I. POLICY STATEMENT

This policy is designed to provide the NKU community with guidelines for the use of Service Animals by faculty, staff, students, and visitors on campus. The policy will assist in:

1. Understanding the rights of individuals with disabilities who utilize Service Animals.
2. Identifying the common types of Service Animals.
3. Providing an outline for managing Service Animals on campus.
4. Differentiate between Service Animals and Emotionally Supportive “Assistance Animals”.

1. What to Do When Bringing a Service Animal to Campus:
   A. Individuals are not required to contact Disability Programs & Services or the Campus ADA Coordinator in order to have a Service Animal on Campus. Service Animals may be used without written permission, according to federal law.
   B. If a Partner would like to inform Northern Kentucky University of the use of a Service Animal, students should contact Disability Programs & Services (859-572-5401) and faculty, staff, or visitors should contact the ADA Coordinator (859-572-7827).

2. When it is not obvious what service an animal provides, only limited inquiries are allowed. Staff may ask two questions:
   A. Purpose of Animal- “Is your service animal required due to a disability?”
   B. Nature of Animal’s Work/Task- “What work or task has your service animal been trained to perform?”

*Staff cannot ask about the person’s disability, require medical documentation, require a special identification card or training documentation for the dog, or ask that the dog demonstrate its ability to perform the work or task.

3. Conflicting/Competing Disability Accommodations:

Students who have a health or safety related concern about exposure to a Service Animal should contact Disability Programs & Services. The student registering the concern will be asked to provide appropriate documentation that identifies the medical condition(s). This documentation will allow for a determination to
be made as to whether the condition is disabling and whether there is a need for an accommodation.

4. Emergency Situations:

Service Animals should wear identifying markers visible to emergency response teams. In case of an emergency, responding emergency personnel should be trained to recognize Service Animals and be aware that the animal may try to communicate the need for help. The individual with a disability or the Service Animal may be confused from the stressful situation. Emergency personnel should be aware that the Service Animal is trying to be protective and, in its confusion, should not be considered harmful. Emergency personnel should make every effort to keep the Partner with his/her Service Animal. However, emergency personnel’s first effort should be to the individual; this may necessitate leaving the animal behind in certain emergency evacuation situations.

5. Management of Service Animal:

A. All vaccinations and licenses required by state law and/or local ordinances should be up to date.
B. Service Animals must be accompanied by their Partners.
C. The Partner must remain in close proximity to the Service Animal.
D. The Service Animal must be restrained on a leash at all times, unless such restraint interferes with the tasks the Service Animal is trained to perform.
E. The Service Animal should be responsive to its Partner’s commands at all times.
F. To the extent possible, the Service Animal should be unobtrusive to other students and the learning environment.

6. Campus Locations:

A Service Animal is permitted to accompany the student anywhere the student goes on campus with some limited exceptions. A Service Animal may be denied access in the following situations:

A. If the service animal is out of control and the Partner does not take effective steps to control the service animal;
B. If the animal is not housebroken (i.e. trained to control its waste elimination absent illness or accident);
C. If the animal poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others that cannot be eliminated or reduced to an acceptable level by a reasonable modification to other policies, practices, and procedures.

7. Emotional Support “Assistance” Animal Guidelines:
Federal guidelines differentiate between Service Animals who are trained to perform a specific task and “emotional support” animals
whose presence alone may positively affect a person’s disability. These emotionally supportive animals, known as Assistance Animals, are not covered under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), but are recognized under the Fair Housing Act (FHA).

Students are not permitted to have Assistance Animals on campus, except within their residential dwellings. The guidelines, as set forth by the FHA, for having an assistance animal are as follows:

1) The person has a disability.
2) The animal is necessary to afford the person with a disability an equal opportunity to use and enjoy a dwelling.
3) There is an identifiable relationship between the disability and the assistance the animal provides.

Students wishing to use an Assistance Animal in a residential dwelling should contact Disability Programs & Services (859) 572-5401 and provide up-to-date documentation from a physician or health care provider explaining the need for such an accommodation.

II. ENTITIES AFFECTED

Faculty, Staff, Students, and Visitors to campus

IV. DEFINITIONS

1. Service Animals: Service Animals are working animals, not pets. They are defined as dogs (or in limited circumstances, miniature horses) that are individually trained to perform tasks for individuals with disabilities, including but not limited to:
   A. Guiding Partners who are blind.
   B. Notifying Partners who are deaf.
   C. Pulling wheelchairs for those with limited mobility.
   D. Providing warning and protection to Partners who have seizures.
   E. Performing other special tasks.

Pets and non-research animals are typically restricted on university property. However, under federal law, Service Animals are permitted on university property or activities as long as they meet the guidelines described in this policy.

2. Partner: this term refers to an individual with a disability who uses a Service Animal.
3. Emotional Support “Assistance” Animals: these animals are used for emotional support for students with disabilities and can be any number of types of animals. These animals are not covered under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) but do have recognition under the Fair Housing Act (FHA).

REVISION HISTORY

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