Dalton State College Service Animal Policy

Definition
The Americans with Disabilities Act defines a service animal as “any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability. Other species of animals, whether wild or domestic, trained or untrained, are not service animals for the purposes of this definition. The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the
handler's disability. Examples of work or tasks include, but are not limited to, assisting individuals who are blind or have low vision with navigation and other tasks, alerting individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to the presence of people or sounds, providing non-violent protection or rescue work, pulling a wheelchair, assisting an individual during a seizure, alerting individuals to the presence of allergens, retrieving items such as medicine or the telephone, providing physical support and assistance with balance and stability to individuals with mobility disabilities, and helping persons with psychiatric and neurological disabilities by preventing or interrupting impulsive or destructive behaviors. The crime deterrent effects of an animal's presence and the provision of emotional support, well-being, comfort, or companionship do not constitute work or tasks for the purposes of this definition.”

The disabling condition must be severe enough to substantially limit one or more major life activities, such as the ability to see or hear, speak, breathe, learn, work, think or take care of oneself. An animal that meets this definition is considered a service animal and is allowed to accompany the person with a disability to class meetings, services, activities, programs, field trips, or residences and to be allowed anywhere on campus unless specifically prohibited by this policy or federal/state law.

In addition, Georgia law (OCGA 30.4.2) provides that any Partner who is accompanied by a dog in training to be a service dog or a dog being raised to be trained as a service dog is required to be given the same degree of access to which a disabled Handler assisted by a service dog is entitled under applicable federal law.

Federal and state law specifically excludes animals whose primary purpose is emotional support, therapy, or comfort from the definition of service animal.

A public entity shall make reasonable modifications in policies, practices, or procedures to permit the use of a miniature horse by an individual with a disability if the miniature horse has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of the individual with a disability.

(1) Assessment factors. In determining whether reasonable modifications in policies, practices, or procedures can be made to allow a miniature horse into a specific facility, a public entity shall consider—
(i) The type, size, and weight of the miniature horse and whether the facility can accommodate these features;
(ii) Whether the handler has sufficient control of the miniature horse;
(iii) Whether the miniature horse is housebroken; and
(iv) Whether the miniature horse’s presence in a specific facility compromises legitimate safety requirements that are necessary for safe operation.

Types of Service Dogs

Guide Dog is a carefully trained dog that serves as a travel tool by persons who are blind or significantly visually impaired.

Service Dog is a dog that has been trained to assist a person who has a mobility or health impairment. Service dogs may perform a variety of duties including carrying, fetching, opening doors, pulling a wheelchair, ringing doorbells, activating elevator buttons, steadying a person
while walking, helping a person up after the person falls, alerting a deaf person to an alarm or signal, etc. Service dogs are also called assistance dogs.

**Ssig 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. A person with autism may have problems with sensory input and need the same support services that a dog might give to a person who is blind or deaf.

**Seizure Response Dog** is a dog trained to assist a person with a seizure disorder. The dog may stand guard over the person during a seizure or go for help. Some dogs are able to predict a seizure and warn the person in advance.

**Diabetic Alert Dog** is trained to alert diabetic individuals in advance of low (hypoglycemia) or high (hyperglycemia) blood sugar events before they become dangerous.

### 1. Guidelines for Service Animals and Their Partners/Handlers

#### 1.1 Registration: Contact the Disability Access office and complete the registration process. This process includes providing professional documentation of a disability and nature of service provided by the animal.

#### 1.2 Owner ID: The animal must wear an identification tag and an owner identification tag (owner name and contact information) any time the animal is on campus.

#### 1.3 Responsibility: The care and supervision of the animal is solely the responsibility of its handler/partner. The handler/partner is responsible for the service animal at all times including times when the animal is being managed by an alternate handler/partner. Handlers/partners of a service animal shall be liable for any and all costs resulting when a service animal causes damage to any DSC facility or injury to any person. In the case of any incident involving injury to a person by a service animal, the handler or Partner shall make an immediate report to the DSC Public Safety Department so that the incident can be properly investigated and documented.

