

Service Animals

Summary

Columbus State University follows the federal law regarding service animals.

Purpose

This document defines "service animal" and presents the expectations of the institution and of service animals and their owner.

Policy

A "service animal" is an animal that is trained to perform tasks that benefit an individual with a disability. Tasks include but are not limited to guiding individuals with impaired vision, alerting individuals who are hearing impaired to intruders or sound, pulling a wheelchair, or retrieving dropped items. Currently, animals that are recognized as service animals under the American with Disabilities Act of 1990 as amended by the Amendments Act of 2008 (P.L. 110-325) are dogs or miniature horses that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a physical, intellectual, or mental disability.

Therapy or emotional support animals are not considered service animals under the Americans with Disabilities Act *and* do not qualify as service animals as an accommodation.

- Service animals are welcome in all buildings on campus and may attend any class meeting or event.
- Reasonable behavior and cleanliness are expected from service animals.
- Service animals must be under the control of the handler at all times. Under the ADA, service animals must be harnessed, leashed, or tethered, unless these devices interfere with the service animal's work or the individual's disability prevents using these devices. In that case, the individual must maintain control of the animal through voice, signal, or other effective controls. While the owner/handler is responsible for the care or supervision of the animal, campus maintenance will provide assistance in the disposal and cleanup of animal waste if needed.
 - A person with a disability cannot be asked to remove his service animal from the premises unless: (1) the dog is out of control and the handler does

- not take effective action to control it or (2) the dog is not housebroken
 - if there is a legitimate reason to ask that a service animal be removed, the university must offer the person with the disability the opportunity to remain in the class or participate in the event without the animal's presences.
- City ordinances require that dogs or any other animal be vaccinated against rabies and also have city permit.
- Service animals in training are welcome on campus, however it is required that the handler notify the Center for Accommodation and Access and provide proof that the animal is in training.

For more information: http://www.ada.gov/service_animals_2010.htm

Service Animals in Science Labs - Guidelines

- Identify what support the animal provides - does it alert by jumping or pawing, is it a pick-up animal, i.e. is it likely to get hurt due to attempting to pick up something contaminated?
- A properly trained service dog should be able to maintain a down-stay in a safe location for the duration of the lab session, in an area that is close to the student, but it is well outside of any potential splashes, spills, etc. The dog may stay on a mat to protect the dog from anything on the floor.
- How close to the student the dog should be "parked" depends on the nature of the student's disability and the dog's tasks. If it's a mobility assistance dog, for example, and if the student is going to be staying at one station and not needing to move around in the lab, the dog could probably be parked across the room. If it's an alert dog that the student might need assistance from during the lab, then it needs to remain close enough to the student to provide that assistance while not interfering with students' ability to move around in the lab.
- What are the safety protocols for the lab? How are students protected? The professor should be asked to detail the precise hazards and safety protocols that exist in the lab, and then you consider how they would apply to the service dog
- If the only difference is that students wear shoes and the dog is barefoot, the dog can wear dog boots.
- If students are issued goggles or lab coats to protect against splatters, the dog can wear Doggles (look it up) or a dog raincoat. (it's the student's responsibility to provide the protective gear for the dog.)
- If students are wearing gloves, the reason for glove use probably doesn't apply to the dog, because the dog is not the one handling chemicals and equipment.
- If the lab environment would be hazardous to the dog (e.g., due to fumes), are there alternative accommodations that would enable the student to access the class?

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Related USG Policy

4.1.5 Students with Disabilities

Last Update

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Responsible Authority

Director of the Center for Accommodation and Access