

Faculty & Staff Guide to Service Animals

What is the purpose of a service animal?

Service animals are permitted on campus for the purpose of ensuring qualified individuals can participate in and benefit from District services, programs, and activities, and to ensure the District does not discriminate on the basis of disability.

What constitutes a service animal?

NOTE: Service animals are significantly different from emotional support animals.

Service Animals:

Service animals are specifically trained to do work for or perform tasks for individuals with disabilities that are directly related to the individual's disability. The need of the individual with a disability and the specific function the service animal is trained to perform legitimizes the use of such an animal under federal and state laws. The task the animal performs must be active not passive. Legally, only dogs and miniature horses are recognized as service animals. Documentation of an individual's disability nor verification of an animal's training are required under the law. Students may go through DSPS to have the use of a service animal included on their Accommodations Form; however, it is not required.

Emotional Support Animals:

Emotional support animals are also referred to as "comfort", "companion", or "therapy" animals. ESAs do not meet definitions of a *service animal* and, therefore, do not have the same ADA protections. ESAs need not have specific training; the presence of the animal alone provides support related to the individual's disability. ESAs are utilized for their calming influence, affections, stability, or a feeling of security. In the context of housing, ESAs are permitted in residences according to The Fair Housing Act. However, ESAs are not permitted on campus.

What tasks do service animals perform?

The work or tasks of the service animal must be directly related to the individual's disability. The work of the service animal must be active, not passive. The provision of emotional support, well-being, comfort, or companionship do not constitute work or tasks. Examples of work or tasks performed include, but are not limited to:

- Guiding individuals who are blind
 - Alerting individuals who are deaf
 - Reminding an individual to take medication
 - Alerting and protecting an individual who is having a seizure
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What questions may I ask students regarding service animals?

It is illegal to ask an individual to disclose their disability or the reason they have a service animal.

When it is not obvious what service an animal provides, college faculty/staff may ask only two questions:

1. Is the service animal required due to a disability?
2. What work or task does the animal provide?

Under what circumstances may use of a service animal be restricted?

Individuals using service animals may be asked by college faculty/staff to remove their service animal (not themselves) from the classroom and/or campus in the following circumstances:

- The animal is behaving in a disruptive manner; or
- The animal is behaving in a directly threatening or aggressive manner; or
- The animal is not housebroken or clean; or
- The presence of the animal poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others that cannot be eliminated by modification of policies, practices, or procedures, or by the provision of auxiliary aids or services

Please contact and/or refer the student to DSPS for guidance and support regarding potential access restrictions.

Allergies or fear of animals are not valid reasons for denying access or refusing service to individuals using service animals. If another student in the classroom has concerns about exposure to the animal, they may be required to provide DSP&S with medical documentation that identifies their conflicting disability and need for accommodation(s). Please refer any students with concerns to DSPS at (949)451-5630 or SSC 171.

How should faculty/staff behave with service animals?

All college faculty/staff should behave with service animals in the following manner:

- Allow the animal to accompany the student at all times and in public areas on district property.
- Do not attempt to pet the animal.
- Do not attempt to feed the animal.
- Do not deliberately startle or distract the animal.
- Do not attempt to separate the animal from its partner or training handler.