An exception to this standard would be in the case of an emergency involving the partner/handler. If an emergency occurs all efforts should be made to keep the service animal with its handler. In a case where this is not possible, a pre-designated alternate handler, a member of public safety, or the Disability Access office staff may take control of the animal until which time it can be reunited with its handler.

#### 1.4 Leash: The animal must be leashed and under close and direct physical control of the handler/partner at all times the animal is on campus facilities. Handlers and Partners are also prohibited from transferring such control to another person (except a designated alternate) even momentarily, requesting the assistance of other persons in supervising or controlling their service animal or otherwise leaving the presence of their service animal for any period of time while on DSC campuses. Any Handler or Partner seeking an exception from the requirements must request an appropriate exception as provided in this policy.
1.5 **Behavior**: Handlers/partners are required to immediately remove a service animal that is unruly or disruptive (biting or attempting to bite, barking, running around, jumping at or on people or other excessive physical activity) or may be directed to do so by a faculty or staff member of by any member of the DSC Public Safety Department. Any service animal may be removed from campus temporarily or excluded from campus permanently if the animal is unruly and disruptive, in ill health, or habitually unclean. The decision to exclude a service animal from campus will be made by the Public Safety Director or officer if the animal is deemed an immediate threat to the health and safety of others, or jointly by the Public Safety Director and the Disability Access office personnel after hearing information from all parties involved if the situation is not an emergency.

1.6 **Housebroken**: Handlers/partners must ensure that their service animal is housebroken. Any service animal that is not will be excluded from DSC campuses. In the event of an isolated incident, the handler/partner is responsible for immediately cleaning up and disposing of bodily fluids or solid wastes whether indoors or outdoors.

1.7 **Cleanup**: The handler/partner is responsible for cleaning up all liquid and solid animal waste unless the partner/handler is physically unable to perform the cleanup. The handler/partner should have appropriate cleanup materials and disposal bags available at all times. Used cleanup materials should be disposed of by tying securely in a plastic bag and depositing in an outdoor waste container. When necessary, the handler/partner must immediately contact Plant Operations so that further cleanup, disinfecting and deodorizing can be performed. Regarding any handler/partner who is physically unable to perform the necessary cleanup, it is the responsibility of such handler/partner to have previously made satisfactory arrangements for a third party to perform all actions required by this paragraph. All costs for additional cleanup or repairs will be the responsibility of the handler/partner.

1.8 **Health**: A handler/partner shall not bring a service animal that is ill to any DSC facilities and must remove the service animal immediately if it becomes ill. A handler/partner with a service animal that appears to be ill may be asked to remove the service animal from the facilities by faculty or staff or DSC Public Safety. Service animals must be clean and well groomed. Any handler/partner with a service animal that is not clean (flea-infested, foul smelling, or inadequately groomed) may be asked to leave any DSC facility until such condition is corrected.

1.9 **Reporting of incidents**: In the event of any incident involving property damage or bodily injury by the service animal, the handler/partner is required to submit a written report to DSC Public Safety and the Disability Access office within 24 hours detailing the events of the incident and identifying any other persons involved in the incident or witnessing the incident.

1.10 **Documentation required for animal**: The owner/handler must provide the documentation of the following:

- 1.10.1 **Vaccination**: The animal must have current immunization against diseases, including rabies, distemper and parvovirus. Dogs must wear a rabies vaccination tag.
1.10.2 Health: The animal must be in good health. Animals to reside in Dalton State’s Residential Life must provide an annual clean bill of health from a licensed veterinarian.

2. Areas Off Limits to Service Animals

Dalton State College may prohibit or restrict the access of service animals in certain facilities due to health and/or safety restrictions or where their presence would compromise the integrity of certain research or otherwise fundamentally alter a program or activity. Such prohibition/restriction will be determined on an individual basis by the administrator responsible for the restricted area and will be communicated in writing to the Disability Access office. Such restrictions may include but are not limited to:

- Research Laboratories where the presence of the animal may negatively impact the outcome of the research or the chemicals may be harmful to the animal.
- Mechanical Rooms/Custodial Closets such as boiler rooms, electrical closets, elevator control rooms, technology control rooms, and similar spaces.
- Areas where protective clothing/gear is required.
- Food preparation areas.
- Areas of Danger to the Service Animal - where there are sharp objects on the floor or protruding from surfaces, hot surfaces, high levels of dust, moving machinery, or potentially dangerous chemicals.
- Other areas where the service animal may be endangered or constitute a danger to persons.

