

## **Health Science Center Animal Policy**

The Health Science Center (HSC) prohibits the presence of any animal in the HSC, except under the following circumstances:

- Service animals that are individually trained to perform specific tasks under the control of an individual with a disability
- Registered (or in training) therapy animals by approved handlers for instructional purposes
- Facility service dog sponsored through a HSC partner.
- Animals approved by the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC)
- On-duty police K-9 or rescue dogs

Any permitted animal must remain under the control of the handler at all times and is solely the handler's responsibility. The HSC reserves the right to exclude an exempted animal whose behavior poses a disruption or a threat to the health or safety of others.

Unless otherwise permitted by state or federal law, privately-owned animals are not permitted inside the HSC.

This policy applies to all HSC staff, students, volunteers, independent contractors, visitors, etc. with privilege to be in the HSC.

### **Procedure**

#### **Definitions**

Service Animal: The Americans Disabilities Act (ADA) defines a service animal as a dog (or miniature horse) that is individually trained to respond to an individual's needs and to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability.

Emotional Support/Comfort Animal: Any animal whose sole function is to provide comfort, companionship or emotional support. Although such animals may be permitted in housing or on airplanes, they do not qualify as Service Animals under the ADA and, as such, are not permitted in the HSC.

Facility Service Dog: Trained in various skills to serve a broad population of individuals, and will take commands equally from multiple handlers.

#### **Use of Service Animal at the HSC**

HSC staff should contact their respective HR department and follow their respective policy.

- Gundersen Health System: GL-9035 Service Animals, Therapy Animals and Hospital Visits by Patient Pets
- Western Technical College: Policy EO710 Animals on Campus
- University of Wisconsin La Crosse: Service Animal Policy

Students should contact their respective school.

- Gundersen Health System: GL-9035 Service Animals, Therapy Animals and Hospital Visits by Patient Pets
- Western Technical College: Disability Services Department
- University of Wisconsin La Crosse: ACCESS Center

## **Determination of Service Animal**

No inquiries may be made if it is clear that the animal is trained to do work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability (e.g. patient is blind and uses directional guidance from dog).

If it is not clear whether an animal qualifies as a service animal, the ADA restricts what can be asked of an individual who wishes to access an area with a service animal so as to not infringe on the individual's right to privacy.

Two questions may be legally asked:

1. Is the service animal required because of a disability?
2. What work or tasks has the animal been trained to perform?

If answers are too vague, the individual can be asked to provide clearer answers to the two legally permitted questions.

The following types of questions cannot be asked:

- Anything about the individual's disability
- Requiring medical documentation to support the need of the animal
- Requiring documentation that the animal has been certified, trained or licensed
- Requiring demonstration in its ability to perform the work/task

## **Other Guidance**

The following circumstances are not reasons to justify exclusion of service animals:

- Individuals with allergies
- Individuals afraid of dogs
- Concern for the animal (handler can make determination of safety)
- Generalized feeling that dogs are dirty or uncontrollable

Circumstances for a service animal/handler to leave the HSC:

- If a service animal is found to be disruptive
- If a service animal shows aggression toward their handler or others
- If a service animal is physically ill
- If the service animal is unreasonably dirty
- If the service animal's presence causes danger to the safety of the handler or other individuals
- If a service animal's safety is compromised

## **Enforcement Guidelines**

### Student process

- Respective program chair/director will be notified.

### Employees working in the HSC process

- Inform the La Crosse Medical Health Science Consortium (LMHSC) office
- If necessary, the LMHSC will contact respective HR department of employee

### Visitor process:

- Inform visitor that pets are not permitted
- Ask them to please take pet outside
- If visitor is non-complaint, contact UW-L Police at 789-9000

Emergency process:

- Contact UW-L Police at 789-9999
- UW-L Police will make decision on removing animal

Restricted areas process:

If there are concerns regarding allowing access to certain restricted spaces for the service animal, they will be addressed on an individual basis by the respective organization/user of the space, who in turn will follow their respective organizational policy.

*HSC Management Group approved September 13, 2017*

*HSC Management Group approved June 9, 2022*