

LAFAYETTE COLLEGE

Academic Resource Hub • Accessibility Services

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LAFAYETTE COLLEGE SERVICE ANIMAL POLICY

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DEFINITION OF SERVICE ANIMAL

Lafayette College recognizes the importance of Service Animals as defined by The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) which defines service animals as “dogs that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities. Examples of such work or tasks include guiding people who are blind, alerting people who are deaf, pulling a wheelchair, alerting and protecting a person who is having a seizure, reminding a person with mental illness to take prescribed medications, calming a person with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) during an anxiety attack, or performing other duties. Service animals are working animals, not pets. The work or tasks a dog has been trained to provide must be directly related to the person’s disability.” A service dog can be any breed or size. It might wear specialized equipment such as a backpack, harness, or special collar or leash, but this is not a legal requirement. If a dog meets this definition, it is considered a service animal regardless of whether it has been licensed or certified by a state or local government or a training program.¹

The ADA further states that “dogs whose sole function is to provide comfort or emotional support do not qualify as service animals under the ADA.”

INQUIRIES

The individual’s disability may not be visible. When it is not obvious what service an animal provides and/or the owner has chosen not to voluntarily register their service animal with Lafayette’s Accessibility Services, only limited inquiries are allowed.

College personnel may ask two questions in determining the validity of the presence of the animal:

- (1) is the dog a service animal required because of your disability? and
- (2) what work or task has the dog been trained to perform?

College personnel cannot ask about the person’s disability, require medical documentation, require a special identification card or training documentation for the dog, or ask that the dog demonstrate its ability to perform the work or task.

¹ Miniature horses are not included in the definition of a service animal, but are specifically listed in the regulations as the one animal that may be used as an exception to a dog. 28 C.F.R. § 35.136(i).

SERVICE ANIMAL ACCESS

The ADA allows service animals accompanying persons with disabilities to be anywhere that is open to the public on College premises. College premises shall mean any land and/or facility owned, leased, rented and/or occupied by Lafayette College. However, Service Animals are not permitted in the Weinstein Natatorium swimming pool as the ADA does not override public health rules that prohibit dogs in swimming pools. Service dogs are permitted on the pool deck and in other places where the public is allowed to go. There may be individual exceptions in places where the presence of the service animal may compromise safety or a sterile environment and/or interfere with the fundamental nature of the activities being conducted in which the service animal would be not permitted. Lafayette reserves the right to amend this Policy as circumstances require.

VOLUNTARY REGISTRATION OF SERVICE ANIMALS WHILE ON CAMPUS

Students

Students with a service dog that would like to voluntarily register their service animal with the College, please contact Accessibility Services. As stated, this is voluntary, but may aid one in accessing the College premises. The service dog, and their student handler, are expected to adhere to the rights and responsibilities outlined below. It is recommended the handler has the animal wear a contact tag on its collar in the event that the dog becomes separated from the handler for any reason.

Service Animals in Campus Housing

If a student is planning to live in on-campus housing with a Service Animal, the student must notify Accessibility Services in advance of the student residing on campus. Such notification allows Accessibility Services to work with Residence Life in order to assign the most appropriate housing location in consideration of the student's needs. A request for housing with a Service Animal does not require documentation of a disability; however, the handler (student owner) of a Service Animal in campus housing must provide a Certificate of Health from the treating veterinarian indicating that the Service Animal is in good health and that the animal has had the vaccinations required by state and local ordinances/laws/regulations. In addition, the dog should be licensed by Northampton County. The dog must have all licenses and vaccinations as required by the City of Easton. It is recommended, but not required, that the Service Animal also wear a contact tag so the handler may be contacted in the event the animal is separated from the handler.

Responsibilities and expectations regarding Service Animals in campus housing will be discussed with the student prior to the animal living in the residence hall. Questions about these responsibilities and expectations should be directed to Accessibility Services.

REQUIREMENTS OF SERVICE ANIMALS AND THEIR OWNERS

- The animal cannot pose a direct threat to the health and safety of persons while on the College's premises.
- Local ordinances regarding animals apply to service animals, including requirements for immunization, licensing, noise, restraint, and at-large animals.
- The owner must be in full control of the animal 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 individual's disability prevents using these devices. In that case, the individual must maintain control of the animal through voice, signal, or other effective controls.
- The owner is responsible for cleaning up the animal's waste and fluids and disposing of such in outside trash containers only. Waste disposal via College plumbing is prohibited. The owner should always carry equipment sufficient to clean up and properly dispose of the animal's waste and fluids. Owners who are not physically able to pick up and dispose of the animal's waste and fluids are responsible for making all necessary arrangements for assistance. The College is not responsible for these services. Additionally, the animal is not to be bathed or its cage/crate, or bedding cleaned using College Housing or facilities.
- The owner is liable for damage caused by the animal.
- The owner is responsible for instructing others on appropriate interactions with the animal and setting clear expectations.

EXCLUSIONS

A service animal may be excluded from any authorized area and its owner may be subject to disciplinary action if, including, but not limited to:

- The service animal displays aggressive or disruptive behavior or noises and effective action is not taken to control it; unless said noise/behavior(s) are part of the needed disability service to the owner;
- The service animal is not housebroken;
- The service animal poses a direct threat to the health and safety of others;
- The service animal is not in good health, well-groomed, or cared for;
- The service animal infringes inappropriately into other's personal space;
- The owner intentionally uses the service animal to block identified fire/emergency exits.

NOTE: In the event that restriction or removal of a service animal is determined to be necessary, every effort will be made to assure that the individual still has access to the programs, services, or activities of the College without the animal.