



Center for Accessibility Services and Academic Accommodations Service Animal Policy

Service animals assisting individuals with disabilities are generally permitted in all AIC facilities, programs, and activities except as described below or otherwise governed by applicable law.

Definitions

Service animals are defined as dogs that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities.[1] The work or task the animal has been trained to provide must be directly related to the person's disability.

Service animal means 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 individual'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. (*Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA)*, as amended. Pub. L. 101 - 336, 104 Stat. 327, 42 U.S.C. 12101 - 12213 and 47 U.S.C. 225 and 611) ((42 U.S.C. 12181)

The College will consider other animal species on a case-by-case basis in accordance with Federal regulations and such requests should be made through CASAA (for students) and Director of Human Resources (employees).

User/Handler Responsibilities

While access rights are legally afforded to users of service animals, that access is accompanied by the responsibility of ensuring that animals act and respond appropriately at all times while in public and that users/handlers adhere to the same socially accepted standards of behavior as other members of the College community. Users/handlers are responsible for ensuring the safety of their service animals.

Control Requirements

- The service animal must be house broken.
- A service animal shall be under the control of its handler. A service animal shall have a harness, leash, or other tether, at all times outside of the handler's private quarters or work area. Note exceptions to this guideline are instances where the handler's disability interferes with the use of a harness, leash, or other tether; or the use of a harness, leash, or other tether would interfere with the service animal's safe, effective performance of work or tasks. When a leash or tether is not in use, the service animal must be otherwise under the handler's control (e.g., voice control, signals, or other effective means).
- The user/handler is responsible for cleaning up after its animal's waste, and should always carry sufficient and appropriate equipment to clean up after the animal. Waste must be properly disposed. Persons with disabilities who physically cannot clean up after their own service animal will not be required to do so; however these individuals should take their animal to designated relief areas for relief. If an animal relieves itself in non-designated areas, (as referenced below) these individuals may ask a person nearby for assistance.

Financial Responsibility:

A person who has a service animal on campus (including College Housing) is financially responsible for property damage caused by his or her service animal including but not limited to cost of repairs, replacement or cleaning of facilities or furnishings, and any bodily injury or personal injury caused to other persons by the service animal.

Licensing:

If the animal is residing on campus, it must meet the City of Springfield and/or Massachusetts licensing requirements and wear tags designating this license. If the animal accompanies a commuter student, employee or other campus visitor and resides in another locale, the animal must meet the licensing requirements of the user/handler's resident town and wear tags indicating this licensing. If required by the City of Springfield, record of animal license will be requested by CASAA for service animals who reside on campus.

Health/Vaccinations:

- All dogs must wear a rabies vaccination tag as required by applicable Massachusetts or local law.
- All service animals living in College housing or coming onto campus on a regular basis (e.g., excluding occasional visitors or guests) must be vaccinated against diseases common to that type of animal in accordance with state and local laws, rules and regulations. All vaccinations must be current.
- Animals to be housed in College housing must have an annual clean bill of health from a licensed veterinarian.

Service Animals in Training/Service Puppies

User/Handler will provide AIC with evidence that a puppy is a bona fide service dog candidate supplied by an authorized service dog organization, and is one that the service dog organization expects will return for specialized training when the puppy is old enough (i.e. proof that Puppy is not a program dropout and will, in fact, be given up after the raising period is over).

Relief Areas

Relief areas are typically unmowed and unmaintained areas on campus. Students with service animals residing on campus are encouraged to meet with CASAA and Facilities personnel to designate, on an individual basis, appropriate relief areas.

Students

We encourage, but do not require, students to make themselves known to the College should they desire to have a service animal accompany them in academic classes, activities, or services on campus.

If a student plans to have their service animal live with them in residence, we ask that you provide notice to the College especially if you are seeking some type of accommodation for that animal. Notice to the College is used solely to ensure the appropriate housing placement is made. Students should provide notice to the College by contacting the CASAA at (413) 205-3810.

Employees

Employee questions on service animals or requests to have a service animal at work, shall be through Human Resources. Employees can call the office at (413) 205-3246.

Visitors

Service animals accompanying individuals with disabilities are welcome in all areas of campus that are open to the public (except in situations determined to apply under “Public Etiquette”, below).

Temporary Residents

All temporary campus visitors/residents (those attending conferences, workshops, lectures, etc.) must adhere to the guidelines outlined in this policy.

Services Animals that are not house broken or under control

If a service animal is determined to be out of control (e.g, displaying vicious behavior towards people; excessive barking, running around, nipping); or is not housebroken; the owner may be subject to action within the College’s disciplinary process. The infraction will be reviewed on an individual basis through the student conduct process (in the case of students) and by the Vice President of Human Resources (in the case of employees). The parties above may consult, as needed, with the appropriate College officials.

Public Etiquette by Students/Staff/Faculty/Administrators on Campus

Service animals are working animals and are not pets. Accordingly, the College asks that members of the AIC community and visitors adhere to the following best practices when interacting with service animals.

