

Title/Subject: **SERVICE ANIMAL POLICY**

Applies to:  faculty  staff  students  student employees  visitors  contractors

Effective Date of This Revision: October 10, 2006

Contact for More Information: Student Disability Services

Board Policy  Administrative Policy  Procedure  Guideline

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### **BACKGROUND:**

Service animals are animals trained to assist people with disabilities in the activities of normal daily living. The Americans with Disabilities Act and the Michigan Persons with Disabilities Civil Rights Act allow service animals accompanying persons with disabilities to be on the Central Michigan University campus. A service animal must be permitted to accompany a person with a disability everywhere on campus. However, there are some places on campus that are not safe for service animals; these areas are discussed in greater detail in section VIII.

### **PURPOSE:**

This policy differentiates “service animals” from “pets”, describes types of service animals, denotes campus locations that are off-limits to service animals, and sets behavioral guidelines for service animals.

### **DEFINITIONS:**

The Americans with Disability Act (ADA) definition of service animals is “...any animal individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including, but not limited to, guiding individuals with impaired vision, alerting individuals who are hearing impaired to intruders or sounds, providing minimal protection or rescue work, pulling a wheelchair, or fetching dropped items.” If an animal meets this definition, it is considered a service animal regardless of whether it has been licensed or certified by a state or local government or a training program.

Partner/Handler: A person with a service animal. A person with a disability is called a partner; a person without a disability is called a handler.

Pet: A domestic animal kept for pleasure or companionship.

Service Animal: Any animal individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability. Service animals are usually dogs, but may be other animals. A service animal is sometimes called an assistance animal.

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Title/Subject: **SERVICE ANIMAL POLICY**

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**Team:** A person with a disability, or a handler, and his or her service animal. The twosome works as a cohesive team in accomplishing the tasks of everyday living.

**Trainee:** An animal undergoing training to become a service animal. A trainee will be housebroken and fully socialized. To be fully socialized means the animal will not, except under rare occasions, bark, yip, growl or make disruptive noises; will have a good temperament and disposition; will not show fear; will not be upset or agitated when it sees another animal; and will not be aggressive. A trainee will be under the control of the handler, who may or may not have a disability. If the trainee begins to show improper behavior, the handler will act immediately to correct the animal or will remove the animal from the premises.

A Guide Dog is a dog with extensive training that serves as a travel tool to persons with severe visual impairment or who are blind.

A Hearing Dog is a dog that 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.

A 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 a fall, etc. Service dogs are sometimes called assistance dogs.

A Sensory Signal Dog (SSigDog) 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 flapping). 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.

A Seizure Response Dog is a dog trained to assist a person with a seizure disorder; how the dog serves 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.

A Therapy Animal is usually a small dog or cat trained to assist a person with a psychiatric disability. Therapy animals ameliorate the symptoms of these disabilities, such as depression and post-traumatic stress disorder, and other anxiety disorders, by providing therapeutic nurture and support.

**POLICY:**

It shall be Central Michigan University policy to allow a service animal to accompany the partner at all times on campus except where service animals are specifically prohibited under this "Policy." The statements found below under the heading "Procedures" are incorporated as part of this "Policy."

As a matter of University policy, any touching of a service animal is forbidden, except upon the explicit prior consent of the handler; petting a service animal when the animal is working distracts the animal from the task at hand.

Service animals must be on a leash at all times.

It is forbidden to feed a service animal. The service animal may have specific dietary requirements. Unusual food or food at an unexpected time may cause the animal to become ill.

It is forbidden to deliberately startle a service animal.

Title/Subject: **SERVICE ANIMAL POLICY**

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It is forbidden to separate or attempt to separate a partner/handler from his or her service animal.

Pets are not permitted in university facilities, except that permission may be granted by a professor/instructor, dean or other college administrator for a pet to be in a campus facility for a specific reason at a specific time (e.g., a pet dog is used as a demonstration tool in a zoology class.)

**PROCEDURE:**

**I. Requirements of Service Animals and Their Partners/Handlers**

A person with a disability who utilizes a service animal must register the use of the animal with Student Disability Services, Faculty Personnel Services or Human Resources. The use of a service animal must be considered a reasonable and appropriate accommodation for an individual who has a documented disability.

An individual working as a handler with a trainee must register the training of each individual animal with Student Disability Services, Faculty Personnel Services or Human Resources. Handlers must also wear and display his or her licensing badge.

Guests or community patrons using a service or therapy animal while on campus are strongly encouraged to notify CMU Police or individual building coordinators of their presence. Where available, individuals may speak with staff at information desks for notification or contact information for the building coordinator. Individuals should be prepared to show authorization for the use of the animal.

