

## **St. John Fisher College Policy on Service Animals**

Service animals are animals trained to assist people with disabilities in the activities of normal living. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) defines service animals as "...any...animal individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including, but not limited to, guiding individuals with impaired vision, alerting individuals who are hearing impaired to intruders or sounds, providing minimal protection or rescue work, pulling a wheelchair, or fetching dropped items." If an animal meets this definition, it is considered a service animal.

St. John Fisher College allows service animals meeting this definition, to accompany persons with disabilities on campus. If there is a question about whether an animal is a service animal, faculty/staff should contact the Human Resources Department and students should contact the Coordinator of Disability Services.

The care and supervision of a service animal while in a place of public accommodation are the sole responsibility of its owner. Businesses, schools or other providers of public accommodation are not required to provide care, food, or a special location for the service animal.

### **Requirements for Faculty, Staff and Students**

- Allow a service animal to accompany the partner at all times and everywhere on campus. In the event that specific occasions when the presence of a service animal presents a safety risk for the animal or for others present, persons with such concerns should contact the Coordinator of Disability Services for assistance in addressing the concern.
- Do not pet a service animal; petting a service animal when the animal is working distracts the animal from the task at hand.
- Do not feed a service animal. The service animal may have specific dietary requirements. Unusual food or food at an unexpected time may cause the animal to become ill.
- Do not deliberately startle a service animal.
- Do not separate or attempt to separate a partner/handler from her or his service animal.

### **Requirements of Service Animals and Their Partners/Handlers**

Compliance with State laws and Town Ordinances: It is the responsibility of the owner to comply with applicable state laws and Town of Pittsford ordinances related to animals. Owners/handlers should contact the Town Clerk for specific information.

Under Control of Partner/Handler: The partner/handler must be in full control of the animal at all times. The care and supervision of a service animal is solely the responsibility of its partner/handler.

Cleanup Rule: College policy requires the partner to: 1) Always carry equipment sufficient to clean up the animal's feces whenever the animal and partner are on the College's property; 2) Never allow the animal to defecate on campus unless the partner **immediately** removes the waste; 3) Properly dispose of the feces by placement in plastic bags that may be subsequently deposited in trash receptacles.

Individuals with disabilities who physically cannot clean up after their own service animal must arrange for the proper clean up of the feces by a capable person. These individuals should use marked service animal toileting areas when such areas are provided.

### **Removal of Service Animal**

Disruption: The partner of an animal that is unruly or disruptive (e.g., barking, running around, etc.) will be asked to remove the animal from college facilities. If the improper behavior happens repeatedly, the partner will be told not to bring the animal into any college facility until the partner takes satisfactory steps to mitigate the behavior. Mitigation can include muzzling a barking animal or refresher training for both the animal and the partner.

Safety Risks: There may be specific occasions when the presence of a service animal presents a safety or health risk for the animal or for others present. When such circumstances are identified, the partner will be notified and asked to remove the service animal from the specific situation.

### **Emergency Situations**

In the event of an emergency, the Emergency Response Team (ERT) that responds should be trained to recognize service animals and to be aware that the animal may be trying to communicate the need for help. The animal may become disoriented from the smell of smoke in a fire or laboratory emergency, from sirens or wind noise, or from shaking and moving ground. The partner and/or animal may be confused from the stressful situation. The ERT should be aware that the animal is trying to be protective and, in its confusion, is not to be considered harmful. The ERT should make every effort to keep the animal with its partner. However, the ERT's first effort should be toward the partner; this may necessitate leaving an animal behind in certain emergency evacuation situations.