



Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities (RCPD)
Maximizing Ability & Opportunity
Michigan State University
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SERVICE ANIMAL POLICY

I. Purpose

Michigan State University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to persons with disabilities and fulfilling its responsibilities under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and the Michigan Persons with Disabilities Civil Rights Act (MPDCRA). This Policy governs the use of service animals on campus by persons with disabilities.¹

II. Policy Statement

Persons with disabilities may be accompanied by working service animals on the campus of Michigan State University consistent with the provisions of this Policy.

III. Definitions

The definition of a disability under the ADA is:

A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, a record of such impairment, or being regarded as having such an impairment.

The definition of a service animal is:

A service animal is a guide dog, signal dog, or other 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 with impaired hearing to sounds, pulling a wheelchair, or fetching dropped items (EEOC & DOJ, 1992).

IV. Service Animal Use on Campus

¹ A separate policy governs the use of service animals in University housing (see “Policy, Guidelines and Procedures for Residents with Service Animals in University Housing”).

- A. Visitors to campus with service animals may access all public facilities, with the exception of areas where service animals are specifically prohibited due to safety or health restrictions, where the service animal may be in danger, or where the service animal's use may compromise the integrity of research.
- B. Students and employees with a disability who wish to utilize a service animal in the classroom or University office must register with the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities (RCPD). For use of a service animal by a resident or potential resident in University housing, see ["Policy, Guidelines and Procedures for Residents with Service Animals in University Housing."](#)
- C. Service animals on campus must comply with all state & local licensure and vaccination requirements.
- D. The care and supervision of a service animal is the responsibility of the individual who uses the animal's service. The individual must maintain control of the animal at all times. The individual using the animal's service is responsible for ensuring the clean up of all animal waste. University Grounds/Maintenance and Housing staff may designate animal toileting areas.

V. Removal of Service Animals

A service animal may be removed from University grounds or facilities if it is disruptive (e.g. barking, wandering, displaying aggressive behavior) and the behavior is outside the duties of the service animal. Ill, unhygienic, and/or unsanitary service animals are not permitted in public campus areas. The individual responsible for such an animal may be required to remove the animal.

VI. Restricted Areas

The University may prohibit the use of service animals in certain locations due to health or safety restrictions, where service animals may be in danger, or where their use may compromise the integrity of research. Restricted locations may include, but are not limited to: research laboratories, classrooms with demonstration/research animals, medical and veterinary surgical areas, and nuclear research areas.

Exceptions to restricted areas may be granted on a case-by-case basis by contacting the RCPD. In making its decision, RCPD will consult with the appropriate department and/or laboratory representative regarding the nature of the restricted area and any ongoing research.

VII. Interacting with Service Animals

Service animals work and perform tasks and are not pets. Accordingly, the RCPD recommends that members of the University community adhere to the following best practices when interacting with service animals:

- Do not touch or feed a service animal unless invited to do so;
- Do not deliberately distract or startle a service animal, and,
- Do not separate or attempt to separate a service animal from the individual using the animal's service.

VIII. Policy Exceptions

Individuals wishing to request a modification or exception to this policy as a reasonable accommodation should contact the RCPD.

IX. Dispute Resolution Procedure

Disputes or disagreements about a disability determination, appropriateness of an accommodation, service quality, or an animal restriction should first be raised with the RCPD specialist involved. If the matter cannot be resolved, a dispute resolution form should be submitted to RCPD (located at www.rcpd.msu.edu/awareness/dispute). Individuals may also file a written complaint with the University's ADA Compliance Officer in the Office for Inclusion and Intercultural Initiatives (<http://www.inclusion.msu.edu/>).

X. Policy Implementation

The RCPD is responsible for implementing this policy. Success requires the cooperation of all students, staff and faculty.