

Sam Houston State University

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A Member of The Texas State University System

3.02. Inquiries Regarding Service Animals.

Per federal law, persons with disabilities who are accompanied by service animals must not be asked to identify the nature or extent of their disabilities or to provide documentation of same. In regard to a service animal:

- a. Generally, university officials will determine a service animal's status as a service animal if it is readily apparent that the animal is trained to do work or to perform a task on behalf of a person with a disability (e.g., a dog is observed guiding an individual who is blind or has low vision to a person with an observable mobility impairment).
- b. University officials will not require documentation of an animal's training or certification as a service animal.
- c. If it is not readily apparent that an animal is doing work or performing a task on behalf of a person with a disability, university officials may discreetly make the following, limited inquiries of the owner/handler:
 - i. Whether the animal is a service animal required because of a disability; and
 - ii. What work or task the animal has been trained to perform.
- d. If a university official is unable to ascertain whether an animal is a service animal, said official will refer a student or visitor owner/handler to the SSD Office. The SSD Director or their designee will make the inquiries noted in 3.02c above to determine whether the animal qualifies as a service animal. Upon making this determination, the SSD Office will provide a letter to the owner/handler of the qualifying service animal verifying that the animal is permitted on campus in accordance with this policy.

3.03 Responsibilities of Service Animal Owner/Handler.

- a. Service animal owner/handlers are solely responsible for any damage or injury caused by their animals. The university may impose financial costs on owner/handlers for property damage caused by their animals.
- b. Owner/handlers must maintain control of their service animals at all times.
 - i. Service animals must be harnessed, leashed, or tethered, unless these devices restrict the animal's movement, interfere with the animal's work, or create a safety hazard for the animal. In that case, the owner/handler must maintain control of the animal by voice, signal, or other effective means.
 - ii. To the extent possible, the service animal should be unobtrusive to other individuals in the learning, living, or working environment.
 - iii. Service animals should not be permitted to block aisles or passageways or fire egress.
- c. Owner/handlers are solely responsible for costs of care and arrangements for the health and well-being of their service animals, including pest control.
- d. Owner/handlers must comply with all applicable laws and regulations pertaining to animal vaccination, licensure, and health.

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