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| **Policy Title:** Service and Support Animals | | |  |
| **Policy #:** | VPSA-ODS-008 | |
| **Responsible Office:** | Office of Disability Services | |
| **Responsible Administrator:** | Vice President for Student Affairs | |
| **Date Reviewed:** | August 2014 | **Revisions Made?**  Yes **\_**X**\_** No\_\_ |
| **Date of Next Review:** | August 2016 | |

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| **PURPOSE**  The Office of Disability Services (ODS) is responsible to coordinate the provision of educational auxiliary aids and accommodations to students and community members with documented disabilities. Provision of auxiliary aids and accommodations is to ensure that students with disabilities are able to participate in the college's educational programs, services and activities. |
| **AUDIENCE**  The Office of Disability Services provides reasonable accommodations for people with documented disabilities but access is the responsibility for all students, employees and volunteers of WOU. |
| **DEFINITIONS**  ADA: Americans with Disabilities Act  ODS: Office of Disability Services  SERVICE ANIMAL:“Service Animal” means any dog[[1]](#footnote-1) that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability. The work or tasks performed by a Service Animal must be directly related to the handler’s disability. The provision of emotional support, well-being, comfort, or companionship does not constitute work or tasks for the purpose of this definition.  Service Animals are working animals, not pets. Examples of work or tasks typically performed by a Service Animal 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.  SUPPORT ANIMALS:"Support Animal" means an animal that is recommended by a healthcare or mental health professional to provide emotional or other support to an individual who has a disability-related need for such support. A Support Animal provides emotional or other support that ameliorates one or more identified symptoms or effects of a person's disability.Support Animals may include species other than dogs and miniature horses. Unlike a Service Animal, a Support Animal does not assist a person with a disability with activities of daily living, nor does it accompany a person with a disability at all times. |
| **POLICY STATEMENT**  This policy sets forth guidelines for the use and authorization of Service and Support Animals on the Western Oregon University campus. Western Oregon University (WOU) is committed to making reasonable modifications to its rules, policies, and practices as required by law to afford people with disabilities an equal opportunity to access its programs, services, and activities. |
| **PROCEDURES**  Service Animals   1. Public Areas on Campus   Service Animals (only dogs or miniature horses) will be permitted to accompany people with disabilities in all areas of WOU's facilities where the general public may also go. WOU does not require documentation for any Service Animal accompanying a person with a disability in a public area. However, if it is not readily apparent that an animal is a Service Animal, WOU staff may make two inquiries to determine whether the animal qualifies:   1. Is the animal required because of a disability? 2. What work or task is the animal trained to perform?   The animal handler must maintain control of the Service Animal and comply with all the requirements of this Policy.  WOU Students  WOU Students who require the use of a Service Animal in non-public areas of the campus (including classrooms, offices, etc.) must request an accommodation through the WOU Office of Disability Services. Please refer to the Office of Disability Services website at <http://www.WOU.edu/student/disability/> or call (503) 838-8250 for more information.  WOU Employees  WOU employees who require the use of a Service Animal in non-public work areas on campus must request an accommodation through the Office of Human Resources. Please visit the Office of Human Resources at www.wou.edu/admin/hr or call (503) 838-8490 for more information.  Support Animals  Support Animals are generally not allowed to accompany persons with disabilities in all public areas of WOU as a service animal is allowed to do. However, a Support Animal may be authorized to reside in University Housing when necessary to afford the person with a disability an equal opportunity to use and enjoy University Housing.  Before a Support Animal can move into University Housing, a request must be submitted to WOU's Office of Disability Services at least 30 days prior to move-in. The request must include documentation from a licensed physician or mental health provider, including without limitation a qualified psychiatrist, social worker, or other mental health professional, to provide sufficient information for WOU to determine:  • that the requesting individual qualifies as a person with a disability (i.e., has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities); and  • that the Support Animal is necessary to afford the person with a disability an equal opportunity to use and enjoy University Housing (i.e. that the animal would provide emotional support or other assistance that would ameliorate one or more symptoms or effects of the disability).  The Office of Disability Services will review the documentation and coordinate with University Housing and with the requesting student regarding approval and reasonable guidelines or restrictions as necessary. Generally, once approved a Support Animal may accompany the person with a disability in the housing unit.  Responsibilities of Those Using Service and Support Animals  WOU is not responsible for the care or supervision of Service or Support Animals. People with disabilities are responsible for the cost, care, and supervision of their animals, including:  • compliance with any laws pertaining to animal licensing, vaccination, and owner identification;  • keeping the animal under control and taking effective action when it is out of control; and  • feeding and walking the animal, and disposing of its waste.  Waste disposal via university plumbing is prohibited, but the Office of Disability Services or University Housing can provide guidance on where to appropriately dispose of animal waste.  WOU will not require any surcharges or fees for Service or Support Animals. However, a person with a disability may be charged for damage caused by an animal to the same extent that WOU would normally charge a person for the damage they cause.  People with disabilities who are accompanied by Service or Support Animals must comply with the same university rules regarding noise, safety, disruption, and cleanliness as people without disabilities.  Exceptions and Exclusions  WOU may pose some restrictions on and may even exclude a Service or Support Animal in certain instances. As noted above, Support Animals are generally not allowed indoors on WOU's campus other than in University Housing. Any animal may be excluded from an area in which it was previously authorized to be if:  • it is out of control and effective action is not taken to control it;  • it is not housebroken (or in the case of a Support Animal that deposits waste in a designated cage or litter box, the owner fails to clean such cage or box such that the cleanliness of the room is not maintained); or  • it poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others that cannot be mitigated by reasonable modifications of policies, practices, or procedures, or the provision of auxiliary aids or services.  In considering whether a Service or Support Animal poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others, WOU will make an individualized assessment, based on reasonable judgment, current medical knowledge, or the best available objective evidence, to determine: (1) the nature, duration, and severity of the risk; (2) the probability that the potential injury will actually occur; and (3) whether reasonable modifications of policies, practices, procedures, or the provision of auxiliary aids or services, will mitigate the risk.  In the event that restriction or removal of a Service or Support animal is determined to be necessary, the person with a disability will still be given the opportunity to participate in the service, program, or activity without having the animal present.  Guidelines for Members of the WOU Community  To ensure equal access and nondiscrimination of people with disabilities, members of the WOU community must abide by the following practices:  • Allow Service and Support Animals to accompany people with disabilities on campus in accordance with this Policy;  • Do not ask for details about a person's disabilities;  • Do not pet a Service Animal, as it distracts the animal from its work;  • Do not feed a Service or Support Animal;  • Do not deliberately startle, tease, or taunt a Service or Support Animal;  • Do not separate or attempt to separate a person from his/her Service or Support Animal.  If you have a disability that may be affected by the presence of animals, please contact the Office of Disability Services. WOU is committed to ensuring that the needs of all people with disabilities are met and will determine how to resolve any conflicts or problems as expeditiously as possible.  Grievance Procedure  A student or employee who wishes to file a disability discrimination complaint should follow the procedures outlined in the WOU Discrimination and Harassment Policy found at the following link. <http://www2.wou.edu:7777/pls/wou2/policy.woupolicy.main>  or call WOU Human Resources at 503-838-8490 |
| **FORMS**  N/A |
| **AUTHORITY**  Western Oregon University in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the American’s with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, the ADA Amendments Act of 2008 and the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design. |
| **RESPONSIBILITY**  The Office of Disability Services is responsible for this policy and may be contacted at 503-838-8250 or ods@wou.edu. |

Alternate formats of this policy may be requested from the Office of Human Resources.

1. A trained miniature horse may also qualify as service animals in certain limited circumstances. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)