



WESTERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY

AccessAbility Services Service Animal General Guideline and Procedure

General Guideline:

Service animals are dogs (and in some cases miniature horses) that are individually trained to perform specific tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability. Such disabilities can include physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disabilities. The tasks performed must be directly related to the student's disability and can include pulling a wheelchair, assisting an individual during a seizure, retrieving a phone or medication, opening a door, interrupting inappropriate repetitive behavior, alerting someone who is deaf or hard of hearing, or other similar tasks. The Department of Justice is explicit in that the following animals are not considered service animals: any animals other than dogs, dogs that serve solely to deter crime, and animals that provide emotional support, comfort, or companionship. While such animals may be therapeutic, they are not covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA).

Individuals with disabilities are permitted to be accompanied by their service animal to all areas of the campus open to members of the public, to appropriate services or programs, and areas of activities such as classrooms, offices, auditoriums, gymnasiums, dining halls, and other similar on-campus settings. It is encouraged that students with disabilities who require the use of a service dog self-identify to AccessAbility Services.

Students will be responsible for the following:

- ❖ The animal shall be on leash, harness, or other tether. If the student's disability requires that the animal be free, then the student must have control over the dog through hand or voice signals.
- ❖ The animal must be licensed in compliance with state and/or local laws.
- ❖ Current license and rabies vaccination tags must be worn by service dogs.
- ❖ The student with a disability is responsible for picking up the animal's waste. If the student's disability prohibits the student from picking up the waste, University staff will develop a plan to assist when possible.
- ❖ WCSU is not responsible for the care or supervision of the service animal.
- ❖ The service animal shall be under control of the student with a disability at all times. The student with a disability may be instructed to remove the service animal from campus if the dog is causing destruction or is creating a disturbance. The student with a disability will be charged for any damage or destruction caused by the service animal. If a service dog has been excluded from campus, the student with a disability has the opportunity to attend the service, activity, or event without the service animal.

Procedure:

- ❖ Students are encouraged to complete an **Accommodation Intake Form** and submit disability documentation indicating their need for a service animal to AccessAbility Services.
- ❖ For residential students, the student is encouraged to provide the following to AAS:
 - Documentation that the dog is licensed in accordance with local regulations, has all appropriate vaccinations, is in good health, and has received an annual clean bill of health from a licensed veterinarian.

Any questions regarding the service animal request guideline and procedure should be directed to Elisabeth Morel, Director, at 203-837-8225 (voice), 203-837-3235 (TTY), or via e-mail at morele@wcsu.edu

Adapted from: NACUA Notes – Accommodating Service and Assistance Animals on Campus, Southern Connecticut State University Disability Resource Center, Central Connecticut State University Student Disability Services, and University of Connecticut Center for Students with Disabilities

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