

**BROWARD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
PROCEDURES FOR ALLOWING A SERVICE ANIMAL
IN SCHOOL DISTRICT FACILITIES**

All Principals/Department Heads and/or designees must comply with the following procedures when permitting individuals (students, employees and/or visitors) with disabilities to be accompanied by a "service animal" in school district facilities (classrooms, school buildings, work locations and administrative sites) at school/district sponsored events.

A "service animal" is defined as any dog/miniature horse that has been trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability.

1. The service animal must be a dog or, in specific circumstances, a miniature horse. No other species of animal, whether wild or domestic, will be permitted in school district facilities as a "service animal."
2. The service animal must be "required" for the individual with a disability.
3. The service animal must be "individually trained" to do work or a task for the individual with a disability. A "therapy animal" is not a "service animal" for the purposes of these procedures.
4. **Service Animal Standards of Behavior:** A service animal must not interfere with the educational process or environment of any student and must not pose a health or safety threat to any student, employee or other person. If the standards of behavior are not met, a Principal/Department Head and/or designee may exclude a service animal and have them removed from the school setting. The behavioral expectations for the service animal and standards by which the request for a service animal to accompany and continue to accompany a student or employee on school premises will be evaluated as follows:
 - a. **Public appropriateness:** The service animal:
 - (1) must be clean, well groomed to avoid shedding and dander and without objectively offensive odor;
 - (2) must be kept free of fleas and ticks; and,
 - (3) does not urinate or defecate in inappropriate locations.
 - b. **Behavior:** The service animal:
 - (1) does not solicit attention or annoy other students or school personnel;
 - (2) does not vocalize unnecessarily by barking, growling or whinnying;
 - (3) does not show aggression towards people or other animals;

- (4) does not solicit or steal food or other items from students or school personnel;
- (5) does not interfere with the educational programming of any student; and,
- (6) does not disrupt the normal course of business.

c. **Training:** The service animal:

- (1) is specifically trained to perform a task to mitigate aspects a student's or employee's disability;
- (2) must have a harness, leash, or other tether, unless either the handler is unable because of his/her disability to use a harness, leash, or other tether, or the use of a harness, leash, or other tether would interfere with the service animal's safe, effective performance of work or tasks, in which case the service animal must be otherwise under the handler's control.
- (3) is able to perform tasks in public; and,
- (4) must be able to lie quietly beside the handler without blocking aisles, doorways, etc.

- 5. The school district is not responsible for the care or supervision of a service animal.
 - a. The school district is not responsible for providing a staff member to walk the service animal for exercise or so that the animal can relieve themselves or to provide any other care or assistance to the service animal.
 - b. Students/Employees/Visitors, with a service animal are expected to care for and supervise their animal. In the case of a young child or a student with a disability who is unable to care for and supervise his/her service animal, a handler provided by the parent is responsible for providing care and supervision of the animal.
- 6. A service animal will not be allowed if the animal's presence would interfere with the nature of the service, program, or activity.

Students:

- 7. All requests for a student with a disability to be accompanied by a service animal must be addressed in writing and provided to the Section 504 Liaison at the school where the request is being made. This request must be provided at least fifteen (15) school days prior to bringing the service animal to the school. (Please use attached request form).

Note: Once the Request is received by the Section 504 Liaison of the school, he/she must inform the Principal of the request and contact the District's Section 504 Liaison/Director of Student Support Services Department, for the review and processing of the request (s).

THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION/DOCUMENTATION MUST BE ATTACHED TO THE REQUEST FORM PRIOR TO ANY REQUEST BEING PROCESSED, REVIEWED AND/OR A DETERMINATION MADE.

a. Service Animal (Dog)

A health certificate or report of examination from a veterinarian licensed in the State of Florida. The certificate/report must indicate that the following vaccinations, (Distemper, Hepatitis, Leptospirosis, Parainfluenza, Parvovirus (DHLPP)), Bordetella, Roundworms, Hookworms and Rabies), had been secured and that the service animal has a vaccination license and is free of disease.

Service Animal (Miniature horse)

A health certificate or report of examination from a veterinarian licensed in the State of Florida. The certificate/report must indicate that the following vaccinations, Rabies, Tetanus, Encephelomyelitis, West Nile Virus, Rhinoneumonitis, Influenza, and Strangles), had been secured and that the service animal has a vaccination license and is free of disease.

