Service Animal Policy
Grinnell College

Updated February 2011

What exactly is a service animal?

The ADA defines a service animal as any guide dog, signal dog, or other animal individually trained to provide assistance to an individual with a disability. If they meet this definition, animals are considered service animals under the ADA regardless of whether they have been licensed or certified by a state or local government.

Service animals perform some of the functions and tasks that the individual with a disability cannot perform for him or herself. "Seeing eye dogs" are one type of service animal, used by some individuals who are blind. This is the type of service animal with which most people are familiar. But there are service animals that assist persons with other kinds of disabilities in their day-to-day activities. Some examples include: alerting persons with hearing impairments to sounds; pulling wheelchairs or carrying and picking up things for persons with mobility impairments; assisting persons with mobility impairments with balance.

http://www.ada.gov/archive/animal.htm (posted July 1996)

Highlights of the Final Rule to Amend the Department of Justice's Regulation Implementing Title II of the ADA:

> The Department of Justice (the Department) has amended its regulation implementing title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which applies to public entities. The ADA requires the Department to publish ADA design standards that are consistent with the guidelines published by the U.S. Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (Access Board). Therefore, the title II rule adopts new Standards for Accessible Design that are consistent with the ADA/ABA Accessibility Guidelines developed by the Access Board. The final rule also amends the existing title II regulation to make it consistent with current policies and published guidance, to reflect the Department's experience since the regulation was first published in 1991, and to address and respond to comments received from the public in response to the Department's 2008 Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM). These revisions take effect on March 15, 2011.
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> #5. Service Animals. The rule defines "service animal" as a dog that has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability. The rule states that other animals, whether wild or domestic, do not qualify as service animals. Dogs that are not trained to perform tasks that mitigate the effects of a disability, including dogs that are used purely for emotional support, are not service animals. The final rule also clarifies that individuals with mental disabilities who use service animals that are trained to perform a specific task are protected by the ADA. The rule permits the use of trained miniature horses as alternatives to dogs, subject to certain limitations. To allow flexibility in situations where using a horse would not be appropriate, the final rule does not include miniature horses in the definition of "service animal."

http://www.ada.gov/regs2010/factsheets/title2_factsheet.html

What types of service animals are allowed on campus?

1. **Dog Guides** are trained to assist blind or visually impaired handlers in navigating their physical environment.
2. **Hearing Dogs** are trained to alert a deaf or hard of hearing handlers to specific important sounds in the environment.
3. **Mobility Assistance Dogs** are dogs that have been trained to assist a person who has mobility impairment.
4. **Medical Alert Dogs** are trained to notify persons with a medical disorder to a change in physiologic status. **Diabetic Alert Dogs** alert to a change in the blood-glucose levels of their diabetic handler. **Migraine Alert Dogs** alert to an oncoming migraine headache in their susceptible handler. **Seizure Alert Dogs** alert to oncoming seizures in their epileptic handler. **Asthma Alert Dogs** alert to impending asthma attacks in their asthmatic handler. **Psychiatric Alert Dogs** alert to mood cycling in bipolar handlers, or impending panic and anxiety attacks in handlers with these conditions.
5. **Psychological Service Dogs*** are trained to assist persons living with psychiatric disabilities such as Major Depression, Bipolar Disorder, Schizophrenia, Dissociative Identity Disorder, Panic Disorder, Anxiety Disorder or Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).
6. **Social Signal Dogs*** are trained to assist a person with autism.

*Please note that Psychological Service and Social Signal Dogs must both be trained to perform specific tasks that address a disability, which is more significant than providing comfort.

What is required of me, the handler/owner, to have my service dog on campus?

1. **Identification and Other Tags**: The animal must have tags or some other method of indicating ownership and rabies clearances. It is strongly suggested but not required that service animals be fitted with some type of identifying equipment such as a harness, cape or backpack as appropriate.
2. **Health and Vaccinations**: The animal must be clean and in good health. All animals on campus must have an annual clean bill of health from a licensed veterinarian. They must have had a general maintenance vaccination series appropriate to the species. All vaccinations must be current. Applicable animals must wear a current rabies vaccination tag. Proof of vaccination must be filed with the College's ADA Coordinator. Provide a current health certificate issued by a licensed veterinarian. Service animals that are ill should not be taken into public settings. A person with an ill animal may be asked to remove the animal from college facilities.
3. **Restraint**: The animal must be kept on a leash and under the control of the handler when outside of a residential room.
4. **Under Control of Handler**: The handler must be in full control of the animal at all times. The care and supervision of a service animal is the sole responsibility of its partner/handler. The animal must be maintained and used at all times in ways that do not create safety hazards for other persons.

