

Procedure – Service

Service Animal Uses

Service animals are animals that are individually trained to perform tasks for people with disabilities such as guiding people who are blind, alerting people who are deaf, pulling wheelchairs, alerting and protecting a person who is having a seizure or performing or other special tasks. Service animals are working animals, not pets. Animals whose primary function is to provide comfort, emotional support, or companionship do not qualify as service animals, and therefore are not allowed in school.

Service animals must be allowed as part of an ADA accommodation, or IEP or 504 plans (for students).

Use of a service animal by a student with a disability will be allowed in schools when it is determined that the student's disability requires such use to assist or accommodate access to the instructional program, school services and/or school activities, regardless of whether school staff can perform the same work or task.

Use of a service animal by an employee with a disability will be allowed when such use is necessary as a reasonable accommodation to enable the employee to perform the essential functions of his/her job or to access benefits of employment provided to all employees in the same job classification.

The use of a service animal by an individual with a disability will not be conditioned on the payment of a fee, security deposit or surcharge.

Use of a service animal by a parent/guardian or other individual with a disability will be allowed in school and on District property. The service animal will be permitted to accompany the individual with a disability to areas where members of the public are normally permitted, unless its presence or behavior creates a fundamental program alteration or direct threat to safety.

An individual with a service animal may not be segregated from others. If a building principal or District administrator is not certain that an animal is a service animal, he or she may ask the individual if it is a service animal required because of a disability. An administrator may also ask what work or task the animal has been individually trained to perform. A building principal or District administrator cannot require proof of a person's disability or identification or certification of the service animal's status.

Requirements for Service Animal Access

Before a service animal will be permitted in school, on school property or at school-sponsored events, the student's parent/guardian or the staff member must provide a description of the task(s) the service animal is expected to perform in assisting the person with the disability.

The District will provide access to a person with a disability who needs a service animal, provided the tasks performed by the service animal are directly related to the disability, and the animal has been individually trained to perform a task, is housebroken, is free of disease and parasites, has a harness, leash or tether so it cannot run free, and is under the control of the person with the disability.

A service animal must also be licensed and immunized in accordance with the laws, regulations and ordinances of the city, the county and the state of Washington.

Parents/Guardians or Animal Handlers

Parents/guardians or animal handler, who will be present in school for the purpose of assisting a student with his/her service animal are required to submit to a sex offender registry and criminal background check. In addition, parents/guardians and handlers must comply with all standards of conduct that apply to school employees and volunteers.

Removal of Exclusion of a Service Animal from School or School Property

The building principal or District administrator may request an individual with a disability to remove a service animal from school property or a school sponsored activity if the animal is:

- Out of control and the animal's handler does not take effective action to control the animal;
- The animal's presence would cause a fundamental alteration to any school program;
- Improperly cared for, including feeding, excretory functions, and cleaning up after the animal;
- Not housebroken; or,
- The animal fails to consistently perform the function(s)/service(s) to assist or accommodate the individual with the disability.

If the District excludes a service animal, it will provide the individual with a disability the opportunity to participate in the program or activity without having the service animal on the premises.

Responsibility/Liability

Neither the District, nor its employees, is responsible for the cost, care or supervision of the service animal. A service animal must be under the control of its handler.

The owner/handler of the service animal is responsible for any and all damage caused by the service animal at school, on school premises or at school activities. This responsibility includes cleaning any areas of the school or school premises where the service animal performed its excretory functions.

Allergic Reactions

An allergy is not a valid reason to deny access or refuse service to a person using a service animal. When a person who is allergic to an animal and a student who uses a service animal must spend time in the same room or school, they both should be accommodated by assigning them, if possible, to different locations in the room or different rooms in the school. The District will work with the parents of both students to develop appropriate accommodations for the service animal and the student with allergies.

Considerations When a Student Has a Service Animal

- Notify appropriate staff that a service animal will be on campus.
- Provide a process for staff, students and parents to inform administrators of any animal allergies that may require accommodations.
- Educate students and staff on proper behavior around a service animal.
- Plan for transportation of the service animal, including on the bus and field trips.
- Develop an emergency evacuation plan to include the service animal.

Appeals

A parent or employee whose service animal has been excluded or removed, may appeal the decision to the Superintendent or designee in accordance with WAC 392-190-065, Compliance-Complaint procedure-District Superintendent, using Olympia School District Procedure 3210P on Nondiscrimination, Level One. If dissatisfied with the Superintendent's decision, the parent or employee may appeal to the Board of Directors in accordance with WAC 392-190-070, Compliance-Appeal procedure-Local school board, Olympia School District Procedure 3210P on Nondiscrimination, Level Two.

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