Individuals should not:

- Assume that the animal is a pet.
- Pet/touch a service animal. Petting distracts them from their responsibilities.

- Restrict the individual and the service animal full participation in programs and activities of the College. This includes off campus activities and activities involving transportation.
- Assume the handler may have a visible disability. Do not make assumptions about the necessity of the service animal.
- Ask the handler about their specific medical condition.
- Prioritize the needs of another individual over the needs of an individual with a service animal. For example, we cannot restrict the access of a service animal fearing another member of the community may have an allergy.
- Feed a service animal.
- Deliberately startle, tease or taunt a service animal.
- Separate or attempt to separate an animal from his/her handler. Service animals are trained to be protective of the handler.
- Hesitate to ask the handler if he/she would like assistance if the team seems confused about a direction in which to turn, an accessible entrance, the location of an elevator, etc.

Emergency Situations

In the event of an emergency, any campus personnel designated to respond is expected to recognize service animals and their role in communicating their partners' need for assistance. The handler and/or animal may be confused or disoriented in a stressful situation due to smoke, sirens, wind noise or by shaking and moving ground. The response personnel should be aware that animals may be protective in their confusion and should not be considered harmful. The responders should make every effort to keep the animal with its partner. The handler should make every effort to control the animal during an emergency situation and be prepared to muzzle or restrain the animal as needed. Students or employees who work with service animals regularly on campus (either in residence or in the workplace) are encouraged to develop an individual evacuation plan (IEP) with the College. Students should contact CASAA to establish an IEP. Employees should contact Human Resources.

Conflicting Disabilities

Allergic reactions to animals are common. Persons who have asthma, allergies, or other medical conditions effected by the presence of animals are asked to contact CASAA. The person impacted by the presence of the animal must provide verifiable medical documentation to support their claim. The needs of both persons will be considered in resolving the issue. If an allergy/animal conflict within a residence hall cannot be resolved agreeably, then the Office of Residential Life and CASAA will collaborate to determine a solution. Please note

that if a person using a service animal was assigned to a residence hall before the person with the medical reaction, the person utilizing the service animal will not be removed to accommodate the second person (*Disability Compliance for Higher Education, July 1996. Vol. 1, No. 12, p 4 and 5*).

Restricted Areas

The College may restrict the use of service animals in certain locations. Service animals may be restricted when their presence would fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program or activity; or where the animal poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others. The safety of locations will be considered on an individual basis by Section 504 Coordinator or Director of Human Resources, the laboratory director or professor, and the College risk management team. If a location is determined to be unsafe, reasonable accommodations will be provided to ensure the individual equal access to the activity.

Complaints, Appeals and Grievances, and Exceptions to the Policy

Any claims of discrimination on the basis of a disability or failure to provide reasonable accommodations regarding the use of a service animal on campus may be brought by any person (student, faculty, staff, visitor) pursuant to the College's Grievance Procedures. Prior to filing a formal grievance, a complaint may be brought to CASAA for informal resolution.

Policy Exceptions

Individuals wishing to request a modification or exception to this policy as a reasonable accommodation should make their request to CASAA and Human Resources for students and employees respectively.

A Special Note on Service Puppies and Service Dogs in Training

Service puppies and service dogs in training may not remain alone in student's residence more than four (4) hours at a time, and such limitation shall not be affected by Student's academic, employment or social schedules.

User/handler will not delegate any of the responsibilities for raising puppy or trainee, including but not limited to those delineated herein, to any other student(s) except as follows: User/handler may designate roommates to be responsible, in his/her absence, for feeding, walking (including required clean up) and maintaining puppy's sleeping area in clean and good order, however such designation does not relieve User/handler of any responsibilities not transfer such responsibilities to any other person.

Repeated infractions of the Service Animal Policy will result in the removal of the service puppy or trainee from campus.

Other Resources

- U.S. Department of Justice, Information about the Americans with Disabilities Act and Service Animals
<http://www.ada.gov/pubs/adastatute08.htm>
http://www.ada.gov/service_animals_2010.htm
- Guidance on Rabies in the State of Massachusetts
<http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/docs/dph/regs/105cmr330.pdf>
- Information about Service Animals
<http://www.mass.gov/ago/consumer-resources/your-rights/civil-rights/disability-rights/information-about-service-animals.html>

[1] In addition, ADA regulations include as service animals miniature horses that have been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities. (Miniature horses generally range in height from 24 inches to 34 inches measured to the shoulders and generally weigh between 70 and 100 pounds.) Miniature horses may be permitted as an accommodation if reasonable under the following assessment factors: (1) whether the miniature horse is housebroken; (2) whether the miniature horse is under the owner's control; (3) whether the facility can accommodate the miniature horse's type, size, and weight; and (4) whether the miniature horse's presence will not compromise legitimate safety requirements necessary for safe operation of the facility.