

**Policy Title: SERVICE ANIMALS**

It is the policy of Mid-State Technical College that service animals assisting individuals with disabilities are generally permitted in all facilities and programs on district campuses.

The purpose of these procedures is to ensure that students and employees with disabilities who have service animals can participate in and benefit from district services, programs and activities, and to ensure that the district does not discriminate on the basis of disability as identified in Titles I and III of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The ADA authorizes places of public accommodation to impose restrictions if it is a safety requirement. Per the ADA, a student is not required to provide an instructor an Accommodation Plan from Disability Services to have a service animal in the classroom.

***Service Animal Definition***

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) defines a service animal as a dog or miniature horse that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities. An animal that is used to provide an emotionally supportive therapeutic service for a student or employee does not meet the definition of a service animal.

***Service Animal Process***

When it is not obvious what service an animal provides, only limited inquiries are allowed. Staff cannot ask about the person's disability, require medical documentation, require a special identification card or training documentation for the animal, or ask that the animal demonstrate its service.

***Types of service animals***

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- **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.
- **Guide Dog:** Professionally trained to serve as a travel tool for persons who are blind or have severe visual impairments.
- **Hearing Dog:** Professionally trained to alert a person with significant hearing loss or who is deaf, when a particular sound occurs.
- **Miniature Horse:** Miniature horse service animals trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities. The animals range in height from 24 to 34 inches measured to the shoulders, and generally weigh between 70 and 100 pounds. The miniature horse must be housebroken and under the owner's control. Other factors to consider:
  - The facility must be able to accommodate the horse's type, size and weight
  - The horse's presence must not compromise legitimate safety requirements necessary for safe operation of the facility
- **Service Dog:** Professionally trained to assist a person who has a mobility or health impairment.

- SIG Dog: Professionally trained to assist a person with autism. The dog alerts the partner to distracting repetitive movements and may provide support similar to what is provided by a dog for a person who is vision- or hearing-impaired.
- Seizure Response Dog: Professionally trained to assist a person with a seizure disorder; how the dog serves the person depends on the person's needs. The dog may stand guard over the person during a seizure, or the dog may go for help. Some dogs have learned to predict a seizure and warn the person in advance.

### ***Responsibility of the individual using the service animal***

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- The service animal is in a harness or on a leash at all times.
- The service animal is under control and behaves properly at all times.
- The supervision of the service animal is the responsibility of its owner.
- Regular bathing of the service animal is expected to avoid odor and shedding.
- The service animal must be housebroken; the owner is responsible for the cleanup of animal waste.

### ***Service Animals in teaching laboratories***

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If you anticipate working with a service animal in a laboratory at any time over the course of your enrollment at Mid-State Technical College, we want to provide that opportunity without endangering the safety of you, your fellow students, or your animal.

In order to achieve this goal, we will need to know the specifics of the service the animal provides, with enough advance notice to make the appropriate arrangements. **Before you attend the first lab for a class, you must meet the Disability Services Coordinator.**

It is highly recommended that you make arrangements for this meeting with plenty of notice (**1-2 months before the start of your class is not too much!**) so that all plans may be worked out without disrupting your class participation.

During this meeting, you can expect to be asked questions including, but not limited to:

- Is the animal a service animal required because of a disability?
- What work or task has the animal been trained to perform?
- Do you require the animal to be with you at all times or only under certain circumstances? What are those circumstances?
- Do you need a place for the animal to stay while you are in lab and not needing the animal at that time? How does the animal alert?

Additionally, there are a few other preparations you can make ahead of each course with a laboratory requirement.

#### **► Personal protective equipment for your service animal**

Service animals are required to wear the same personal protective equipment covering as students in the lab. This means that you must acquire goggles, foot protection (though a protective mat will be provided for the animal's safety during lab), and sturdy protective clothing for your service animal. We

are happy to work with you to identify clothing materials that are well suited to the laboratory environment.

► **Chemical safety information pertaining to your service animal**

It will be your responsibility to discuss with faculty and Disability Services any particular chemical hazards that may apply to your service animal.

