

Service Animals

Service animals are different from therapy/emotional support animals because their work is not passive and they are not present in the classroom to provide emotional support, wellbeing, comfort, or companionship.

A service animal refers to any guide or signal dog individually trained to do work or perform tasks for a person with a disability, where the work is directly related to the individual's disability. In addition to provisions for service animals, revised ADA regulations have new, separate provision about miniature horses that have been trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities. (Miniature horses generally range in height from 24-34 inch, measured at the shoulders and generally weigh between 70-100 lbs).

Students must sign an agreement with DRC in order to have a service animal in the classroom. The following is a list of policies that students with service animals must agree to:

Here are a few tasks that service animals can often perform:

- Guiding students who are blind
- Alerting individuals with hearing loss
- Pull a wheelchair for a student with physical/mobility loss
- Fetching items or turning on/off light switches
- Alerting others or standing guard over a student having a seizure

Although the institution may exclude any service animal that is a direct threat, it will give the student with a disability the option of staying without the animal or obtaining another service animal under the following circumstances:

1. The dog is behaving in a disruptive manner by barking, growling, whimpering, running around, or soliciting social attention through behavior uncharacteristic of a service animal; or
2. The dog is not housebroken or clean;
3. The presence of the dog poses a direct threat to the health or safety of other persons that cannot be eliminated by a modification of policies, practices or procedures, or by the provision of auxiliary aids or services.

Tips for having service animals in the classroom:

- Please discuss with the student the best place to seat both student and their service animal in the classroom.
- Please discuss with student what are considered appropriate/inappropriate interactions between the service animal and students in the class (e.g. petting, feeding). Then come to an agreement on how to address the class of the do's and don'ts regarding the service animal in the classroom.
- Allergies or a fear of the service animal are not valid reasons for denying access or refusing service to students using service animals. However, it may be possible to accommodate requesting students to use different locations within the classroom or take a different section of the course.
- A service animal may be excluded from the campus when that animal's behavior poses a direct threat to the health and safety of others.

1) The student must abide by current city, county, and state ordinances, laws, and/or regulations pertaining to licensing, vaccination, and other requirements for animals. The student must know and understand these ordinances, laws, and regulations. The university has the right to require documentation of compliance with such ordinances, laws, and/or regulations, which may include a vaccination certificate or a veterinarian's statement regarding the Service Animal's health. The university reserves the right to request documentation showing that the Service Animal has been licensed.

2) Service animal must not obstruct or disturb any space or activity of the academic program including but not limited to: residence halls, classrooms and labs, other campus buildings or recreational areas, roads, walkways, and passages on any part of campus, legitimate campus activities and any other university programs, spaces or activities

3) Service animal must not engage in other behaviors or noises that are disruptive to others including but not limited to: excessive barking, excessive whining, excessive growling, excessive grooming, excessive sniffing people, or intrusion into the personal belongings of others, and tables in eating areas.

4) The student is required to clean up after and properly dispose of the Service Animal's feces in a safe and sanitary manner. The Service Animal must be housebroken and kennel trained.

5) In the case of an emergency, the university is not responsible for evacuating the Service Animal.

6) The student is financially responsible for any and all actions of the Service Animal, including but not limited to, bodily injury or property damage, such as furniture or floor coverings replacement. The student may be charged for any damage caused by the Service Animal that is beyond reasonable wear and tear. If living in the dorms, the student's living accommodation must be kept clean with no odors from the Service Animal.

Members of the campus community are required to abide by the following practices

- Do not touch or pet an emotional support animal or service animal unless invited to do so.
- Do not feed an emotional support or service animal.
- Do not deliberately startle an emotional support animal or service animal.
- Do not separate or attempt to separate an owner from his, her, their emotional support animal. or service animal.
- Do not inquire for details about a person's disabilities. The nature of a person's disability is a private matter.