

Southwest Technical College

Service Animal Policy

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This policy addresses the use of service animals by persons with disabilities on the Southwest Tech campus and presents a standard of behavior for the animal. It is the intent of Southwest Tech to meet the needs of the entire campus community in an atmosphere of open communication and inclusion.

2.0 SCOPE OF POLICY

2.1 This policy applies to an individual with a disability who uses a service animal, as defined below, during his or her employment and/or participation in an academic program or event on campus property.

3.0 STATEMENT OF POLICY

3.1 It is the policy of the Southwest Tech that service animals assisting individuals with disabilities are generally permitted on the campus, including exterior and interior locations which are deemed appropriate in accordance with the provisions of this policy, as detailed below. In addition, reasonable accommodations will be made to allow qualified individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions and/or to allow individuals with disabilities to participate in Southwest Tech educational programs, benefits and opportunities.

4.0 DEFINITIONS

4.1 Service Animal:

An animal 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. Examples of work or tasks 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, 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, and helping persons with psychiatric and neurological disabilities by preventing or interrupting impulsive or destructive behaviors. 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.

4.2 Reasonable Accommodation:

A modification to a campus policy, procedure or environment that will allow a person with a disability to perform the essential duties and functions of his or her position and/or allow a person to participate in the academic programs of the campus (including class, campus owned-housing, university events or activities). For purposes of this policy, a miniature horse may be considered a reasonable accommodation, upon request, if the miniature horse has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of the individual with a disability. In determining whether reasonable modifications in policies, practices, or procedures can be made to allow a miniature horse into a specific facility, a public accommodation 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."

¹This policy was created in accordance with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, as amended. If any provision herein conflicts with the applicable provisions of the above federal regulations, the federal regulations will apply. If a state law provides a greater right and/or protection to an individual with a disability as it relates to the use of service animals at a public institution of higher education, said state law will prevail.

5.0 IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICY

5.1 Southwest Tech property/buildings where service animals are allowed:

- 5.1.1** For individuals and guests who are visitors on campus, service animals will be permitted at campus locations which are generally open to the public, such as the Student Services, Charley's, restroom facilities, common areas and recreational facilities (when not restricted by a pass, permit or ticket).
- 5.1.2** For individuals who are either employees and/or students, service animals will be permitted at campus locations where staff and/or students are allowed access for purposes of employment and/or academic matters, such as general classrooms, offices, residence halls and assembly areas.

5.2 Southwest Tech property/buildings where service animals may be prohibited:

- 5.2.1** Mechanical rooms, utility rooms
- 5.2.2** Animal research facilities
- 5.2.3** Food preparation areas
- 5.2.4** Laboratories, shops or studios with hazardous activities or where the presence of a service animal would be inappropriate or disruptive to the learning activity.

5.3 Responsibilities of the Handler:

- 5.3.1** Request the accommodation through the appropriate contact at Southwest Tech refer to section 5.6.
- 5.3.2** Ensure the animal is wearing an identification tag (with handler contact name and phone number), and an identifying cape/bandana/harness.
- 5.3.3** Be in control of the animal at all times.
- 5.3.4** Maintain animal health, hygiene and vaccination.
- 5.3.5** Use designated areas on campus, if applicable, for outdoor toilet and/or exercise of service animal.
- 5.3.6** Ensure the immediate clean-up and disposal of animal waste.

5.4 Reasonable Inquiries Regarding Service Animal:

- 5.4.1** If the need for service animal is not reasonably obvious to Southwest Tech, Southwest Tech may ask the owner or handler the following questions:
 - a. Whether the animal is required because of a disability, and
 - b. What tasks or work has the animal been trained to perform.
- 5.4.2** Southwest Tech may also inquire into the training cues or other signs given to the animal to perform a task or work in order to distinguish the service animal from an ordinary pet or animal. However, Southwest Tech may not require documentation of training, licensure or certification.
- 5.4.3** If an owner or handler refuses to provide the above information, Southwest Tech may refuse to allow the animal to enter or remain on campus property.

5.5 Removal of Service Animal:

- 5.5.1** Southwest Tech may require a service animal to be removed from Southwest Tech, if one or more of the following occurs:
 - a. The animal's behavior is aggressive in nature;
 - b. The handler is unable or unwilling to maintain proper control over the animal;
 - c. The animal's presence creates a significant hazard to the academic or workplace environment;
 - d. The animal's presence fundamentally alters or is disruptive to the workplace and/or learning environment or educational program;
 - e. The animal poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others.

5.6 Responsibility for Implementation

5.6.1 Disability Specialists has overall responsibility for ensuring compliance with the policy.

5.6.2 Students

Student requests for disability accommodations, including requests to have a service animal accompany a student on campus, in classrooms and student housing are determined by the Disabilities Specialist through an accommodation request and review process. Students can reach the Disabilities Specialist at 608-822-2631 or acc@swtc.edu.

5.6.3 Employees

Employee requests for disability accommodations, including requests to have a service animal at work, are handled through the appropriate disability accommodation policy and procedures.

5.6.4 Visitors

Service animals accompanying individuals with disabilities are welcome in all areas of campus that are open to the public (except in situations determined to apply under section 5.2 above). Specific questions related to the use of service animals on the Southwest Tech by visitors can be directed to the Disability Specialist at 608-822-2631.

5.7 Appeal Process

5.7.1 Any student dissatisfied with a decision concerning a service animal may contact:

Dean of Students Office

The student will be asked to submit their appeal in writing to the office of the Dean of Students. The complaint will be reviewed and recommendations will be made to the Disability Specialist no later than 30 days from receipt of the complaint, unless extenuating circumstances warrant additional time.

5.7.2 Any employee dissatisfied with a decision concerning a service animal should contact: Human

Resources/Affirmative Action Office

The employee will be asked to submit an appeal in writing to the office. The Disability Specialist will review the complaint and make a recommendation to the Director of Human Resources no later than 30 days from receipt of the complaint, unless extenuating circumstances warrant additional time.