

Service Animal Policy

Purpose

Kilgore College is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to persons with disabilities and fulfilling obligations under State and Federal law. This Policy governs the use of service animals on campus by persons with disabilities.

Policy Statement

Persons with disabilities may be accompanied by working service animals on the campus of Kilgore College consistent with the provisions of this Policy.

Definitions

Disability under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, a record of such impairment, or being regarded as having such an impairment.

Service animal: Any dog 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. Other species of animals, whether wild or domestic, trained or untrained, are not service animals for the purposes of this definition. The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the handler's disability. The crime deterrent effects of an animal's presence and the provision of emotional support, well-being, comfort, or companionship do not constitute work or tasks for the purposes of this definition.

Reasonable Modifications - Miniature Horse

Kilgore College shall make reasonable modifications in policies, practices, or procedures to permit the use of a miniature horse by an individual with a disability if the miniature horse has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of the individual with a disability. Other requirements which apply to service animals shall also apply to miniature horses.

Assessment factors: In determining whether reasonable modifications in policies, practices, or procedures can be made to allow a miniature horse into a specific facility, Kilgore College shall consider:

- The type, size, and weight of the miniature horse and whether the facility can accommodate these features;
- Whether the handler has sufficient control of the miniature horse;
- Whether the miniature horse is housebroken; and

- Whether the miniature horse's presence in a specific facility compromises legitimate safety requirements that are necessary for safe operation.

Service Animal Use on Campus

Visitors: Visitors to campus with service animals may access all public facilities, with the exception of areas where service animals are specifically prohibited due to safety or health restrictions, where the service animal may be in danger, or where the service animal's use may compromise the integrity of research.

Students: Students with a disability who wish to utilize a service animal in a classroom are encouraged but not required to register with the Office of Disabilities Services (ODS). Students are encouraged to register with the ODS for access to resources, information, and advocacy around a range of disability-related dynamics, including service animals. Registration is required for any student who wishes to use a miniature horse in College facilities.

KC Housing: For use of a service and/or comfort animal by a resident or potential resident in College housing, see: "[Service/Assistance Animal Policy and Agreement in College Housing.](#)"

Service Dogs in Training

Service dogs in training are permitted on campus and in all public facilities on the same basis as working service animals, provided that all of the following conditions are met:

- The guide or leader dog in training is wearing a harness or the hearing dog or service dog in training is wearing a hearing dog cape or service dog backpack;
- The dog is being led or accompanied by a trainer for the purpose of training the dog; and
- The trainer has in his or her possession picture identification and identification stating that he or she is a representative or employee of an organization or trainer, or is a trainer, included on the department of labor list of organizations or trainers that train guide or leader dogs, hearing dogs, or service dogs.
- On a leash at all times.

Under Texas Law, Sec. 121.002. DEFINITIONS. In this chapter:

- (1) "Assistance animal" and "service animal" mean a canine that is specially trained or equipped to help a person with a disability and that is used by a person with a disability.
- (2) "Harass" means any conduct that:
 - (A) is directed at an assistance animal that impedes or interferes with, or is intended to impede or interfere with, the animal's performance of its duties; or
 - (B) Places a person with a disability who is using an assistance animal, or a trainer who is training an assistance animal, in danger of injury.

General Requirements

Service animals on campus must comply with all state and local licensure, vaccination requirements and on a leash at all times.

The care and supervision of a service animal is the responsibility of the individual who uses the animal's service. The individual must maintain control of the animal at all times. The individual using the animal's service is responsible for ensuring the cleanup of all animal waste and for any damage caused by the animal. College officials and staff may designate animal toileting areas.

Process for Requesting Use of a Service Animal as a Reasonable Accommodation

A. An student with a disability who wishes to utilize a service animal as a reasonable accommodation in a College office or other areas of campus buildings not open to the general public must identify and register with the Office of Disabilities Services (ODS) in advance (ideally 30 days) before the animal is needed, and provide the following documentation:

1. Documentation of a disability;
2. A signed letter, on professional letterhead, from the individual's health care provider stating:
 - The nature of the disabling condition or impairment; and
 - The provider's professional opinion regarding the relationship between the disability and the service that will be performed by the animal.
 - *The College reserves the right to request additional clarification or documentation.*

B. The ODS will validate the need for approved accommodations and work with the individual and campus officials to facilitate a supportive network.

C. Once approved by ODS, the use of a service animal will appear as a validated accommodation letter.

Clarifying Animal Status

Service animals are permitted in all public facilities on campus in accordance with this Policy. College employees should not question an individual about an accompanying service animal if the individual's disability is readily apparent and the function of the accompanying animal is clear.

In the unusual circumstance when an inquiry must be made to determine whether an animal is a service animal, a College employee may only ask two questions:

- Whether the animal is required because of a disability
- What work or task the animal is trained to perform

College employees shall not ask any questions about the individual's disability.

Although a service animal may sometimes be identified by an identification card, harness, cape, or backpack, such identifiers are not required and should not be requested or demanded for any service animal on campus.

Conflicting Disabilities

Individuals with medical issues impacted by animals (e.g., respiratory conditions, allergies or psychological conditions) should contact Office of Disabilities Service (ODS) for assistance.

Removal of Service Animals

A service animal may be removed from College facilities or grounds if disruptive (e.g., unleashed, barking, wandering, displaying aggressive behavior) and the behavior is outside the duties of the service animal. Ill, unhygienic, and/or unsanitary service animals are not permitted in public campus areas. The individual responsible for such an animal may be required to remove the animal.

Restricted Areas

The College may prohibit the use of service animals in certain locations due to health or safety restrictions, where service animals may be in danger, or where their use may compromise the integrity of research. Restricted locations may include, but are not limited to: research laboratories, classrooms with demonstration/research animals, medical.

Exceptions to restricted areas may be granted on a case-by-case basis by contacting the ODS. In making its decision, ODS will consult with the appropriate department and/or laboratory representative regarding the nature of the restricted area and any ongoing research.

Interacting with Service Animals

Service animals work and perform tasks and are not pets. Accordingly, the ODS recommends that members of the College community adhere to the following best practices when interacting with service animals:

- Do not touch or feed a service animal unless invited to do so;
- Do not deliberately distract or startle a service animal, and,
- Do not separate or attempt to separate a service animal from the individual using the animal's service.

Emergency Situations

A handler/animal team may become stressed during emergency situations involving smoke, fire, sirens, or injury, and exhibit protective behavior. Be aware that service animals may try to communicate the need for help. In emergency situations make every effort to avoid separating the handler from the animal.

Policy Exceptions

Individuals wishing to request a modification or exception to this policy as a reasonable accommodation should contact the ODS.

Dispute Resolution Procedure

Disputes or disagreements about a disability determination, appropriateness of an accommodation, service quality, or an animal restriction should first be raised with the ODS Coordinator involved. If the matter cannot be resolved, a grievance should be submitted to ODS. Individuals may also file a written complaint with the College ADA Coordinator in the Vice President of Student Service at 903-983-8189.

Policy Implementation

The ODS is responsible for implementing this policy. Success requires the cooperation of all students, staff and faculty.