



Service Animal

- Federal definition of a Service Animal (SA) is a dog that has been specifically trained to perform specific task(s) directly related to the handler's disability diagnosis.
- The state of Texas has provision for Service Dogs in Training, but also must be being trained to perform specific task(s) related to the diagnosed disability. Texas Law allows for Service Animals in Training but, must be accompanied by an approved handler at all times. Use of a service animal in training on campus must be approved by the SAR Center. If student is the approved (certified) trainer, then documentation stating such must be provided to the SAR Center. If student is NOT the approved trainer, then student and service dog in training must always be accompanied by the approved trainer when on campus.
- SAs are not required to be registered with the Student Access & Resource Center on campus, although for support on campus and potentially other available accommodations, it is encouraged.
- A trained SA is considered an extension of the handler and is intensely trained to perform specific tasks directly related to the handler's diagnosed condition. Therefore, Service Dogs are allowed in any and all buildings with their handler.
- As an *extension* of the Handler, the dog accompanies the Handler everywhere they go. The dog is not to be left unattended or in the care of another individual anywhere on campus.
- An SA is to be under the control of the handler at all times. This includes being secured to a leash no longer than 6 feet, unless obeying a direct command by the Handler that the service dog has been specifically trained to do, then returned to the leash.
- Although not required by law, it is encouraged that a Service Dog wears visible identification (vest, collar, etc.) so other students and individuals on campus are made aware that the animal is working for you and discourage petting or other interaction with your animal.
- There are an increasing number of individuals falsely representing this important asset and true SAs are encouraged to be properly identified and handled on campus.
- Additionally, all campus, city and county regulations for pet management must be adhered to by the Handler.



STATE OF TEXAS HUMAN RESOURCES CODE

TITLE 8. RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES Sec. 121.005. RESPONSIBILITIES OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES.

- a) A person with a disability who uses a service or assistance animal (for assistance in travel) is liable for any damages done to the premises or facilities by the animal.
- b) A person with a disability who uses a service or assistance animal (for assistance in travel or auditory awareness) shall keep the animal properly harnessed or leashed, and a person who is injured by the animal because of the failure of a person with a disability to properly harness or leash the animal is entitled to maintain a cause of action for damages in a court of competent jurisdiction under the same law applicable to other causes brought for the redress of injuries caused by animals.

Sec. 121.006. PENALTIES FOR IMPROPER USE OF ASSISTANCE ANIMALS.

- a) A person who uses a service animal with a harness or leash of the type commonly used by persons with disabilities who use trained animals, in order to represent that his or her animal is a specially trained service animal when training has not in fact been provided, is guilty of a misdemeanor and on conviction shall be punished by: (1) a fine of not more than \$300; and (2) 30 hours of community service to be performed for a governmental entity or nonprofit organization that primarily serves persons with visual impairments or other disabilities, or for another entity or organization at the discretion of the court, to be completed in not more than one year.
- b) (b) A person who habitually abuses or neglects to feed or otherwise neglects to properly care for his or her assistance animal is subject to seizure of the animal under Subchapter B, Chapter 821, Health and Safety Code.

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