

Wesleyan University – Service Animal Policy

This policy is intended to provide support to individuals with disabilities who require the assistance of a service animal in order to access University property, courses, programs and activities.

What is a Service Animal?

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) defines a service animal as “a dog individually trained to work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including, but not limited to, physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disabilities.”

This definition does not include companion dogs (pets) or emotional support animals.

Service animals assist people with disabilities in many different ways including:

- Guiding people who are blind or have low vision and retrieving dropped objects for them;
- Alerting people who are deaf or hard of hearing to sounds and the presence of others;
- Carrying and picking up items, opening doors, or flipping switches for people who have limited use of hands or arms, limited use of their legs, or limited ability to bend or stoop.
- Pulling wheelchairs.
- Alerting people to the onset of medical conditions such as seizures, protecting them and cushioning them if they fall, reviving them, and performing other tasks that reduce the risk of disability-related injury.
- Doing work or performing tasks for persons with traumatic brain injury, intellectual disabilities, or psychiatric disabilities, such as reminding a person with depression to take medication or waking them up, alerting a person with anxiety to the onset of panic attacks, orienting people with schizophrenia to reality, and
- helping people with intellectual or cognitive disabilities to locate misplaced items, find places, or follow daily routines; and
- Providing physical support and assisting people with stability and balance.

If the need for the service animal is not apparent, the University may only ask the following of service animal’s owner:

- Is the dog a service animal required because of a disability?
- What work or task has the dog been trained to perform?

If the employee states the animal is required because of a disability and, the animal has been trained to do work or a task for the employee, the service animal will be approved and may accompany the employee to all areas of University property. The employee will not be asked any additional questions about their service animal.

Requirements of service animals and their owners include:

- All vaccinations must be current, including rabies and other diseases common to type of dog.
- All dogs must wear rabies vaccination tag.
- All dogs must be in good health.
- All dogs must have a license per state law.

- Service dogs must wear an identification tag which includes the name and phone number of the owner at all times.
- Service dogs must be harnessed, leashed or tethered, unless these devices interfere with the service dog's work or the individual's disability prevents them from using these devices.
- Service dogs do not always have a harness, a sign, or a symbol indicating that they are service animals.
- The owner must be in full control of the dog at all times.
- Ensure the service dog does not disturb or disrupt normal business functions.
- Immediately clean up after the service dog and properly dispose of waste or other debris.
- The care, supervision and cleanliness of the dog is solely the responsibility of the owner.
- The owner is responsible for damage or injury caused by the service dog.

University's Responsibilities

The University has the right to exclude a service dog from our premises if the dog is out of control and the owner does not take effective action to control it, or the dog is not housebroken. When there is a legitimate reason to ask that a dog be removed, the University will offer the employee an alternative reasonable accommodation.