeks to be accompanied by a service animal (including a service dog in training addressed below) while on school property shall have such request addressed via a Section 504 Plan, other applicable plan, including a potential Health Care Plan with the District. Such plan shall be prepared in accordance with standard District policy in conjunction with the student's parent/legal guardian. It shall be the responsibility of the parent/legal guardian to contact the school to commence this process.

C. Any employee who seeks to be accompanied by a service animal while on school property shall contact the District's Human Relations Department and shall work through the Americans with Disabilities Act process with the District.

4. Requests to permit a miniature horse to accompany a student or adult with a disability in school buildings, in classrooms, or at school functions will be handled on a case by-case basis, considering:

   A. The type, size, and weight of the miniature horse, and whether the facility can accommodate these features;
   B. Whether the handler has sufficient control of the miniature horse;
   C. Whether the miniature horse is housebroken; and
   D. Whether the miniature horse's presence in a specific facility compromises legitimate safety requirements that are necessary for safe operation.

5. Upon request, owners of service animals must provide proof of current vaccinations to the Superintendent with their request to be accompanied by a service animal.

6. All service animals must be kept clean and groomed to avoid shedding and dander, and must be treated for, and kept free of fleas and ticks

7. Owners of service animals are liable for any harm or injury caused by the animal to other students, staff, visitors, and/or property.

8. A service animal must have a harness, leash, or other tether, unless either the handler is unable because of a disability to use a harness, leash, or other tether, or the use of harness, leash, or other tether would interfere with the service animal's safe, effective performance of work or tasks, in which case the service animal must be otherwise under the handler's control, through voice control or other effective means.

9. The school system is not responsible for the care or supervision of a service animal, including walking the animal or responding to the animal's need to relieve itself.

   A. The District is not responsible for providing a staff member to walk the service animal or to provide any other care or assistance to the animal.

   B. Students with service animals are expected to care for and supervise their animal. In the case of a young child or a student with disabilities who is unable to care for or supervise his or her service animal, the parent is responsible for providing care and supervision of the animal.

   C. Issues related to the care and supervision of service animals will be addressed on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the building administrator.

D. Student requests for service animal-related accommodations will be reviewed based on the specific circumstances particular to the student in question and may be addressed in conjunction with a student's Section 504 Plan or Individual Education Plan.

10. A school administrator may ask an individual with a disability or his or her parents to remove a service animal from a school building, a classroom, or from a school function if any of the following circumstances occurs:

    A. The animal is out of control and the animal's handler does not take effective action to control it.
    B. The animal is not housebroken.
    C. The animal's presence would "fundamentally alter" the nature of the service, program, or activity.
    D. The animal's presence presents a direct threat to students, staff, or other individuals.

Service Dogs in Training

Any student's request to be accompanied by a service dog in training shall be assessed on a case by case basis according to their disability.

Non disabled handlers accompanied by service dogs in training shall carry and, upon request, display an Identification card, issued by a recognized school for service dogs or organization that services individuals with disabilities. Disabled handlers shall have the right to be accompanied by a service dog in training for the purposes of training on District property without producing an identification card.

However, regardless of whether the handler has a disability, the service dog in training must be identified by wearing a jacket, collar, scarf, or similar article identifying the dog as "in training."

Should other types of animals be recognized by federal and/or state law subsequent to the enacting of this Policy, this policy will be read as consistent as possible with regard to such animal until such time as this policy is amended.

Legal Reference:	I.C. § 18-5812B	Person May be Accompanied by a Service Dog-in-Training
	I.C. § 56-701A	Definitions
	I.C. § 56-704B	Rights of Individuals with Dogs-in-Training
	28 C.F.R. Part 35	Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability in State and Local Government Services (Implementing the ADA)

Policy History:

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