

OGC Revision, 2/7/18

CAMBRIDGE COLLEGE POLICY

Service Animals on Campus – Guidelines, Policies and Procedures

Service Animals on College Premises

Individuals with a disability may be accompanied by their service animal(s) on all Cambridge College premises where members of the public or participants in College services, programs or activities are allowed to go.

The term “service animal” (or “dog guide” under Massachusetts law) refers to any dog 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. If a dog meets this definition, it is considered a service dog regardless of whether it has been licensed or certified by a state or local government or a training program.

Dogs (and in rare circumstances, a miniature horse) are the only animals that may serve as service animals. Other species of animals, whether wild or domestic, trained or untrained, are not service animals.

The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the individual's impairment. Examples of tasks include, but are not limited to: assisting an individual with low vision with navigation; alerting individuals who are hard of hearing to the presence of people or objects; pulling a person's wheelchair; or providing assistance with stability or balance to an individual with mobility impairment.

Federal law does not require the individual to provide documentation that an animal has been trained as a service animal. The College or its agents may not ask questions of the individual if it is readily apparent that the dog is trained to perform tasks for a person with a disability. If it is not readily apparent that the dog is a service dog, the College or its agents may ask two questions:

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

If the individual answers “yes” to the first question and articulates a description of the work or task, no further inquiries are permitted, and the student must be allowed to proceed. Admission of a service animal may be denied if an individual answers “no” to the first question, or cannot describe any work or task that the dog has been trained to perform.

In addition to the performance of specific tasks, some service animals may also provide a disabled individual with emotional support and/or comfort. Such service animals shall be permitted on the College's premises on the same conditions as any other service animal.

While registration is not mandatory (per ADA), students with service animals are encouraged to contact the Office of Disability Support. This ensures a record of the animal being on campus and could be important in case of emergency. It will also allow the College to alert security personnel and make staff members aware that there will be a service animal on campus.

Emotional Support Animals

An “emotional support animal” is a term used to describe an animal that provides comfort by being present with a person. Since the animal has not been trained to perform a “specific job or task,” it does not qualify as a service animal under the ADA.

Except as provided for above, Emotional support animals for students may be permitted on the Cambridge College campus on a case-by-case basis. Before bringing an emotional support animal onto campus grounds, the requesting student must submit a request and appropriate supporting documentation. Emotional support animals that do not otherwise qualify as service animals/dog guides may not be on campus grounds without prior notification, registration and approval.

Individuals Denied Access

Students, guests, or visitors who are either denied access of an assistance animal or feel they have been unreasonably questioned should contact the Coordinator of Disability Support, who has been designated to coordinate the efforts of Cambridge College to comply with all relevant disability laws.

Employees Questioning Whether an Animal Qualifies as a Service Animal

Any University employee questioning the appropriateness of a service animal in a University facility should report their concern to an immediate supervisor. Supervisors can contact the Coordinator for Disability Support for guidance.

Exclusions of Service Animals

Exclusions of service animals are determined on an individualized basis and when one of the following conditions exists:

- The dog is disruptive and not effectively controlled;
- The presence of the service dog would fundamentally change the nature of the job, service, or activity;
- The service dog’s presence, behavior, or actions pose an unreasonable or direct threat to property and/or the health or safety of others;
- The dog is not housebroken.

When circumstances arise which would justify evaluating the presence of a service dog, the Office of Disability Support will use the following criteria:

- The student/employee using the service dog has a disability and the dog is trained to perform certain tasks related to the individual's impairment; or
- The dog is a licensed assistance dog-in-training.

Handler/Owner Responsibilities

The College is not responsible for the care or supervision of a service dog. Individuals are responsible for:

- The cost of any damages as a result of the service dog;
- The immediate clean-up and proper disposal of all animal waste;
- The control of the animal at all times. Reasonable behavior is expected from service dogs. If a service dog, for example, exhibits unacceptable behavior, the individual is expected to employ the proper training techniques to correct the situation;
- Harnessing, leashing, or tethering the service dog, unless an individual's disability precludes the use of a restraint or if the restraint would interfere with the service animal's safe, effective performance of work or tasks;
- Following all requirements for the presence of animals in public places mandated by State or local ordinances (vaccination, licensure, animal health, leash).

For questions regarding ADA, please visit:

<https://www.ada.gov> or https://www.ada.gov/regs2010/service_animal_qa.html