

ADM 227 – McPherson College Animals on Campus including Service and Emotional Support

ADM 227 – McPherson College Animals on Campus including Service Animals, Emotional Support Animals and Pets

I. Statement of Policy

McPherson College supports the use of service animals and emotional support animals on campus by those with disabilities in appropriate circumstances and in accordance with this policy. McPherson College permits service, emotional support, certified therapy animals, and pets on campus within the bounds of this policy.

II. Definitions

A. Service Animals are defined under the Americans with Disabilities Act (“ADA”) as dogs that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities. Service animals are working animals, not pets. The work or tasks performed must be directly related to the individual’s disability. Dogs whose sole function is to provide comfort or emotional support do not qualify as service animals.

1. Examples of work or tasks that service animals perform include, but are not limited to: 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, pulling a wheelchair, assisting an individual during a seizure, alerting individuals to the presence of allergens, retrieving items such as books or the telephone, alerting a person to a sudden change in blood sugar levels, providing physical support and assistance with balance and stability to individuals with mobility disabilities, calming a person with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) during an anxiety attack, and helping persons with psychiatric and neurological disabilities by preventing or interrupting

impulsive or destructive behaviors.

2. Miniature horses may also be considered service animals in certain situations.

B. Emotional Support Animals – An emotional support animal is a companion animal that provides therapeutic benefit, such as alleviating or mitigating symptoms of a person's disability. Emotional support animals are not service animals. However, emotional support animals will be permitted in residential facilities with prior approval from the Royer Center for Academic Development and the Division of Student Affairs pursuant to the procedures and standards outlined below.

C. Pets – Pets are defined as a domestic or tamed animal that is kept for companionship.

D. Certified Therapy or Comfort Animals – Therapy dogs are dogs who go with their owners to volunteer in settings such as schools, hospitals, and nursing homes working to improve the lives of other people. Therapy and comfort animals are not service animals.

E. Owner – A student or employee who has an approved animal on campus.

F. Handler – A student or employee with a disability that a service animal assists or a personal care attendant who handles the animal for a person with a disability.

III. Specific Procedures

A. Students

Policies and procedures regarding the use of service animals, emotional support animals, and pets by students can be found in the Student Handbook and Code of Conduct. Additional information can be sought from the Center for Academic Development and the Division of Student Affairs on the main level of Miller Library.

B. Employees and Visitors

1. Service Animals: Visitors to McPherson College to attend sporting events, concerts or other events visit a friend or relative or engage in other general activities are permitted to bring service animals onto campus without prior approval subject to the standards, responsibilities, and restrictions

outlined below.

2. Employees who believe they require the use of a service animal as a workplace accommodation should reference ADM 225 Americans with Disabilities (ADA) Reasonable Accommodation Policy and may contact the Director of Human Resources/ADA Coordinator at (620) 242-0454.

3. Emotional Support Animals: Employees and visitors may not bring emotional support animals onto campus unless the employee has worked through the ADA reasonable accommodation process.

4. College departments may benefit by the presence of a certified therapy or comfort animal. Certified therapy or comfort animals must have approval by the Executive Director of Operations and the department supervisor to be present on campus and must comply with Section V below. These animals must have their certification and vaccination records on file with the Executive Director of Operations.

5. Employees will not be allowed to bring their personal pet on campus during their regular work hours. College-wide exception to this includes:

1) college employees required to live on campus and perform duties for the college may have a personal pet as campus housing would be considered her/his home. The Executive Director of Operations shall be notified of any college employee who is housing a pet. These college employees must comply with a signed agreement of understanding and/or housing contract that lists the pet obligations and consequences of non-compliance with Section V below or

2) a college supervisor approves an employee's pet on campus during their regular works hours. The employee with approved pet shall comply with Section V below and understand the consequences of non-compliance. An approved pet for an employee must wear a rabies vaccination tag and up to date vaccination documentation must be provided to the Executive Director of Operations. Pets on campus during regular work hours must be on a leash at all times.

