Service Animal Policy

Students with disabilities can be accompanied by a service dog on campus where members of the public or participants in services, programs or activities are allowed to go. By law, a service animal means any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of someone with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability. Other species of animals, whether wild or domestic, trained or untrained, are not service animals. In some cases, the university may permit miniature horses on campus on a case-by-case basis, consistent with applicable law.

Federal law does not require someone to provide documentation that an animal has been trained as a service animal. Federal law does not require that the animal wear any type of vest or badge indicating that it is a service animal. Federal law does not prohibit any particular breed of dog from being a service animal.

Where it is not readily apparent that the animal is a service animal, the university may ask if the animal is required because of a disability, and what work or task the animal has been trained to perform.

The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the individual’s disability. Examples of such 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 a mobility disability.

Responsibilities of Students with Service Animals

The university is not responsible for the care or supervision of a service animal. Students with disabilities are responsible for the control of their service animals at all times and must comply with all applicable laws and regulations, including vaccination, licensure, animal health and leash laws. A service animal shall be restrained with a harness, leash, or other tether, 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. If the service animal is not tethered, it must be otherwise under the individual’s control, whether by voice control, signals, or other effective means.

Individuals are responsible for ensuring the immediate clean-up and proper disposal of all animal waste. Although the university may not charge an individual with a disability a service
animal surcharge, it may impose charges for damages caused by a service animal in the same manner the university imposes charges for damages caused by pets.

**Exceptions**

The university may exclude a service animal from campus if its behavior poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others or when its presence fundamentally alters the nature of a program or activity. Also, the university may ask a student with a disability to remove a service animal from campus if the animal is out of control and the student does not take effective action to control it; or if the animal is not housebroken.

**Resident Housing**

Additionally, a student requiring a service animal who plans to reside in Resident Housing must submit a signed *Liberty University Resident Housing Service Animal Policy Form*, available on the Resident Housing website, to the Resident Housing Office. By signing and returning the form, the student agrees that they have read, understood, and accept the terms and conditions set forth in the policy.

**Appeals and Grievances**

Any student dissatisfied by a decision concerning a service animal may appeal through the Office of Disability Academic Support. They can be reached by phone at 434-582-2159 or by email at odas@liberty.edu.

**Public Etiquette towards Service Animals**

It is fine to ask someone if he/she would like assistance if there seems to be confusion; however, faculty, staff, students, visitors and members of the general public should avoid the following:

- Petting a service animal, as it may distract them from the task at hand.
- Feeding the service animal.
- Deliberately startling a service animal.
- Separating or attempting to separate a handler from his/her service animal.