The Disability Access office will coordinate with units that restrict access of service animals to a specific facility to provide appropriate notice to all members of the community and the public at large that those facilities are service animal restricted areas.

3. Residents Requesting to Use, Raise, and/or Train Service Animals

Within the following sections of the agreement, it is understood that the term “resident” means both the resident who has requested permission to possess a service animal based upon his or her personal needs as supported by the Disability Access office as well as the individuals who have made a commitment to raise and train a service animal.

3.1 Procedures

3.1.1 For residents who require a service animal or who have committed to raise and train service animals, the resident may apply for an exception to the pet policy by registering
with the Disability Access office along with providing appropriate documentation at least
30 days before making a reservation to live in on-campus housing.

3.1.2 The Disability Access office will review the request, determine eligibility and
notify Residential Life.

3.1.3 Residential Life will notify the individual that the request has been received. The
request will be reviewed by the Director of Residential Life. No service animal may
enter a housing facility until approval has been granted. Once a decision has been
rendered, the Director of Residential Life will inform the requesting student and the
Disability Access office. The individual may then proceed with the process for reserving
a space in housing.

3.1.4 In addition, the residents raising and training service animals must notify the
Director of Residential Life (in writing) if the training program has been concluded and
the approved service animal is no longer in residence. To raise and train a new service
animal, the resident must file a new request and follow the same procedures as before.

3.1.5 The Residential Life Office will make a reasonable effort to notify tenants in the
residence building where the animal will be located of the existence of a service animal
in the building. Students with medical condition(s) that are affected by animals
(respiratory diseases, asthma, severe allergies) should contact the Disability Access office
if they have a health or safety related concern about exposure to a service animal. The
individual will be asked to provide medical documentation that identifies the condition(s)
and that will allow determination to be made as to whether the condition is disabling and
whether there is a need for an accommodation.

3.2 Resident Responsibilities

3.2.1 All roommates/suitemates of the resident must sign the agreement form allowing
the service animal to reside with them. In the event that one or more
roommates/suitemates do not approve, either the resident and service animal or the non-
approving roommates/suitemates as determined by the Director of Residential Life, may
be reassigned to a more suitable location.

3.2.2 The resident is responsible for ensuring that the service animal does not interfere
with the routine activities and daily operations of the Residential Life facility or cause
difficulties for residents or staff who reside and work there. Sensitivity to individuals
with allergies and to those who fear animals is important to ensure the integrity of the
academic and residential community.

3.2.3 The resident is financially and legally responsible for the actions of the service
animal such as bodily injury or property damage including, but not limited to, any
replacement of furniture, carpet, drapes, or wall coverings, etc. Residential Life shall
have the right to bill the resident’s account for necessary repair and/or replacement costs.
3.2.4 The resident is responsible for any expenses that are required due to costs incurred for cleaning which is above and beyond a normal cleaning or for repairs to housing premises that are assessed after vacating the residence. Residential Life shall have the right to bill the resident’s account for all damages or deficiencies with the room condition. At a minimum, the resident will be charged a $125 fee for carpet cleaning upon check-out.

3.2.5 The student’s residence may be inspected for fleas, ticks, or other pests once per term or as needed. The Residential Life staff will schedule the inspection. If fleas, ticks, or other pests are detected through inspection, the residence will be treated using approved fumigation methods by an approved pest control service. The resident will be billed for the expense of any pest treatment above and beyond normal required pest management.

3.2.6 Residents are responsible for properly containing and disposing of all animal fecal waste. Outdoor animal waste, such as animal feces, must be immediately retrieved by the resident, placed in a plastic bag and securely tied before being disposed of in outside trash dumpsters. For visually impaired residents, a designated area will be agreed upon in advance.

3.2.7 Residential Life has the ability to relocate the resident and the service animal as necessary per current contractual agreements.

3.2.8 The resident agrees to continue to abide by all other residential policies. An exception to a policy that otherwise would prohibit having an animal does not constitute an exception to any other policy.