5. **Campus Residence Responsibility.** Handlers living in college residences are responsible for any damage caused by their animal. When working animals are left unattended in a residence, they are required to be kenneled. It is the responsibly of the handler to ensure that others are not disrupted by an unattended animal (e.g., no vocalizing).
6. **Appropriate Care:** The handler must commit to providing proper care of the animal, which includes feeding, fresh water, regular exercise, and plentiful rest.
7. **Cleanup**: Always carry equipment and bags sufficient to clean up the animal's feces. Properly dispose of the feces in a prearranged area. Persons who are not physically capable of picking up and disposing of the feces are responsible for making all necessary arrangements for assistance. The college is not responsible for these arrangements.
8. **Disruption**: The handler of an animal that is unruly or disruptive (e.g., barking, running around, aggressiveness towards others, bringing attention to itself) may be asked to remove the animal from college facilities. If the improper behavior happens repeatedly, the handler may be disallowed to bring the offending animal into college facilities until the handler takes significant steps to eliminate the behavior.
9. **Registration Required**: All Service Animals must be registered with ADA Coordinator, Jennifer Krohn, by completing and the form, "Registry of Service Animals." Failure to register or maintain an animal, as required above, may subject the handler to fines or refusal by the College for the animal to remain on campus. You will sign an authorization form allowing the ADA Coordinator to notify appropriate campus personnel/offices of the presence of the animal and any special circumstances relevant to service animal usage.

What is required of faculty, staff, or students when interacting with service dogs on campus?

1. Allow a service animal to accompany the handler at all times and everywhere on campus, except where service animals are specifically prohibited.
2. Do not pet or touch a service animal; petting the animal while it is working distracts it from the tasks at hand and may cause the animal to be corrected or the handler to be injured.
3. Do not feed a service animal. The animal may have specific dietary requirements. Unusual food may cause the animal to become ill.
4. Do not deliberately startle a service animal.
5. Do not attempt to separate a handler from his or her service animal.

What is the role of the ADA Coordinator as it relates to service dogs on campus?

1. Respond to requests to bring a service animal onto campus.
2. Maintain a current registry of Service Animals on campus.
3. Collect and keep on file current health certificates.
4. Notify appropriate personnel or campus offices about the animal and handler. Provide guidelines for appropriate interaction with the animal.

SAMPLE/DRAFT REGISTRATION FORM FOR SERVICE ANIMALS

Effective Date: _____ End Date: _____

Applicant Name: _____

Residence Hall or Office Building: _____ Room #: _____

E-mail address: _____ Phone: _____

Home/Permanent Address: _____

Home/Permanent Telephone: (_____)_____

Status of individual on campus (circle one):

9 Student 9 Guest 9 Faculty/Staff 9 Conference/program participant

9 Other: (specify) _____

INFORMATION REGARDING THE SERVICE ANIMAL:

Name of Animal: _____

Species of Animal:_____

Breed of Animal:_____

Purpose of Service Animal: _____

_____

Identifying tags or Accessories: _____

_____

Date of most recent vaccinations:

DHLPPC: _____ Bordetella: _____

Rabies: _____ Other: _____

Training Completion Date

Service Animals

- Training Organization:_____ Date:_____
- Public Access Test Date:_____

Service Animals

Service animals are trained to assist people with disabilities in the activities of normal living. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and amendments defines service animals as *"…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 a dog, or in rare cases a miniature horse, meets this definition of being individually trained to work directly with their disabled owners to assist with specific daily tasks, it is considered a service animal. **Grinnell College complies with the ADA in allowing use of service animals on campus and in residence halls.** However, because of health and safety concerns, the College's ADA Coordinator, Jennifer Krohn, oversees use of such animals.

Therapy Dogs

Therapy animals are handled by their owners to provide comfort and companionship by sharing the animal with patients in hospitals, nursing homes and other institutions and wherever else the therapy animal is needed. This is done in a way that increases emotional well being, promotes healing, and improves the quality of life for the people being visited. Therapy animals are NOT entitled to the same benefits as service animals (i.e., they are not covered by the ADA) and thus **are not permitted in the residence halls**. However, if a student owns or needs a therapy dog, and it has been certified through a nationally recognized program or process, the student may be released from the on-campus residential requirement. The two organizations that certify therapy dogs, and provide insurance for dogs that complete their programs, are:

- Therapy Dog International http://www.tdi-dog.org/
- Delta Society http://www.deltasociety.org/

Emotional Support Animals

Emotional support animals are usually used by people who find the company of an animal to be important for their mental health and wellness, beyond the pleasure of a pet. Sometimes, people with depression, anxiety, or other struggles related to mental well-being will train and keep an animal that soothes their symptoms, often with the support of their treating counselor or physician. Owners can register their animal with an organization that will classify their pet as an emotional support animal, usually after some paperwork is completed and a fee is paid. Because emotional support animals are not legally protected by the ADA, **they are not permitted in the residence halls.** One example of this kind of organization is:

- National Service Animal Registry http://www.nsarco.com/

Pets

A pet is a domestic animal that is kept for pleasure or companionship. Amphibians, birds, fish, invertebrates, rodents (except ferrets), or reptiles that are non-poisonous and non-dangerous **are permitted in student rooms**, provided there is roommate permission, proper care, and registration with the Residence Life Coordinator (RLC). The full pet policy can be found here:

- http://www.grinnell.edu/offices/studentaffairs/shb/reslifeproc/residencypolicy