

Chapter Name: **Campus and Facilities**

Policy 6-20

Policy Title: **Service Animal Policy**

Date Approved: 8/2017

Date Revised: _____

Page 1 of 5

6-20 Service Animal Policy

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) states, “A public entity may ask if the animal is required because of a disability and what work or task the animal has been trained to perform. A public entity shall not require documentation, such as proof that the animal has been certified, trained, or licensed as a service animal.”

I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide the College community with guidelines for the use of Service Animals on campus. This policy is designed to assist in:

- A. Understanding the rights of those with disabilities who utilize Service Animals
- B. Identifying the types of Service Animals
- C. Providing a framework for managing Service Animals on campus

II. Policy

A. Service Animals and the Law

Pets are normally restricted on College of The Albemarle property. However, under federal law, Service Animals are not excluded from college property or activities so long as they meet the guidelines set forth in this policy. Service Animals are defined as animals that are individually trained to perform tasks for individuals with disabilities, such as:

- 1. Guide dogs for the blind
- 2. Alert dogs for the hearing impaired
- 3. Pulling wheelchairs for those with limited mobility
- 4. Alerting and protecting a person with a seizure disorder
- 5. Performing other special tasks (**examples: carrying items, entering a room first, providing balance assistance**)

Service Animals are working animals, not pets.

B. Partner/Handler/Team

A person with a disability using a Service Animal is called a partner. A person without a disability with a Service Animal is called a handler. Sometimes, handlers and partners work together with Service Animals, while other times partners work solely with Service Animals. A partner, or a handler, and the Service Animal are called a team. The team works as a cohesive unit to accomplish tasks of daily living.

C. Conflicting/Competing Disability Accommodations

Persons with medical condition(s) affected by a Service Animal's presence should contact the Office of Special Populations (ext. 2277) if they have a health or safety related concern about exposure to the Service Animal. The person registering the concern will be asked to provide documentation that identifies the condition(s) allowing a determination to be made as to whether the condition is disabling and whether there is a need for accommodation.

D. Types of Service Animals

1. Service Dog

A dog who is trained to assist a person with mobility or health impairment is a Service Dog. The types of duties the dog might perform include: carrying, retrieving, opening doors, ringing doorbells, activating elevator buttons, steadying a person while walking, helping a person up after a fall, etc.

2. Guide Dog

A dog who is trained to serve as a travel tool/assistant for persons who are blind or have severe visual impairments is a Guide Dog.

3. Hearing Dog

A dog who is trained to alert a person who is deaf or has impaired hearing to sounds (someone knocking on the door for example) is a Hearing Dog.

4. Seizure Response Dog

A dog who is trained to assist a person with a seizure disorder is a Seizure Dog. How the dog may serve the partner depends on his/her needs. The dog may stand guard over the partner during a seizure or the dog may go for help. Some dogs have learned to predict seizures and warn the partner in advance.

5. Dog in Training

A dog being trained to perform as a Service Animal has the same rights as a fully-trained dog when accompanied by a trainer and identified as such.

6. Miniature Horse

Miniature horse service animals are trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities. The animals range in height from 24 to 34 inches measured to the shoulder, and generally weighs between 70 and 100 pounds. The miniature horse must be housebroken and under the owner's control. Other factors that will be considered:

- a. The facility must be able to accommodate the horse's type, size, and weight
- b. The horse's presence must not compromise legitimate safety requirements necessary for safe operation of the facility.

E. Emergency Situations

Service Animals must wear identification markers visible to emergency response teams. In the event of an emergency, responding emergency personnel should be trained to recognize Service Animals and be aware that the animal may try to communicate the need for help. The animal may become disoriented from the smell of smoke in a fire or from sirens. The partner and/or service animal may be confused by the stressful situation. Emergency personnel should be aware that the service animal is trying to be protective, and in its confusion, should not be considered harmful. Emergency personnel should make every effort to keep the service animal

Chapter Name: **Campus and Facilities**

Policy 6-20

Policy Title: **Service Animal Policy**

Date Approved: 8/2017

Date Revised: _____

Page 4 of 5

with its partner; however, emergency personnel's first effort is to protect human life and this may necessitate leaving the animal behind in certain emergency evacuation situations.

F. Management of Service Animals

1. The Service Animal must be vaccinated and licensed as required by state law and local ordinance;
2. Service Animals must be properly identified with a vest or identification badge;
3. Service Animals must be accompanied by the Partner at all times;
4. The Service Animal must be under control by the Partner at all times via leash, harness, or voice command if unable to perform service while leashed; and
5. To the extent possible, the Service Animal should be unobtrusive to others and not disrupt the learning environment.

The Partner may reasonably expect others to refrain from:

1. Petting or addressing the Service Animal;
2. Feeding the Service Animal;
3. Deliberately startling the Service Animal; or
4. Separating or attempting to separate the Partner from the Service Animal.

Others may inquire if the Partner needs assistance if there seems to be confusion.

To the extent possible, the Service Animal shall not:

1. Sniff people, dining tables or the personal belongings of others;
2. Display behaviors or noises that are disruptive to others, unless it is part of the service the provided to the Partner;
3. Engage in personal grooming in public settings; or
4. Block an aisle or passageway for fire/emergency egress.

G. Poor Health

Service Animals that are ill or in poor health should not be taken into public areas. A partner with an ill Service Animal may be required to remove the animal from college property.

H. Maintenance

The Partner will be responsible to make arrangements for any cleaning that is necessary due to the presence of the Service Animal. Feces must be cleaned immediately and disposed of properly. This includes all college common areas and exterior property, including walkways and grassy areas.

I. Campus Access

A Service Animal is permitted to accompany the Partner anywhere the Partner goes on campus with the following exception:

Any room, studio, or classroom, with sharp metal cuttings or glass shards on the floor; hot materials such as molten metal; excessive dust; or moving machinery may pose a danger to the service animal. When a person with a service animal must be in one of these areas as a course requirement or condition of employment, alternative arrangements will be considered for providing access; or the Partner may sign a waiver confirming their understanding of the potential danger. Reasonable accommodations will be provided to ensure equal access to all College of The Albemarle programs, activities and employment.