

## **Palm Beach State College Service Animal Policy**

*Please Note: If you have a question or concern related to this policy please contact the ADA/504 Coordinator at 561-868-3375.*

### **General Policy Description:**

This policy provides the College community with guidelines for the use of service animals on campus. Palm Beach State College adheres to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and is committed to insuring that students, employees and visitors with disabilities who rely on service animals are able to access all public areas, benefit from employment opportunities, attend classes, and participate in campus activities.

### **Definition:**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) defines a service animal as a dog or a miniature horse 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. The work or task performed must be directly related to the individual's disability. Tasks may include, but are not limited to, guiding individuals with impaired vision, alerting individuals with impaired hearing to sounds, retrieving dropped items, or pulling a wheelchair.

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. Comfort dogs are not permitted on campus.

### **Primary contacts for information or guidance:**

*Student issues:* Campus Manager of Disability Support Services

*Employment/employee issues:* Executive Director of Human Resources

*Visitor issues:* ADA/504 Coordinator

### **Responsibility of individual with a service animal:**

- The animal must be licensed and in compliance as required by Palm Beach County Animal Care and Control Ordinance 98-22.
- The individual must provide proper care and supervision of the animal.
- The dog must be on a leash, harness or tether at all times unless such use prevents the performance of the necessary task. In this situation the animal must be otherwise under control (e.g. by voice control, signals, etc.).

- The individual 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.

**Responsibility of faculty and staff:**

- Do not distract or interact with the animal in any way without the permission of the person who is being assisted.
- Allow service animals to accompany the person they are assisting and do not attempt to separate them.
- Clarify the animal's status ONLY if there is a compelling reason to believe that the animal is NOT a service animal. In that instance, it is permissible to make two inquiries to establish the animal's status: *1) Is the animal required because of a disability?* And *2) What work or task has the animal been trained to perform?* If the individual's responses do not clarify the concern, refer the issue to the appropriate staff member indicated on page 1 for review. The designated primary contact will investigate the concern and consult with appropriate college personnel to determine a course of action.

**Exclusion from campus:**

The College may impose some restrictions or exclude a service animal from campus if the animal is not housebroken, is unruly or disruptive, or poses a direct threat to health and safety of others. Situations are considered on a case-by-case basis through the office of the ADA/504 Coordinator in consultation with other officials of the College. If an animal is excluded from campus, the appropriate point of contact will work to ensure the individual receives appropriate accommodations in place of the use of a service animal. An individual who does not agree with the resolution may file a complaint or grievance in accordance with college policy.

**Conflicting disabilities:**

Persons with medical conditions that are affected by proximity to an animal should contact either the Campus Disability Support Services Manager (if a student) or Executive Director of Human Resources (if an employee) 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.