

Superintendent Procedure 2030SP

Service Animals in Schools

Approved by: s/Larry Nyland Date: 11/18/16

Dr. Larry Nyland, Superintendent



A. Service Animal Uses:

Service animals are animals that are individually trained to perform tasks for people with disabilities such as guiding people who are blind, alerting people who are deaf, pulling wheelchairs, alerting and protecting a person who is having a seizure or performing other special tasks. Service animals are working animals, not pets. The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the individual's disability.

Generally, the district will modify its policies, practices, or procedures to permit the use of a service animal by an individual with a disability.

Use of a service animal by an employee with a disability will be allowed when such use is necessary as a reasonable accommodation to enable the employee to perform the essential functions of their job or to access benefits of employment provided to all employees in the same job classification.

The use of a service animal by an individual with a disability will not be conditioned on the payment of a fee, security deposit or surcharge.

B. Requirements for Service Animal Access:

When it is not readily apparent that an animal brought on to school property or to a school- sponsored event is a service animal, the district may make two inquiries to determine if the animal is a service animal: (1) is the animal required because of a disability? and (2) what work or task has the animal been trained to perform?

Service animals must be under the control of the handler at all times and be harnessed, leashed or tethered, unless the devices interfere with the service animal's work or the individual's disability prevents him from using these devices. Individuals who cannot use such devices must maintain control of the animal through voice, signal, or other effective controls.

C. Parents or Animal Handlers:

Third party service animal handlers who will be regularly present in school for the purpose of assisting a student with his/her service animal will be subjected to the same requirements and standards of conduct that apply to other school volunteers.

D. Removal or Exclusion of a Service Animal from School or School Property:

The building principal or a district administrator may request an individual with a disability to remove a service animal from school, a school sponsored activity or school property if the animal is out of control and the animal's handler does not take effective action to control the animal or the animal is not housebroken.

The district superintendent may exclude a service animal in rare circumstance if, after making an individualized determination, it is determined that:

1. The presence of the animal poses a direct threat to the health and/or safety of others that cannot be eliminated by a modification of policies, practices, or procedures, or by the provision of auxiliary aids and services; or
2. The presence of the animal would result in a fundamental alteration of any school program.

If the district excludes a service animal, it will provide the individual with a disability the opportunity to participate in the service, program or activity without having the service animal on the premises.

E. Service Animals at School-Sponsored Events:

Individuals with disabilities may be accompanied by their service animal to events or activities open to the public that are held in schools or on school property.

The building administrator may revoke or exclude the service animals for the reasons set forth in paragraph "D" above.

F. Responsibility/Liability:

1. Generally, neither the district, nor its employees, are responsible for the cost, care or supervision of the service animal.
2. The owner/handler of the service animal is responsible for any and all damage caused by the service animal at school, on school premises or at school activities.

G. Appeals:

A person whose service animal has been excluded or removed may appeal the decision using the discrimination complaint process found in Superintendent Procedure 3210SP.B or 5010 SP.

H. Resources:

District Contact

Section 504/ADA Grievance Coordinator
Office of Student Civil Rights
Seattle Public Schools
MS 32-149, P.O. Box 34165
Seattle, WA 98124-1166
206-252-0178
accessibility@seattleschools.org

State Contacts

Superintendent of Public Instruction
Equity and Civil Rights Office
P.O. Box 47200
Olympia, WA 98504-7200
360.725.6162

Washington State Human Rights Commission
711 South Capitol Way, Suite 402
P.O. Box 42490
Olympia, WA 98504-2490
360.753.6770

Federal Contact

Office of Civil Rights
U.S. Department of Education
915 Second Avenue, Room 3310
Seattle, WA 98174
206.607.1600

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