IV. General Standards for the Removal of Service Animals or the Disapproval/Removal of Certified Therapy or Comfort and Emotional Support Animals and Pets

A. Decisions to remove a service animal or disapprove/remove an emotional support animal or pet will be made on a case-by-case basis, taking into account all surrounding circumstances. However, the following general standards reflect reasons why an animal may be removed or disapproved:

1. The animal poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others. For example, the animal displays vicious behavior towards others or has a serious illness.

2. The animal disrupts the community or ability of students to sleep and study by making excessive noise.

3. The animal causes or would cause substantial physical damage to the property of the College and other community members, including but not limited to students, faculty, staff, and visitors.

4. The animal poses an undue financial and administrative burden to the College.

5. The animal would fundamentally alter the nature of the College's housing and/or general operations.

6. The animal is out of control and the handler/owner does not take effective action to control it. If the out-of-control behavior happens repeatedly, the handler/owner may be prohibited from bringing the animal into College facilities until the handler/owner can demonstrate that he/she has taken significant steps to mitigate the behavior.

7. The animal is not housebroken.

8. The handler/owner does not abide by his/her responsibilities as outlined in Section V of this policy.

B. When an animal has been properly removed pursuant to this policy, McPherson College will work with the handler/owner to determine reasonable alternative opportunities to participate in the College's services, programs, and activities without having the animal on the premises.

V. Responsibilities of Handlers/Owners

A. Laws, Ordinances, and Policies – Handlers/owners are

responsible for complying with all state laws and local animal ordinances and are subject to all College policies and guidelines regarding housing and residence life.

B. Proper Identification – All animals are subject to local licensing and registration requirements.

C. Health and Vaccination – Animals must be immunized against diseases common to that type of animal. All vaccinations must be current. These animals must wear a rabies vaccination tag and, in the case of emotional support animals and pets, vaccination documentation must be provided to the Division of Student Affairs prior to the animal being allowed into any residence hall. An approved pet for an employee must wear a rabies vaccination tag and up to date vaccination documentation must be provided to the Executive Director of Operations.

D. Caring for the Animal – The cost of care, arrangements, and responsibilities for the well-being of the animal are the sole responsibility of the handler/owner at all times. McPherson College will accept no responsibility for the care of any animal covered by this policy.

1. Animals must be well groomed (residential facilities such as showers, tubs, sinks, and the like may not be used for this purpose).

2. Animals cannot be left unattended overnight at any time. If the handler/owner must be away, they must either take the animal with them or arrange for the animal to be cared for elsewhere off campus.

3. Animals cannot be confined to a vehicle, tethered, or abandoned at any time.

4. Regular and routine cleaning of floors, kennels, cages, etc. must occur. The odor of an animal emanating from a residence hall room is not acceptable.

E. Keeping the Animal Under Control – The animal should respond to voice and/or hand commands at all times and be fully controlled by the handler/owner.

F. Being Responsible for Damage Caused by the Animal – Handlers/owners are personally responsible for any damage

caused by their animals and must take appropriate precautions to prevent property damage. The handler/owner will be required to pay for any damages caused by the animal.

1. An individual with an animal covered by this policy in a residence hall has an obligation to make sure that his/her residence is as clean and damage-free as the original standard, excepting normal wear and tear. When the individual moves out of residential housing or no longer owns the animal, the residence will be assessed to determine if damage to College property or extraordinary cleaning costs are attributable to the animal. If so, the owner will be financially responsible for associated costs.

2. The College maintains the right to conduct facility inspections for the purpose of assessing damage caused by the animal or otherwise determining the owner's compliance with this policy.

G. Being Responsible for Waste – Cleaning up after the animal is the sole responsibility of the handler/owner, and it must be done so immediately. In the event that the handler/owner is not physically able to clean up after the animal, it is then the responsibility of the handler/owner to hire someone capable of cleaning up after the animal.

