



Policy for the Use of Service Animals at Ashland University

This policy speaks to the presence of service animals on campus, as defined by the Department of Justice, under the Americans with Disabilities Act. Those wishing to have other animals on campus should contact the Disability Services Office for information about restrictions, or for referral to other offices on campus.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) 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.

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.”

The ADA allows service animals accompanying people with disabilities to be anywhere that is open to the public on University premises. This includes the right to bring the service animal into food service locations. University premises shall mean any land and/or facility owned, leased, rented and/or occupied by Ashland University. 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 not be permitted. If a Service Animal’s role is not apparent by observation, a handler may be asked “Is that a service animal for a disability?” and “What service does it perform for you?” University 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.

All animals are the responsibility of their handlers. Animals must be house broken and be under their handler’s control (in proximity to the handler and responsive to commands, in harness, leashed or in a carrier). An animal’s behavior is considered the handler’s behavior; the animal will be held to the same basic standard of conduct as their handler. If they are disruptive to University business or behavioral expectations for educational and residential environments, handlers may be asked to correct the animal’s behavior or remove it from the environment.

In the case of an emergency, every effort will be made to keep the animal with its partner.

For those individuals who are enrolled in courses that would like to voluntarily register their service animal with the University, please contact the Student Accessibility Center at (419) 289-5904 (930 Claremont Avenue). As stated, this is voluntary but may aid one in accessing the University premises. Registration is not available for visitors to campus or service dogs in training.

Requirements of Service Animals and their Owners

- The animal cannot pose a direct threat to the health and safety of others while on the University'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 University 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 University is not responsible for these services. Additionally, the animal is not to be bathed or its cage/crate, or bedding cleaned using University Housing or University facilities.
- The owner is liable for damage caused by the animal.
- As much as possible, the owner should ensure that the service animal does not approach and sniff other individuals, dining tables, or the personal belongings of others.
- The owner must ensure that the service animal does not block identified fire/emergency exits.
- The owner must ensure that the service animal does not display behaviors or noises that are deemed disruptive to others, unless said noise/behaviors are part of the needed disability service to the handler.
- 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: If the restriction or removal of a service animal is determined to be necessary, every effort will be made to ensure that the individual still has access to the programs, services, or activities of the University without the animal.

Service Animals in Residence in University Housing

Sufficient notice of the intent of an individual with a disability planning to have a service animal in University Housing must be given to the Student Accessibility Center at (419) 289-5904 (930 Claremont Avenue) so that appropriate arrangements regarding placement, roommates, etc. can be made. Service animals residing in University Housing are subject to the University's Housing Service Animal and Emotional Support Animal Agreement Form. Registration is not available for visitors to campus.

The University reserves the right to modify this policy as needed. This policy speaks to the presence of service animals on campus, as defined by the Department of Justice, under the Americans with Disabilities Act. Those wishing to have other animals on campus should contact the Disability Services Office for information about restrictions, or for referral to other offices on campus. For additional information concerning the use of a service animal or other accommodations and services, please contact the Student Accessibility Center at (419) 289-5904 (930 Claremont Avenue) or visit the SAC website at ashland.edu.