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SERVICE ANIMALS

I. The purpose of this policy is to implement standards related to service animals as set forth in federal and state law including

A. Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA);
B. Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended;
C. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA);
D. Section 413.08, F.S.

II. A service animal is any dog that is trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability. The animal must be trained to perform tasks directly related to the person’s disability.

A. Other species of animals are not considered service animals.
B. Miniature horses may be used as an alternative to dogs, with certain limitations.
C. The crime deterrent effect of an animal's presence and the provision of emotional support, well-being, comfort, or companionship do not constitute work or tasks for purposes of this policy.
D. A service animal is not a pet.

III. A task is a minor job or piece of work that the animal performs. Tasks include

A. Guiding a person who is visually impaired or blind;
B. Alerting a person who is deaf or hard of hearing;
C. Retrieving objects;
D. Assisting with mobility or balance;
E. Pulling a wheelchair;
F. Alerting an individual to the presence of allergens;
G. Helping an individual with a psychiatric or neurological disability by preventing or interrupting impulsive or destructive behaviors;
H. Reminding an individual with mental illness to take prescribed medications;
I. Calming an individual with posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) during an anxiety attack;
J. Alerting and protecting a person having a seizure; and
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K. Doing other work or performing other specific tasks.

IV. A service animal is personal property and may not be brought on campus without the knowledge and permission of the school or district administration. A student’s need for and use of a service animal must be documented in the student’s Individual Education Plan (IEP) or Section 504 Plan.

V. A service animal may not interfere with the educational process of any student or pose a health or safety threat to any student, school personnel or other persons. The service animal must meet health requirements and established standards of behavior.

VI. The service animal must be under the control of its handler.

VII. A service animal may be excluded from school board facilities, vehicles, and functions under the following circumstances:

   A. The service animal's behavior poses a direct threat to the health and safety of another person. Allergies and/or fear of animals are not valid reasons for denying access.

   B. The service animal is out of control and the animal's handler does not take effective action to control it.

   C. The service animal is not housebroken.

VIII. The Superintendent shall develop guidelines for service animals on campus. Guidelines shall include but not be limited to

   A. The process for requesting approval for the use of a service animal in the school or district setting;

   B. Standards of behavior for the service animal;

   C. Required accommodation documentation;

   D. Required health certification for the animal;

   E. Transportation of the service animal;

   F. Emergency procedures; and

   G. Orientation for school personnel and students.

IX. The District shall not assume responsibility for training, health care or daily care of any service animal.
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STATUTORY AUTHORITY: 1001.41, 1001.42, F.S.

LAW(S) IMPLEMENTED: 413.08, 1001.32, 1001.43, 1006.07, 1006.08, F.S.
28 CFR 35.104, 28 CFR 35.136,
28 CFR 36.104,

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NOTES:
Refer to: Guidelines for Including Service Animals in Schools and on School Buses