

I. PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that service animals that accompany patients, staff and visitors with disabilities have public access to Stanford Health Care (SHC) facilities, except where the access may present risk to the animals or patients. This policy also provides guidance to staff regarding how to identify and interact with services animals (dogs) or miniature horses (MH).

II. POLICY:

- A. It is the policy of SHC that persons with disabilities shall not be discriminated against and that they will have full and equal access, services, and treatment.
- B. All staff, patients, and visitors accompanied by a dog or miniature horse that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for a disabled person must be permitted to enter all areas of SHC open to the general public, unless
 1. Poses a direct threat or
 2. Fundamentally alter SHC's operations, policies, practices, and/or procedures or
 3. The area requires the general public to adopt safety measures that cannot reasonably be adopted by the service animal to mitigate safety risks and no other accommodation can be made or
 4. The area is closed to the general public.
- C. **Excluding / Removing Service Animals and/or Comfort / Emotional Support Dogs** - Any decision to exclude service animals and/or comfort/emotional support dogs from SHC shall be made only after an individualized assessment by the department manager in consultation with other services, including, but not limited to Infection Control, Guest Services and Risk Management, and Stanford Attending Veterinarian. The individualized assessment shall include the following (Appendix A):
 1. Reasonable judgment that relies on current medical knowledge or on the best available objective evidence.
 2. Ascertaining the nature, duration, and severity of the risk.
 3. Probability that the potential injury will occur; and
 4. Whether reasonable modification of policies, practices or procedures or provisions of auxiliary aids or services could mitigate the risk.
- D. **Restricted Areas** – Service animals may be excluded from areas which may provide risk to the animals including imaging (e.g., MRI and CT) and radiology and use of radionuclides, chemotherapy, and lasers. In addition, service animals shall be excluded from areas in where patient with presumed or active infection as some may pose a risk to the service animal. Service animals are prohibited from operating rooms, patient care units housing immunosuppressed patients and isolation for infectious precautions, unless it is determined that the service animal does not pose a direct threat or fundamentally alter SHC's operations, policies, practices, and procedures.

E. Staff Inquiry

1. SHC staff shall use minimal inquiry when the work, service or tasks performed by the dog or miniature horse are not obvious and apparent.
2. When it is not obvious or apparent what service, task or work the *dog* performs, staff may ask two questions only:
 - a. Is the dog a service animal required because of a disability; and
 - b. What work or task has the dog been trained to perform?
3. Under the Americans with Disability Act (ADA), staff shall rely upon the patient or visitor's word that the dog is a service animal and the description of the service, task or work it performs. If the animal is not a service animal, staff shall use CI-CARE words that work and contact Guest Services, if necessary.
4. Staff shall not engage in the following lines of inquiry:
 - a. Ask about the nature or extent of the person's disability.
 - b. Require documentation to support service animal status (ex: ID card, proof of certification and training).
 - c. Ask dog to demonstrate ability to perform service, task, or work.
 - d. Refuse access based upon allergies and fear of dogs.
 - e. Modify practices and accommodate the service animal (ex: move patient to another comparable room, change staff schedules)
 - f. Treat patients and visitors with service animals less favorably.
 - g. Pet the service animal (May distract from assigned tasks).
 - h. Feed, clean, toilet or care for the service animal.
 - i. Ask patient, visitor, or handler to remove service animal from premises, unless there is a legitimate reason, and an individualized assessment has been completed (Appendix A).

F. Requirements for Handlers and Service Animals – Service animals shall be under the handler's control at all times via harness, leash, tether, unless these devices interfere with the service animal's work in which case the handler must be able to maintain control over the service animal via voice control, motion/signal control or effective controls.

1. The handler shall perform hand hygiene and follow Standard Precautions policy for self and animal care.
2. The handler shall use the prescribed/designated areas for animal relief (e.g., 500 Pasteur Dog Park, see [Appendix B](#)).
3. If a service animal becomes sick or injured while in SHC facilities, the handler is responsible for arranging veterinary care. Neither the hospital nor campus veterinary services can provide care to privately owned animals.

G. Safety Incidents and Legitimate Reasons for Removing the Service Animal

1. All patient and staff safety incidents shall be reported to SAFE and to the Stanford Attending Veterinarian and Security Operations Center. Reasons for removal of Service Animals from SHC facilities shall include the following (Appendix A):
 - a. Direct threat
 - b. Fundamentally alters SHC's operations, policies, practices, and procedures.
 - c. Dog is out of control and handler does not take effective action to control
 - i. Disruption (e.g., barking, running, jumping).
 - ii. Aggressive behavior (e.g., biting, lunging).
 - d. Not housebroken
 - e. Poor hygiene (e.g., fleas, skin conditions).
 - f. Dog is sick (e.g., coughing, sneezing, vomiting, and diarrhea and/or has had a fever within the past 3 days).
 - g. The handler is a patient and during care is incapable of managing the animal. In such cases, staff shall contact Guest Services to arrange for alternate care.