H. Leash Requirements – Service animals should be on a leash at all times, unless the owner is unable to use a leash due to a disability or the use of the leash would interfere with the animal's ability to perform its duties. Emotional support animals and pets must be on a leash or in a crate when leaving a residence hall to go to an off-campus location.

I. Observing Good Animal Etiquette – To the greatest extent possible, the handler/owner should ensure that the animal does not display behaviors or make noises that are disruptive or frightening to others, unless it is part of the service being provided to the handler (e.g., barking to alert the handler of danger). The animal must possess friendly and sociable characteristics.

J. Other Conditions and Restrictions – In response to a particular situation, McPherson College reserves the right to

impose other reasonable conditions or restrictions on the use of service animals and emotional support animals as necessary to ensure the health, safety, and reasonable enjoyment of College programs and activities by others.

VI. Other Information Specifically Related to Service Animals

A. Permitted Inquiries

1. In general, members of the McPherson community should not ask about the nature or extent of a person's disability. However, as permitted by the ADA, if it is not obvious that the animal is required because of a disability, the handler may be asked:

a. If the animal is required because of a disability, and

b. What work or task the animal has been trained to perform.

2. The handler should not be asked for documentation, such as proof that the animal has been certified, trained, or licensed as a service animal. Generally, McPherson community members should not make inquiries about a service animal when it is readily apparent that an animal is trained to do work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability (e.g., if the dog is observed guiding an individual who is blind or has low vision, pulling a person's wheelchair, or providing assistance with stability or balance to an individual with an observable mobility disability).

B. Areas Off Limits to Service Animals

While service animals are generally allowed to go anywhere on campus that the handler is allowed to go, there are certain areas where the presence of a service animal fundamentally alters the nature of a program or activity or is disruptive. Examples of the areas that are off limits to service animals include:

a. Research Laboratories: The natural organisms carried by service animals may negatively affect the outcome of the research. At the same time, the chemicals and/or organisms used in the research may be harmful to service animals.

b. Mechanical Rooms/Custodial Closets: Mechanical rooms, such as boiler rooms, facility equipment rooms, electric closets, elevator control rooms and custodial closets, are off-limits to service animals. The machinery and/or chemicals in these rooms may be harmful to animals.

c. Food Preparation Areas: Food preparation areas are off limits to service animals per health codes.

d. Areas Where Protective Clothing is Necessary: Any room where protective clothing is worn is off-limits to service animals. Examples impacting students include the kiln, chemistry laboratories, wood shops and metal/machine shops.

e. Areas Where There is a Danger to the Service Animal: Any room, including classroom, where there are sharp metal cuttings or other sharp objects on the floor or protruding from a surface; where there is hot material on the floor (e.g., molten metal or glass); where there is a high level of dust; or where there is moving machinery is off-limits to service animals.

f. Questions regarding areas that are off limits to service animals should be directed to the Academic Development, Executive Director of Operations or, in the laboratory setting, the laboratory instructor. Exceptions may be granted in some circumstances.

VII. Additional Matters

A. Concerns – Concerns regarding an animal covered by this policy may be brought to the attention of the Office of Academic Development, Student Affairs Division or the Executive Director of Operations.

1. Also, individuals with animals covered by this policy in residential housing should understand that issues may arise with other residents. The individual with the animal should be receptive to these concerns and, if necessary, contact the Division of Student Affairs for assistance in resolving the situation.

2. Other residents with minor concerns about an animal in their residence hall may discuss the matter with the owner/handler or talk with a representative of the Residence

Life Staff. Major concerns should immediately be brought to the attention of the Division of Student Affairs.

3. Employees and visitors may also raise concerns about this policy with the Director of Human Resources at (620) 242-0454.

B. Grievances – If the decision is made to deny a request for or remove an animal covered by this policy, employees and visitors may informally discuss the situation with the College President in order to reach a resolution.