

**Greenville Technical College
Administrative Policies**

2-17 Service Animals

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Removal Date: _____

Approved by President:

Kiah Miller

It is the policy of Greenville Technical College that service animals assisting individuals with disabilities are welcomed and generally permitted in all facilities and on all campuses with the exceptions described below.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and its amendments define a service animal as a dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability. Beginning on March 15, 2011, only *dogs* are recognized as service animals under Titles II and III of the ADA. There is a provision regarding miniature horses as services animals, meeting specific assessment factors.

There are instances when a service animal may be restricted. With regard to the college, there may be possible restrictions of service animals in nursing and health sciences programs, food services programs, or laboratories that can pose a safety risk. These exceptions would need to be considered individually to determine whether the dog poses a possible danger and if other reasonable accommodations can be provided.

Overall, it is the student's responsibility to ensure the safety and control of the animal. While legal access rights are afforded to users of assistance animals, with that comes the responsibility of ensuring the animal behaves and responds appropriately at all times in public and adheres to the same socially acceptable standards as any individual in the community.

Types of Service Dogs (Animals):

- **Guide dog** – Guide dog is a carefully trained dog that serves as a travel tool by persons who are blind or have severe visual impairment.
- **Hearing dog** – Hearing dog is a dog who has been trained to alert a person with significant hearing loss or who is deaf when a sound, e.g. knock on the door occurs.
- **Service dog** – Service dog is a dog that has been trained to assist a person who has a mobility or health impairment. Types of duties the dog may perform include carrying, fetching, opening doors, ringing doorbells, activating elevator buttons, steadying a person while walking, helping a person up after the person falls, etc.
- **Sig dog** – Sig dog is a dog trained to assist a person with autism. The dog alerts the partner to distracting repetitive movements common among those with autism, allowing the person to stop the movement (e.g. hand flopping). A person with autism may have problems with sensory input and need the same support services from a dog that a dog might give to a person who is blind or deaf.

- **Seizure response dog** – Seizure response dog is a dog 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. A few dogs have somehow learned to predict a seizure and warn the person in advance.
- **Therapy and Companion Animals** are not generally covered under the ADA. However, if the animal is specifically trained to perform tasks for the owner, the requests will be evaluated on a case by case basis.

Documentation Requirements:

The owner of the service animal will be required to meet with the Director of Disability Services for Students. Requests are handled through the regular accommodation process. The following information is required for documentation purposes:

- **Health records** – The animal must have a health statement, including vaccinations from a licensed veterinarian dated within the past year. Generally, legitimate assistance animals are well groomed and receive excellent veterinary care, including an annual checkup. A veterinarian’s statement within the past 12 to 15 months as to good health is necessary. Preventative measures should be taken at all times for flea and odor control.
- **Minimum training standards** – Verification that the animal has been individually trained to provide the service/assistance to meet the needs of the student/handler.
- **Identification** – It is recommended that the animal wear some type of commonly recognized identification symbol, identifying the animal as a working animal, but not disclosing disability.

Control Requirements:

- The animal should be on a leash when not providing a needed service to handler.
- The animal should respond to voice commands at all times, and the handler should be in full control of the animal.
- To the extent possible, the animal should be as unobtrusive to other students and the learning environment as possible.

Consequences for behavior – When a service animal is determined out of control as reported by students, staff or administration, the infraction will be treated on an individual basis. If the animal poses a threat to the safety of other students, Campus Police will be part of the collaboration team to determine the outcome of the behavior. Consequences may include but not be limited to muzzling a barking animal, refresher training for both the animal and the owner, or exclusion from college facilities. If the service animal is excluded from the college, this does not apply to the owner who is welcome to continue at the college without the service animal.

Public Etiquette by Service Animals

To the extent possible, the animal should not:

- Sniff people or the personal belongings of others.

- Display any behaviors or noises that are disruptive to others unless part of the service being provided to the owner.
- Engage in personal grooming in public settings.
- Block an aisle or passageway for fire egress.

Public Etiquette to Student with Animal – General public should avoid:

- Petting a service animal as it may distract them from the task at hand.
- Feeding the service animal.
- Deliberately startling a service animal.
- Separating or attempting to separate an owner/handler from his/her service animal.
- Hesitating to ask a student if she/he would like assistance if there seems to be confusion.

Conflicting Disabilities – It is common for a person to have a disability that precipitates an allergic reaction to animals. Persons making an asthmatic/allergy/medical complaint are directed to the Disabilities Services Office. The person making the complaint must show medical documentation to support the problem as efficiently and expeditiously as possible. In the event the situation cannot be resolved, the Dean of Students office will assist within the grievance procedure.