

# Service Animal Policy



WILLIAM WOODS  
UNIVERSITY

## **Service Animal Policy**

William Woods University is committed to granting reasonable accommodations to its rules, policies, practices, or services when such accommodations may be necessary to afford people with disabilities an equal opportunity to access University resources, as may be required by federal, state, and local law. William Woods University's Policy regarding Service Animals complies with the ADA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504), which require that the University make reasonable modifications to its policies, practices, or procedures to permit the use of a Service Animal by a student, faculty, staff or visitor with a disability.

The ADA defines a Service Animal as "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." Importantly, other species of animals, whether wild or domestic, trained or untrained, are not Service Animals for the purposes of the ADA. However, under certain conditions, William Woods University will make reasonable modifications for a miniature horse that is trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of the individual with a disability.

When assessing whether a dog is a Service Animal individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, the dog must be trained to do work or perform tasks that are directly related to the individual's disability. Examples of work or tasks include, but are not limited to, the following:

- ✓ assisting individuals who are blind or have low vision with navigation and other tasks;
- ✓ alerting individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to the presence of people or sounds;
- ✓ providing non-violent protection or rescue work;
- ✓ pulling a wheelchair;
- ✓ assisting an individual during a seizure;
- ✓ alerting individuals to the presence of allergens;
- ✓ retrieving items such as medicine or the telephone;
- ✓ providing physical support and assistance with balance and stability to individuals with mobility disabilities;

- ✓ calming a person with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder during an anxiety attack; and
- ✓ assisting persons with psychiatric and neurological disabilities by preventing or interrupting impulsive or destructive behaviors.

The crime deterrent effects of a dog's presence and the provision of emotional support, well-being, comfort, or companionship do not constitute work or tasks for purposes of determining if a dog is a Service Animal under this policy.

William Woods University will not ask about the nature or extent of an individual's disability. When it is not readily apparent that the dog identified by the individual with a disability is trained to do work or perform tasks for them, the Student Disability Services staff may ask the individual with the disability if the dog is required because of a disability and what work or task the dog has been trained to perform. The University will not require documentation, such as proof that the dog has been certified, trained, or licensed as a Service Animal.

Faculty, staff and visitors wishing to utilize a Service Animal on the campus may contact the Office of Campus Safety to notify the University. Commuter students who require the use of a Service Animal on campus are encouraged to contact the office of Student Disability Services to notify the University. Resident students who require the use of a Service Animal on campus must contact the Student Disability Services before occupying student housing. There are additional requirements related to the use of Service Animals in University housing, and those requirements are outlined in this policy. Information provided to Student Disability Services is confidential and specific information about the disability will not be released without the consent of the student.

If any student believes they have been denied a reasonable modification related to the use of a Service Animal on campus, a grievance can be filed through the regular William Woods University grievance procedures on file with Student Disability Services.

For any questions regarding this policy, please contact the Director of Student Disability Services.

### **Responsibilities/Requirements for Service Animals on University Property**

The individual with the disability using a Service Animal is responsible for the care or supervision of a Service Animal. Under the ADA, the Service Animal must be under the control of the individual at all times and must have a harness, leash, or other tether. If the use of a harness, leash, or other tether would interfere with the performance of the work or tasks performed by the Service Animal or is impractical because of an individual's disability, a harness, leash, or other tether may not be required. In that case, the individual must be able to control the Service Animal by other effective means such as

voice controls or signals.

A Service Animal is permitted, generally, to accompany the individual with a disability to William Woods University facilities where members of the public, students, staff, and faculty are allowed to go. Institutional staff are not required to provide care or food for the Service Animal. William Woods University may ask the individual with a disability to remove a Service Animal from any of its facilities if:

- i. The Service Animal is out of control, aggressive to others, or significantly disruptive and the individual with a disability does not take effective action to control it.
- ii. The Service Animal is not housebroken.
- iii. William Woods University may also ask the individual with a disability to remove a Service Animal from any of its facilities if the use or presence of the Service Animal poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others or if the animal's behavior, such as barking, is unreasonably disruptive to the other participants within the facility.

William Woods University may prohibit the use of a Service Animal in certain locations due to health or safety restrictions. Restricted areas may include, but are not limited to, food preparation areas, research laboratories, stables or classrooms that contain horses, areas that require protective clothing, and other areas as required by state or local laws. Exceptions to these restrictions may be requested and will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

The individual with a disability must abide by current city, county, and state ordinances/laws/regulations pertaining to licensing, vaccination, and other requirements for animals (it is the individual's responsibility to know and understand these ordinances, laws and regulations). The individual with a disability is responsible to clean up after and properly dispose of the animal's feces in a safe and sanitary manner and, when provided, must use animal relief areas designated by the University.

There are additional responsibilities and requirements for a Service Animal to reside in University Housing. Those responsibilities and requirements are set out in the Service Animal Forms for University Housing. Any student seeking to bring a Service Animal to reside in University Housing must complete the Service Animal Forms for University Housing.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **A. Responsibilities/Requirements of the University Community.**

1. William Woods University community must allow Service Animals to accompany their owners at all times and everywhere on campus where the general public (if accompanying a visitor) or other students (if accompanying a student) are allowed, except for places where there is a

health, environmental, or safety hazard. **The appropriate way to ascertain that an animal is a Service Animal is to ask (only if it is not apparent) if the animal is required because of a disability and what tasks it has been trained to perform.** Specific questions about the individual's disability may not be asked.

2. Contact Student Disability Services if any questions or concerns arise relating to Service Animals.
3. Only two questions can be asked about Service Animals:
  - i. Is the Service Animal required because of a disability?
  - ii. What work or task is the dog trained to perform?
4. Do not ask questions about the disability.
5. Do not pet or feed a Service Animal.
6. Do not attempt to separate the animal from the owner.
7. Do not startle or tease a Service Animal.
8. Contact Student Disability Services if faculty/staff have any additional questions regarding visitors to campus who have Service Animals.
9. Refrain from charging a fee for the Service Animal to reside in the residence hall, but may assess usual fees for any damages incurred.
10. Report any Service Animals who misbehave or any owners (or other individuals) who mistreat their Service Animals to the Residential Life.

**B. Role of Student Disability Services.** Student Disability Services is responsible for developing the necessary procedures for the University and facilitating the use of Service Animals by students on campus. Student Disability Services also assists owners and William Woods University community when questions or concerns arise relating to Service Animals on campus and seeks legal advice when necessary.

**C. Role of Residential Life.**

1. The Student/Owner will notify roommate(s) about the **approved** housing accommodation of a Service Animal by completing the Roommate Notification Form, and submitting the Form Residential Life with appropriate signatures.
2. Students/Owners who have concerns about any matter affecting the approved housing accommodation use of a Service Animal should contact Residential Life. Issues or concerns that may arise during the academic year should be reported as quickly as possible.

### **Accommodation Process for Service Animals in University Housing**

In order to request a Service Animal as a reasonable accommodation in University Housing:

1. Students must have a disability as defined by the ADA.

2. The Service Animal must be trained to do specific tasks for the qualified individual.
3. As soon as is reasonably practicable, Students should register the Service Animal with the Student Disability Services office to allow for coordination of accommodations with Residential Life.
4. The Student must provide William Woods University with the name and contact information for someone who does not reside in University housing and who can take responsibility for the animal within twelve (12) hours should the Student be unable or unavailable to care for it.

While a request for a Service Animal does not require any supporting documentation, students requesting to have a Service Animal reside in University Housing must complete the Service Animal Forms for University Housing. Students should contact the Director of Student Disability Services to complete the required forms.