This documentation must be provided annually.

b. Written proof that all service animals have been spayed or neutered.

c. If the service animal's handler is not the student, the handler must have completed a Level II background screening.

d. In as much as owners of a service animal are liable for any harm or injury caused by the animal to other students, staff, visitors, and/or property, and the owner must provide proof of current liability insurance coverage as required by the Risk Management Department of The School Board of Broward County, Florida. (Failure to provide proof of liability insurance in and of itself is not a reason to deny access to school facilities)

8. Once a Request, with all required documentation is received, the School's Section 504 Liaison will review the information with the School's Principal, District's Section 504 Liaison and ESE Program Supervisor, if the student has an IEP. A Section 504 and/or IEP meeting will be held to determine if the student needs to be accompanied by a service animal to access his/her education.

9. If it is determined that a service animal will accompany the student to school, the parent/guardian of the student will sign a Parent/Guardian Agreement regarding the service animal on school campus, which will contain the information in items 1 through 10.
10. **Implementation Plan:** Upon approval, the school will work with the student's parent and handler to:
 - a. familiarize the service animal and/or handler with the campus prior to actual start date;
 - b. orient the service animal to school faculty and students, particularly those in the student's classroom;
 - c. institute a schoolwide educational program to educate others on how to behave appropriately around the service animal; and
 - d. establish a water or feeding break for the service animal
 - e. establish a place for the service animal to urinate/defecate and a location for the handler to properly dispose the service animal's waste;
 - f. establish and practice a fire drill and an emergency evacuation plan to include the service animal
11. **Transportation of service animals:** If a student with an approved service animal uses district transportation services, the following provisions shall apply:
 - a. **Training.** Prior to the first transport of the student and the service animal:
 1. The driver and any bus attendant shall meet with the service animal's owner. The owner is responsible for providing information to the driver and any bus attendant regarding critical commands needed for daily interaction and emergency/evacuation.
 2. The service animal's owner shall assist the school District's transportation Department staff in providing an orientation to other students riding the bus with the service animal regarding the animal's functions and how students should interact with the service animal.
 3. The service animal's owner shall ensure the service animal practices the bus evacuation drills with the student.
 4. The handler shall ensure the service animal is positioned on the floor, at the student's feet and must have a harness, leash, or other tether, unless either the handler is unable because of his/her disability to use a harness, leash, or other tether, or the use of a harness, leash, or other tether would interfere with the service animal's safe, effective performance of work or tasks, in which case the service animal must be otherwise under the handler's control.
 - b. **Cessation of Transportation.** Situations that would cause cessation of transportation of the service animal include, without limitation, the following:

1. The service animal's behavior poses a threat to the health or safety of others as determined by the school district
 2. The service animal urinates or defecates on the bus; or
 3. The service animal does not remain in the designated area
12. Allergies and fear of dogs are not valid reason for denying access or refusing service to people using service animals. When a person who is allergic to dog dander and a person who uses a service animal must spend time in the same room or facility, for example, in a school classroom, they both should be accommodated by assigning them, if possible, to different locations within the room or different rooms in the facility.

For additional questions or information regarding a request for a student with a disability to be accompanied by a service animal, please contact the District's Section 504 Liaison/Director of the Student Services Department at 754-321-2460 or via Teletype Machine TTY at 754-321-2158.

Employees:

13. All requests for an employee with a disability to be accompanied by a service animal must be addressed in writing and delivered to the Executive Director, Benefits & EEO Compliance and/or designee at 600 S.E Third Avenue, 14th Floor, Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33301. This written request must be delivered at least fifteen (15) school days prior to bringing the service animal to a school district facility. (Please see attached Request Form)
14. Items 1 through 6, 7(a-d) above, of the Procedures for Allowing Service Animals in School District Facilities apply equally for employees.

Visitors:

15. A Visitor with a disability accompanied by a Service Animal will be permitted to access a school district facility at District/School functions.
16. Items 1 through 6 above, of the Procedures for Allowing Service Animals in School District Facilities apply equally for visitors.

For additional questions or information regarding a request for an employee or access for a visitor with a disability to be accompanied by a service animal, please contact the Executive Director, Benefits & EEO Compliance at 754-321-2150 or via Teletype Machine TTY at 754-321-2158.