H. **Miniature Horses (MH)**

1. Miniature Horses are not Service Animals under the ADA; however, MHs shall be accommodated where reasonable and if individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities.
2. The department manager, in consult with other departments as needed, shall complete an individualized assessment to determine whether miniature horses can be accommodated. The four (4) assessment factors are:
 - a. Whether the MH is housebroken or has devices used to support elimination.
 - b. Whether the MH is under the owner or handler's control.
 - c. Whether the facility can accommodate the miniature horse's type, size, and weight; and
 - d. Whether the MH's presence will not compromise legitimate safety requirements necessary for safe operations.

III. **DEFINITIONS:**

- A. Individual with a Disability: A person who:
 1. Has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities,
 2. Has a record of such an impairment, or
 3. Is perceived by others as having such an impairment
- B. Service Animal: Only dogs (excludes other species of animals, however, see additional considerations for miniature horses; See also Miniature Horses (MH) section herein) that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities qualify as service animals.
 1. Service animals recognize and respond to needs. Examples include, but are not limited to:

Policy Title: Service Animals

Page 4 of 10

Departments Affected: All Departments

- a. Guiding vision impaired
 - b. Alerting hearing impaired
 - c. Pulling wheelchair
 - d. Retrieving items
 - e. Stability and ambulation
 - f. Alerting or protecting person having seizure
 - g. Reminding person to take medication
 - h. Calming person with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder during an anxiety attack
 - i. Preventing or interrupting impulsive or destructive behavior
 - j. Removing disoriented individuals from dangerous situations
- C. “Trained”: The ADA provides that a service dog must be trained to do work or perform tasks. In other words, a dog cannot be a service animal until it has completed its training. However, the California Disabled Persons Act extends its protection to dogs in training and provides that service animals in the process of being trained may be taken into a public place for the purpose of furthering its training.
- D. Comfort / Emotional Support Dogs
1. Dogs or other animals that solely provide companionship, comfort, and emotional support are not service animals under the Americans with Disability Act (ADA) and therefore do not have the same service animal accommodation requirements and considerations.
 - a. Companionship, comfort, and emotional support do not constitute work or tasks
 - b. While several institutions such as hospitals clinical practices allow and encourage the presence of therapy animals, the handlers and/or owners of the therapy animals are not granted the same rights to public access as assistance dogs under the Americans with Disability Act (ADA).
- E. Direct Threat: A significant risk of substantial harm to the health or safety of others that cannot be eliminated or reduced by reasonable accommodations.
- F. Fundamental Alteration: A change that is so significant that it alters the nature of the facility or service offered. For example, service animals are generally prohibited from the operating room and burn units, which are not open to the public and requires strict hygiene and protective barriers that could not be reasonably imposed on the service animal. Allowing a service animal in areas such as the operating room would require a fundamental alteration of the nature of the facility.
- G. Undue burden: Generally, means significant difficulty or expense. Additional information regarding factors to consider with undue burden can be found at the following link:
<https://www.ada.gov/reachingout/12factors.html>

IV. COMPLIANCE:

- A. All workforce members including employees, contracted staff, students, volunteers, credentialed medical staff, and individuals representing or engaging in the practice at Stanford Health Care (SHC) are responsible for ensuring that individuals comply with this policy.
- B. Violations of this policy will be reported to the Department Manager and any other appropriate Department as determined by the Department Manager or in accordance with SHC policy. Violations will be investigated to determine the nature, extent, and potential risk to SHC. Workforce members who violate this policy will be subject to the appropriate disciplinary action up to and including termination.

V. RELATED DOCUMENTS / PROCEDURES:

- A. Disabled Accessibility and Services Policy
- B. Disability Discrimination Grievance Policy
- C. Workplace Accommodations Policy

VI. APPENDICES:

- A. [Appendix A: Individualized Service Animal Assessment Tool](#)
- B. [Appendix B: Stanford Hospital Dog Park](#)

VII. DOCUMENT INFORMATION:

- A. Legal References / Regulatory Requirements:
 - 1. Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 U.S.C. §12181 et seq.
 - 2. 28 CFR §§ 35.104, 35.130, 35.136, 36.104, 36.208, 36.301, 36.302
 - 3. The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 2a USC §794
 - 4. Cal. Civ. Code §54 - 55.32
 - 5. Cal. Pen. Code §§365.5, 365.6
- B. Original Document Owner:
 - 1. Author and date: Dana Orquiza, March 7, 2014
 - 2. Stored in: Administrative Manual
- C. Review and Renewal Requirements:
 - 1. This policy will be reviewed and/or revised every three years or as required by change of law or practice.
- D. Review and Revision History:
 - 1. 05/2021, Kevin Burson, Risk Manager, Risk Management; Sherril Green DVM, Veterinarian, Stanford University Veterinarian; Steve Felt DVM, Veterinarian, Stanford University; Employee Safety Council
 - 2. 03/2022 Kevin Burson, Risk Manager, Risk Department; Angelo Soto, EHS Integrity and HIMS Operations Director, HIMS Department; Jody Greenhalgh OTR/L, Occupational

