

Service Animals

Service animals are allowed on campus, in classrooms, and at events. We ask that the Student Resource Center for ADA Services and/or that Campus Public Safety be notified of the animal's presence, especially if attending classes.

A service animal is a dog or miniature horse (per the State of Florida) that **is trained to do work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability**, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability. The work done or tasks performed must be directly related to the individual's disability. Tasks may include, but are not limited to

- guiding an individual who is visually impaired or blind,
- alerting an individual who is deaf or hard of hearing,
- pulling a wheelchair,
- assisting with mobility or balance,
- alerting and protecting an individual who is having a seizure, fainting spell, blood sugar issue
- retrieving objects,
- alerting an individual to the presence of allergens,
- helping an individual with a psychiatric or neurological disability by preventing or interrupting impulsive or destructive behaviors,
- reminding an individual with mental illness to take prescribed medications,
- calming an individual with posttraumatic stress disorder during an anxiety attack,
- or doing other specific work or performing other special tasks.

A service animal is not a pet.

The crime-deterrent effect of an animal's presence and the provision of emotional support, well-being, comfort, or companionship do not constitute work or tasks for purposes of Florida law.

Trainee: A dog guide trainee is granted the same rights as fully trained service animals.

Note: Therapy Animal

A therapy animal is an animal used within a therapeutic relationship whose function is to provide comfort, companionship, and/or a feeling of well-being. Animals whose sole function is to provide a therapeutic effect by being present are not service animals and are not generally allowed on campus, though they may be requested as an accommodation in housing situations.

Comfort Animal or Emotional Support Animal

An emotional support or comfort animal may well provide a benefit to the individual, but in a general manner that is not protected by law. Note that a service animal is different because it has been specifically trained to recognize a condition, behavior, or situation and is also trained to respond or perform specific tasks that aid the disabled person.

Responsibilities of Individuals Using Service Animals

An individual with a service animal is responsible for the following:

- A. Ensure that the animal is under control of its handler by means of a harness or on a leash. In instances where a person's disability or the service animal's performance of work or tasks precludes use of a harness or leash, the service animal must still otherwise be under control (e.g. by voice control, signals, or other effective means). If an animal is out of control and the animal's handler does not take effective action to control it, the matter will be addressed individually by Campus Public Safety.
- B. Be responsible for the care and supervision of the service animal.
- C. Assure that service animals are housebroken (i.e., trained so that, absent illness or accident, the animal controls its waste elimination) and pick up the animal's waste. Individuals with physical disabilities who cannot pick up and dispose of the animal's waste should work with campus contacts to identify appropriate service animal toileting areas.

PSC may exclude a service animal from some or all parts of its property if the service animal

1. is out of control and the animal's handler does not take effective action to control it;
2. is not housebroken;
3. fundamentally alters the nature of PSC's programs, services, or activities; or
4. poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others.

Requirements for Faculty, Staff and Students

Members of the PSC community are responsible for the following:

- A. Allowing service animals to accompany the person they are assisting in all areas of campus where members of the public, participants in services, programs or activities, or invitees, as relevant, are allowed to go.
- B. Not distracting a service animal in any way. Do not pet, feed, or interact with the animal without the handler's permission.
- C. Not separating a disabled person from his or her service animal.
- D. Clarifying an animal's status as a service animal only when it is not readily apparent that an animal is a service animal. In such cases, staff may not ask about the nature or extent of a

person's disability, but may make two inquiries to establish whether the animal is a service animal:

1. Is this a service animal?
2. What work or task has the animal been trained to perform?

Other questions regarding the status of a service animal should be referred to the SRC/ADA. PSC may take disciplinary action against any individual who fails to abide by these guidelines.

Restrictions and Exclusions

PSC may impose some restrictions or remove from campus a service animal that is out-of-control, not housebroken, poses a direct threat to health and safety of others, or whose presence fundamentally alters a program, service, or activity. Restrictions or removals are considered on a case-by-case basis in accordance with applicable laws.

A community member may report a concern regarding a service animal to Campus Public Safety 850-484-2500.

- A. In response to an immediate concern, Campus Public Safety may determine that a service animal must be removed from campus on a temporary basis. The officer will notify the service animal's handler of this decision and the incident will be turned over to the SRC/ADA office.
- B. The point of contact will investigate all reported concerns and cases where service animals have been temporarily removed from campus and will consult with appropriate college personnel to determine whether or not the animal should be excluded from campus on a permanent basis.
- C. If there is a concern that a service animal poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others, PSC will make an individualized assessment, based on current medical knowledge or on the best available objective evidence, to ascertain:
 1. the nature, duration, and severity of the risk;
 2. the probability that the potential injury will actually occur;
 3. whether reasonable modifications of policies, practices, or procedures or the provision of auxiliary aids or services will mitigate the risk.
- D. If a service animal is believed to fundamentally alter a service, program, or activity, PSC has the burden of proving that a fundamental alteration would occur. The decision that allowing the service animal would result in a fundamental alteration must be made by the head of PSC or his or her designee.
- E. If it is appropriate for the animal to be excluded from a class or the campus permanently,
 1. The service animal's handler must be provided with a written statement of the reasons for reaching that conclusion.

2. The appropriate point of contact will work to ensure the individual receives appropriate accommodations in place of the use of a service animal.

F. An individual who does not agree with the resolution may file a complaint or grievance.

Conflicting Disabilities

Individuals with medical issues who may be impacted by the presence of service animals should communicate with the instructor if they have a concern about exposure to a service animal. The instructor will reach out to SRC/ADA for assistance with the situation. ADA Services will facilitate a process to resolve the conflict that considers the disability-related needs/accommodations of all persons involved. Documentation may be requested.

Emergency Situations

Emergency Responders (ERs) are trained to recognize service animals and to be aware that animals may try to communicate the need for help or that an animal may become disoriented in an emergency situation. Responders make every effort to keep a service animal with the disabled person it is tasked with assisting. However, the Responder's first effort should be toward the individual, which may result in the service animal being left behind in some emergency evacuation situations.

If a service animal is not with its handler, please contact ADA Services or Campus Public Safety.