

Palm Beach State College

Service Animal Policy for Students

Note: The policy below relates only to students. As noted on the College Security "Animal Control" web page: Campus visitors with service animals may access all public facilities. Nonpublic areas include, but are not limited to, classrooms, laboratories and learning labs.

General Policy Description:

This policy provides the College community with guidelines for the use of service animals for students with disabilities attending Palm Beach State College. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) defines a service animal as a dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric or mental disability. The work or task performed must be directly related to and mitigate the effects of the disability.

The individual with a disability (handler) must provide proper care of the animal and ensure that animals act and respond appropriately at all times.

Types of Service Dogs:

Guide dog: Trained to serve a handler with navigation who is low vision or blind.

Seizure response dog: Trained to assist an individual with a seizure disorder. The type of assistance depends upon the circumstances and severity of the disorder. The dog may stand guard over the person or go for help.

Hearing dog: Trained to alert an individual who is deaf or has significant hearing loss to specific sounds such as fire alarms, phones ringing, knocks on the door, etc.

Service (assistance dog): Trained to assist a handler with a mobility or health impairment. The dog may pull a wheelchair or help a person with a psychiatric or neurological disability by preventing or interrupting impulsive or destructive behaviors.

Note:

Although a dog's companionship may offer comfort or emotional support, this in and of itself does NOT qualify as "work" or a "trained task" under the ADA. Therefore emotional support dogs or therapy dogs are not permitted on campus.

Documentation/Requirements:

A student with a disability who desires to use a service animal on campus must contact the campus Disability Support Services office. The process of determining eligibility and considering what is a reasonable accommodation is an interactive and collaborative process. A student requesting an accommodation for his/her disability must submit the appropriate documentation to support the requested accommodation. The College will determine whether the requested accommodation is reasonable based upon all relevant factors, including the nature of the student's disability.* The information submitted must clearly describe the tasks performed by the animal and explain how those tasks mitigate the impact of the disability. When it is not readily apparent that a service dog is trained to do work or perform tasks for an individual with disability (e.g., the dog is observed guiding an individual who is blind, or a dog is pulling a person's wheelchair), the College reserves the right to request and be provided specific information on the nature and training of the tasks performed.

The handler must show proof that the animal is in compliance with [Palm Beach County Animal Care and Control Ordinance 98-22](#) including wearing current rabies/license tags.

*Students who disagree with the College's determination may appeal the decision (see Appeals Procedure section at the end of this policy).

Control Requirements:

- The care and supervision of the animal is solely the responsibility of the handler.
- The dog must be on a leash, harness or tether at all times.
- The handler must be in full control of the animal at all times.
- The handler is required to clean up if the animal defecates on campus and properly dispose of the waste by placing it in a plastic bag and depositing it in a trash receptacle.

Exclusion from Campus:

When a service dog is determined to be in violation of any of the above behaviors, the situation will be handled on a case-by-case basis through the office of the Dean of Students on the campus where the infraction occurred. The College may ask the handler to remove the service dog from the premises if the animal is:

- Unruly or disruptive, including but not limited to growling, barking, aggressiveness, sniffing (people, tables in eating areas or personal belongings of others).
- Not housebroken.
- Not receiving appropriate care (dirty, has a strong odor or there is evidence of having fleas or ticks).
- Ill or in poor health.

If an animal is excluded from campus, the handler will be given the option of continuing to utilize or participate in College services without having the service animal on the premises.

Conflicting Disabilities

Persons with medical conditions that are affected by proximity to an animal should contact the Disability Support Services office and provide medical documentation to support their claim and the request for accommodation. Resolution of the complaint will be handled on a case-by-case basis and take into consideration the needs of both parties.

Campus Etiquette

Service animals are working companions and are not considered pets. College faculty, staff and students should not:

- Pet or touch a service animal as that distracts from the tasks it is trained to perform.
- Feed service dogs as they may have strict dietary requirements.
- Attempt to separate a handler from his or her service animal.

Appeals Procedure

Appeals should be submitted to the office of the campus Dean of Student Services. If necessary, an ad hoc committee comprised of key representatives from Palm Beach State College will discuss and resolve the issue. Complaints can also be filed with the Atlanta office of the Office of Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, 61 Forsyth St., S.W., Suite 19T70, Atlanta GA 30303-8927, Telephone number 404-974-9406.