Campus partners who regularly use service or therapy animals while conducting programs on campus are strongly encouraged to notify CMU Police or individual building coordinators of their programs.

Vaccination: Each service animal must be immunized against diseases common to that type of animal. Dogs must have current vaccination against rabies, distemper, and parvovirus. Dogs must wear a rabies vaccination tag and license [MCL Act 339, 287.267].

Health: Each service animal to be housed in a University residence hall or apartment (University Housing) must have an annual clean bill of health from a licensed veterinarian. The University has continuing authority to direct that a service animal receive veterinary attention.

Under Control of Partner/Handler: The partner/handler must be in full control of the animal at all times. The care and supervision of a service animal is solely the responsibility of its partner/handler.

Clean-up: The partner/handler is responsible for ensuring the clean-up of all animal waste. (When appropriate, areas will be designated as animal toileting areas by University Grounds/Maintenance and Housing staff).

**II. Removal of a Service Animal**

Disruption: The partner of an animal that is unruly or disruptive (e.g. barking, running around, bringing attention to itself) may be asked to remove the animal from university facilities or programs. If the improper behavior happens repeatedly, the partner may be directed not to bring the animal into any university facility or program until the partner takes significant steps to mitigate the behavior. Mitigation may include muzzling a barking animal or refresher training for both the animal and the partner.

Health: Service animals that are ill must not be taken into public areas. A partner with an ill animal may be directed to leave university facilities.

Title/Subject: **SERVICE ANIMAL POLICY**

---

Uncleanliness: Partners with animals that are unclean and/or bedraggled may be directed to leave university facilities or programs. An animal that becomes wet from such activities as walking in the rain or mud or from being splashed by a passing automobile, but is otherwise clean, should be considered a clean animal. Animals that shed in the spring sometimes look bedraggled. If the animal in question usually is well groomed, consider the animal tidy even though its spring coat is uneven and messy-appearing or it has become wet from weather or weather-related incidents.

### **III. Areas Off Limits to Service Animals**

Mechanical Rooms/Custodial Closets: Mechanical rooms, such as boiler rooms, facility equipment rooms, electric closets, elevator control rooms and custodial closets, are off-limits to service animals because machinery and/or chemicals in these rooms may be harmful to animals.

Areas where Protective Clothing is Necessary: Any room where protective clothing is worn is off-limits to service animals. Examples impacting students include chemical laboratories, wood shops, metal/machine shops and photography dark rooms.

Areas where there is Danger to the Service Animal: Any room, including a classroom, where there are sharp metal cuttings or other sharp objects on the floor or protruding from a surface; where there are hot materials on the floor; where there is a high level of dust; or where there is moving machinery is off-limits to service animals.

#### **Exceptions:**

A laboratory instructor may open his or her laboratory to all service animals.

A laboratory instructor in a classroom or teaching laboratory with moving equipment may grant permission to an individual animal/partner team to enter the laboratory or classroom with moving machinery. Admission for each team will be granted or denied by the laboratory instructor on a case-by-case basis. The final decision shall be made based on the nature of the machinery or class and the best interest of the animal. Example: The machinery in a classroom may have moving parts at a height such that the tail of a large dog could easily be caught in it; this is a valid reason for keeping large dogs out. However, a very small hearing dog may be shorter than any moving part and, therefore, considered for admission to the classroom.

Access to other designated off-limits areas may be granted on a case-by-cases basis.

To be granted an exception a partner/handler who wants his or her animal to be granted admission to an off-limits area should contact the Director of Student Disability Services, Faculty Personnel Services or Human Resources.

### **IV. Emergency Situations**

In the event of an emergency, the Emergency Response Team (ERT) should make every effort to keep the animal with its partner. However, the ERT's first effort should be toward the partner; this may necessitate leaving an animal behind in certain emergency evacuation situations. ERTs should be trained to recognize service animals and to be aware that the animal may be trying to communicate the need for help. The animal may become disoriented from the smell of smoke from a fire or laboratory emergency, from sirens or wind noise, or from shaking and moving ground. The partner and/or animal may be confused by the stressful situation. The ERT should be aware that the animal is trying to be protective and, in its confusion, is not to be considered harmful.

### **X. Grievance**

Title/Subject: **SERVICE ANIMAL POLICY**

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In the event of a dispute or disagreement about a disability determination, appropriateness of an accommodation, service quality or an animal restriction, the individual should work with the Director of Student Disability Services, their Faculty Personnel Services Work Accommodation Coordinator, or Human Resources Work Accommodation Coordinator. If parties are unable to reach an agreement, the individual may contact the university's Affirmative Action Officer.

*Central Michigan University reserves the right to make exceptions to, modify or eliminate this policy.  
This document supersedes all previous policies, procedures and directives relative to this subject.*