3.2.9 Any violation to the above policies will be reviewed through the DSC conduct review process and the resident will be afforded all rights of due process and appeal as outlined in that process.

3.2.10 Should the service animal be removed from the premises for any reason, the resident is expected to fulfill his/her housing obligations for the remainder of the contract.

3.2.11 The service animal must be on leash/harness and escorted by the resident at all times when entering public areas within the residential facilities and across campus. In addition, the service animal must wear identification tags with contact information.

3.2.12 The service animal must not be left within the resident’s living space should the resident leave his/her campus residence.

3.2.13 Other responsibilities may be added to the resident’s individual agreement as determined by the individual circumstances.

3.3 Animal Health and Behavior in housing
3.3.1 An exception to DSC’s Residential Life’s Pet Policy is granted for service animals provided that their behavior, noise, odor, and waste not exceed reasonable standards for a well-behaved animal and that these factors do not create unreasonable disruptions to the residential community.

3.3.2 All service animals must have all veterinarian recommended vaccinations to maintain the animal’s health and prevent contagious diseases. Documentation of vaccinations is due prior to the beginning of the contract period. If the approval is obtained after the contract period has begun, documentation of vaccinations will be required prior to the service animal entering the residential facility after approval has been granted. Residential Life reserves the right to request an updated verification at any time during the animal’s residency.

3.3.3 If state or local licenses are required for the service animal, they must be obtained and kept current in compliance with the local jurisdiction (i.e., dog license) requirements. The Disability Access office and Residential Life reserves the right to request proof of licensing at any time during the animal’s residency.

3.3.4 All service animals, if taken outside the private residential area, must wear identification tags with contact information and if applicable, vaccination information.

3.3.5 All service animals must be housed in acceptable conditions within the residential area (i.e. appropriately sized crate/carrier, ability to move freely through the residential area, etc.)

3.3.6 All service animals must be treated humanely. If mistreatment is reported, DSC’s conduct process may be initiated as a result.

4. **Appeals**

Any partner/handler dissatisfied with a decision concerning a service animal may appeal through DSC’s established grievance procedure.

5. **Exceptions**

Exceptions to any provision of this Policy, including restrictions placed by DSC units on access to specific areas, will normally be considered on a case-by-case basis upon written request to the Disability Access office, submitted not less than five business days prior to the effective date of any such exception. The Disability Access office Coordinator will consult with other appropriate members of the DSC community in an interactive process to determine whether or not the request will be granted or denied taking into account all of the relevant facts and circumstances and will so inform the requester in writing, including any specific additional conditions or restrictions in those cases where exceptions are granted.

Under certain exigent or other unusual circumstances, a responsible official of a DSC unit may allow a temporary exemption (for a duration and extent consistent with the nature of the
exigency or other unusual circumstances) to any provision of this policy regarding restrictions placed by DSC units on access for service animals to specific areas, but any such action must thereafter be reported in writing in a timely manner to the Disability Access office explaining all the relevant circumstances.

6. Other Matters

The provisions of this Policy are minimal guidelines that may be supplemented by more specific guidelines and procedures developed and implemented by individual DSC units due to the particular circumstances involved. Upon approval by Board of Regents Legal Affairs, these shall also be enforceable under this Policy.

7. Violations

7.1 In the case of student Handlers or Partners, failure to comply with this policy may constitute one or more violations of the DSC Code of Conduct and lead to student conduct proceedings.

7.2 In the case of faculty/staff, incidents of failure to comply with this policy will be referred to Human Resources for further consideration.

8. Campus Commitment and Responsibility

Dalton State is committed to providing equal access to all individuals. In order to do so, service animals are allowed to accompany the person with a disability to classrooms and labs, in dining facilities, campus activities, programs and events, field trips, or residences and to be allowed anywhere on campus unless specifically prohibited by this policy or federal/state law (see “exceptions” section 5 above). If you have questions or concerns about the areas a service animal is allowed, please contact the Disability Access office at 706-272-2524.

Individuals with a service animal are not legally bound to register with the Disability Access office nor do they require a formalized accommodation plan or form. It is recommended that they do register with the Disability Access office and the Disability Access office will inform the campus community of service animals on campus as they are made aware.

9. Federal Regulations and Resources