Policy Title: Service Animals

Page 6 of 10

Departments Affected: All Departments

Therapist, Stanford Medicine Alliance for Disability Inclusion and Equity; Nitay Gill, Director Special Patient Services, Customer Navigation; Fred Ehlers, Director, Site Support Services; Suzanne Harris, Director of Employee Labor Relations, Human Resources

E. Approvals:

1. 08/2014, Quality, Patient Safety & Effectiveness Committee
2. September 2014, SHC Medical Executive Committee; SHC Board Credentials, Policies & Procedures Committee
3. 03/2022 Barbara Hardy, Chief IDHE Officer, Inclusion, Diversity & Health Equity; Helen Wirth, Administrative Director, Hospitality Services
4. 04/2022 Policy & Procedure Steering Committee
5. 05/2022 Medical Executive Committee; SHC Board of Credentials, Policy & Procedure

*“This document is intended for use by staff of Stanford Health Care.
No representations or warranties are made for outside use. Not for outside reproduction or
publication without permission.” V05.17.*

Appendix A: Individualized Service Animal Assessment Tool

Any decision to **exclude or remove a service animal** from Stanford Health Care (SHC's) shall be made only after an individualized assessment completed by the department manager in collaboration with staff nurses, social work, physicians, advanced practice professionals and in consultation with other departments *as needed* including, but not limited to Infection Control, Guest Services and Risk Management.

Individualized assessment of direct threat must include all the following:

- A. Be based on actual risks, not speculation or generalizations; rely upon current medical knowledge or best available objective evidence
- B. The nature, duration and severity of the risk
- C. Determine the probability that potential injury will occur, and
- D. Determine reasonable accommodations to policy, practice, or procedures to accommodate the disability.

Assessment Date: _____

Dept. Manager Name/Designee: _____

Name: _____

MRN (If Patient), ID (If Employee) Write N/A if Family, Visitor or Other: _____

Animal Being Assessed (Circle): Service Dog Miniature Horse

A. Check All Boxes That Apply to the Animal:

1. Animal poses a **direct threat**¹ to the health and safety of others

- Not housebroken; has had more than one accident
- Poor hygiene (malodorous, dirt, fleas)
- Illness (fever, vomiting, diarrhea, impaired ability to serve patient)
- Out of control / disruptive (barking, jumping, running, lunging, biting)

Additional facts:

2. **If you have checked any boxes above, please answer the following:**

a. Nature of risk animal poses:

b. Duration of the risk the animal poses:

c. Severity of the risk:

d. Probability that injury will occur:

e. What reasonable accommodations can be made?

3. Animal **fundamentally alters**¹ SHC's operations, policies, practices, and procedures or would result in an **undue burden**².

NOTE: #3 should be completed when applicable. #3 must be completed if denying or removing an accommodation and section 2.e above is left blank.

Provide Facts Demonstrating a Fundamental Alteration or Undue Burden:

B. Check All Boxes that Apply to the Patient/Handler/Owner

- Refuses or is unable to control the animal (tether, harness, verbal commands, visual cues)
- Refuses or is unable to feed and care for the animal (ambulation, toileting)
- Refuses or does not designate / provide handler to control animal
- Does not have friends or family who can control and care for the animal

¹ Does the presence of the animal significantly alter the nature of the services, goods, and facilities that SHC provides? (Ex: Dog would fundamentally alter the services in the OR since the OR is a limited access area that requires strict hygiene and protective barriers. No infection control measures could be reasonably imposed on the service animal).

² Does an accommodation present significant difficulty or expense?



Send completed forms to:

1. **If Patient:** HIMS Departments to be scanned and placed in the Media Tab of the patient's Legal Medical Record. Forms can be sent to HIMS by mail to: Stanford Health Care Health Information Management 300 Pasteur Drive, MC 5200, Stanford, CA 94305-5202 or email to: DL-HIMS-Document Imaging DL-HIMS-DocumentImaging@stanfordhealthcare.org.
2. **If Employee:** The employee's immediate supervisor should complete and send to Employee & Labor Relations.
3. **If Family, Visitor, or Other:** Send to guestservices@stanfordhealthcare.org

Appendix B: Stanford Hospital Dog Park

The Sierra Dog Park is approximately 500-square-foot fenced play area, with artificial turf, located near the promenade between 500 Pasteur and 300 Pasteur. It features a dog-friendly water fountain, waste disposal bags and can emptied three times a day, benches for human companions and a centrally located rock.

Veterinary Assistance Contact: Business Hours 650-723-3876, Non-business Hours 650-723-4408
If a service animal becomes sick or injured while in SHC facilities, the handler is responsible for arranging veterinary care. Neither the hospital nor campus veterinary services can provide care to privately owned animals.