► **Chemical hazards and alternative assignments**

In some cases, lab exercises may involve use of chemicals that interfere (or run a reasonable risk of interfering) with your service animal's ability to provide its service. In such cases, your instructor will work to provide you with an alternative assignment to minimize loss of instructional quality and keep you from losing any credit.

► **Leashing/tethering of service animal**

Per Mid-State policy, service animals will have to remain leashed or tethered at all times unless doing so prevents them from performing their necessary service or the individual's disability prevents use of these devices.

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***Removal of Service Animal from Campus***

If a service animal becomes aggressive and poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others, the student or employee will be required immediately to remove the service animal from college property. This behavior includes excessive barking, running around without a leash, or growling/biting others. The student or employee using the service animal is then expected to report such incidents to Security (X5656) within 24 hours of the occurrence.

An excessively unclean or unkempt service animal may be asked to leave campus until the problem is resolved.

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***Restrictions***

There are certain areas that may be considered unsafe for the service dog and its partner, or where the presence of an animal might interfere with the safety of others (labs, machine rooms, kitchens and areas where protective clothing is necessary). Exceptions will be made on a case-by-case basis. If it is determined that an area is unsafe, reasonable accommodations will be provided to assure equal access to the student or employee.

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***Allergies***

Some individuals may have adverse reactions to a service dog due to allergies. If these circumstances arise, resolution of the complaint will take into consideration the needs of both parties and be as prompt as possible.

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***Therapy dogs***

Although therapy dogs are not considered service animals under the ADA, they may be allowed on campus on a case-by-case basis, for certain events in limited areas. Therapy dogs provide people with therapeutic contact, usually in a clinical setting, to improve their physical, social, emotional, and/or cognitive functioning. Therapy Dogs International (TDI) is an organization dedicated to regulating, testing, and registering therapy dogs and their handlers. For therapy dogs to be considered for approval to be on campus, they must have been tested and evaluated by a Certified TDI Evaluator and registered as a therapy dog.

***No therapy dog will be allowed on campus without prior approval.***

***Process for approval of therapy dogs:***

A Mid-State Technical College student with a disability who wants to use a non-service animal on campus may request an accommodation via an interactive process with Disability Services Coordinator to determine what is appropriate and necessary. To be considered, the therapy dog must be registered with Therapy Dogs International (TDI) and have the necessary documentation to certify the animal as a therapy dog. On a case-by-case basis, the Disability Services Coordinator will engage with students via an interactive process to assess an individual's need for a therapy dog.

The owner must comply with all applicable laws regarding the keeping of the therapy dog. The owner is also responsible for compliance with all local and state licensing laws, and animal rights laws. Therapy dogs must be current with immunizations and wear appropriate vaccination tags.

If a Mid-State employee with a disability wants to use a non-service animal on campus, they should request an accommodation from Human Resources.

***Responsibility of the individual using a therapy dog***

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- The therapy dog is in a harness or on a leash at all times.
- The therapy dog is under control and behaves properly at all times.
- The supervision of the therapy dog is the responsibility of its owner.
- Regular bathing of the therapy dog is expected to avoid odor and shedding.
- The therapy dog must be housebroken; the owner is responsible for the cleanup of animal waste.

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**Comfort/Emotional Support Animals:**

Comfort or emotional support animals are defined as animals whose presence provides a sense of comfort, companionship, and well-being for an individual. Comfort animals do not require any specific training; they are solely a companion animal. Comfort animals are generally **not** allowed on campus however we encourage you to consult with Disability Services Coordinator if you are a student and consult Human Resources if you are an employee.

## ***Appeals Procedure***

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Questions related to the use of service animals or therapy dogs by students at Mid-State Technical College should be directed to the Disability Services Coordinator at (715) 422-5452. If you are dissatisfied with a decision concerning a service animal or therapy dog and would like to appeal the decision, please review [\(link to the student harassment and disability policy\)](#).

Questions related to the use of service animals or therapy dogs by employees at Mid-State Technical College should be directed to the VP of Human Resources at (715) 422-5325.

*Adopted: May 2020*

*Last Reviewed:*

*Last Revised:*