

Service Animals Policy

Georgetown College Service Animals Policy

Georgetown College is committed to being a welcoming and accessible place for all community members and visitors and permits service animals, as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA §36.302)[1], access to areas of public accommodation on campus.

Under Kentucky State Law, Service Animals include dogs in training, while engaged in training. Therefore, the same standards of conduct and location access are granted to dogs in training in regard to public access on campus. All trainers must have in their personal possession identification verifying that they are trainers of assistance dogs (KRS §258.500).

Examples of work or tasks include, but are not limited to, assisting an individual who is blind or has low vision, alerting an individual who is deaf or hard of hearing, pulling a wheelchair, assisting an individual during a seizure, alerting an individual to the presence of allergens, retrieving items such as medicine, providing physical support and assistance with balance and stability, or helping an individual with psychiatric and/or neurological disabilities by preventing or interrupting impulsive or destructive behaviors. Dogs whose function is to provide emotional support, well-being, comfort, or companionship, do not qualify as service animals under the ADA.

When it is not apparent what service the dog provides, Georgetown College employees may ask if the animal is required because of a disability and what work or tasks the dog has been trained to perform.

Handler's responsibilities

Service animals may accompany their handler to places where the handler is normally allowed to go. Georgetown College reserves the right to restrict service animals in certain locations due to health, environmental, or safety hazards. Please contact Disability Services for exceptions to restricted areas.

Service animals must be under control at all times. Under the ADA, Service Animals must be harnessed, leashed, or tethered, unless these devices interfere with the Service Animal's work or the handler's disability prevents using these devices. In these cases, the handler must maintain control of the animal through voice, signal, or other effective controls. If an animal exhibits unacceptable behavior, the handler must take effective action to correct the situation.

A service animal must be in good health, vaccinated, and licensed as required by state law (KRS §258.005-991) and local ordinance. If the handler resides in Student Housing, verification of vaccination and flea treatment must be provided to the Disability Services Coordinator.

Care and treatment of the service animal is the responsibility of the handler.

The handler shall dispose of the animal's waste in a safe and sanitary manner. Only grassy areas are to be used as relief areas. Handlers who physically cannot clean up after their service animal are responsible for finding someone to do so for them.

The handler is solely responsible for any damage to persons or College property caused by their service dog. If living in Student Housing, the handler may be charged for any damage caused by the service animal beyond reasonable wear and tear to the same extent that other students are charged for damages beyond reasonable wear and tear. This includes any pest infestation (such as fleas or ticks) beyond standard pest treatment for the residence hall.

Exceptions

The College may ask for a service animal to be removed from campus when:

1. the service animal is out of control (e.g. incessant barking, wandering) and the handler does not take effective action to control it, or
2. the service animal poses a direct threat to the health and safety of others (e.g. displaying aggressive behaviors), or
3. the service animal is not housebroken, or
4. the service animal is excessively unclean, or
5. the handler does not comply with the responsibilities as listed above.

If a service animal is excluded from the premises, the College will offer the handler the opportunity to participate in services, programs, or activities without the animal's presence.

Conflicting Disabilities

Conflicts between a service animal and a disabled person (e.g. severe allergies that cannot be controlled by medication) will be addressed on a case-by-case basis. The need of both disabled persons will be considered in resolving the issue^[2]. Persons whose disability is negatively affected by the presence of a service animal are asked to contact the Disability Services Coordinator. The person negatively impacted by the presence of the animal must provide verifiable documentation to support their claim and to request accommodations. In severe situations of allergic, behavioral, or medical reactions, temporary accommodations might be arranged.

Interactions with Service Animals

Service Animals are working animals and not pets. The College asks that members of the Georgetown College community and visitors adhere to the following best practices.

Individuals should not:

- Pet/touch a service animal unless invited to do so by the handler. Petting distracts them from their responsibilities.
- Feed a service animal.
- Restrict the handler and the service animal from full participation in programs and activities of the College. This includes off-campus activities and activities involving transportation.
- Ask the handler about the nature or extent of their disability.
- Make assumptions about the necessity of the Service Animal.
- Prioritize the needs of another individual over the needs of an individual with a service animal. For example, a service animal's access cannot be restricted based on another community member's allergy or fear of dogs.
- Deliberately startle, tease, or taunt a Service Animal.
- Separate or attempt to separate a Service Animal from its handler. Service animals are trained to be protective of their handler.

Appeals and Grievances

If the decision is made to remove the Service Animal, the handler may file an appeal by following the Grievance Process found on the [Disability Services webpage](#).

[1] Service animals are defined as dogs that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities. The work or task a dog has been trained to provide must be directly related to the person's disability.

[2] ADA Requirements: Service Animals | [ADA.gov](https://www.ada.gov)