

## SERVICE ANIMAL POLICY - MIDWEST INSTITUTE

### **Disability Accommodations Policy**

**Directions for staff:** According to the *ADA Revised Requirements*: “When it is not obvious what service an animal provides, only limited inquiries are allowed. Staff may ask two questions: 1) is the dog a service dog because of a disability, and 2) what work or task has the dog been trained to perform. Staff cannot ask about the person’s disability, require medical documentation, require a special identification card or training documentation for the dog, or ask that the dog demonstrate its ability to perform the work or task” (U.S. Dept. of Justice, ADA, 2010, p.1)

**If you plan to bring a service dog to campus:** You must first meet with Midwest Institute’s Director of Education/Program Director to discuss best practices and discuss a detailed management plan. After the meeting, your instructors will be notified of the presence of a service dog.

- Appropriate service dogs accompanying individuals with disabilities are welcome, but please note that Midwest Institute is a higher risk exposure site due the nature of its medical programs.
- There are some circumstances where infection-control measures will require the exclusion of a service dog. These situations will be reviewed in the meeting and are listed in Midwest Institute's Service Animal Policy.

### **Exclusions**

Service dogs are permitted in areas where added precautions are not required of healthcare personnel. However, per the *Guidelines for Environmental Infection Control in Health-Care Facilities*:

Excluding a service animal from an OR or similar special care areas (e.g., burn units, some ICUs, and other areas containing equipment critical for life support) is appropriate if these areas are considered to have “restricted access” with regards to the general public. General infection-control measures that dictate such limited access include:

- a) The area is required to meet environmental criteria to minimize the risk of disease transmission,
- b) Strict attention to hand hygiene and absence of dermatologic conditions, and
- c) Barrier protective measures [e.g., using gloves, wearing gowns and masks] are indicated for persons (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), updated February 15, 2017, p.123)

Areas of potential exclusion for training or employment:

- Sterile environments or surgical rooms.
- Triage situations or isolation areas where a disease control or an infection concern is present.
- At externship/off-site experiences - Surgery, Dentals, Isolation, Triage, ICU, and other possible sterile environment areas.

### **Best Practices**

Due to potential exposure risks inherent in veterinary technology training, we ask that individuals with service dogs consider best practices to protect their animal from harm in high risk situations that the law does not automatically exclude service dogs from.

Typical areas of high risk concern during veterinary technician training and externship:

- Radiology and other labs - due to potential exposure risks.
- Large animal interactions - due to potential injury risks.
- While cleaning, chemicals or other potential exposure risk substances are in use.
- Interactions with animals that are ill, have unknown health histories, or potential infectious diseases.

### **Questions to Consider on Best Practices**

- Would the presence of my service dog require a fundamental alteration to any medically necessary safety standards that are in place for patient or staff safety?
- Is there an exposure risk that my service dog's vaccinations will not provide protection for (i.e. chemicals, pathogens, radiation, disease, infection, etc.)?
- Is there a risk of harm from other animals in the environment that may become defensive or aggressive towards my service dog?
- Is there a space limitation that will inhibit myself or those around me from performing duties or moving around safely if my service dog is present?(i.e. practical exams)
- Are there additional areas of training that my service dog would benefit from before I take him/her to labs, exams, practical training situations, internship, or employment in a medical field?
- Will I be able to appropriately care for my service dog throughout my scheduled time, including food/water, cleaning up, walking, etc.?

### **Proper Restraint**

Federal law requires that a service dog handler be in direct control of their animal and specifies that employees or other individuals cannot be expected to take care of a service dog when the handler cannot be with them. Because of these limitations, it is essential that you find an appropriate and safe area for your dog to stay in if you cannot have him/her with you at all times.

- Your service dog must be under your control at all times during your training. Animals must be on a leash, harness, or tether, except when in a crate.
  - Exception: If there is a situation where a leash, harness, or tether would interfere with your lab, class, exam, or other training, then the animal can sit or lie quietly in an appropriate spot in the room but must still be under your control via voice commands or visual signs.
- Allowing your service dog to roam loose in a classroom, lab, exam, or other training setting is never appropriate. If your service dog is disruptive, you will be asked to take him/her out of the room immediately (e.g. take them home).
- You will be asked to remove your service dog (e.g. take them home) if: 1) "the dog is out of control and the handler does not take effective action to control it or (2) the dog is not housebroken." If a service animal must be removed, then "staff must offer the person with the disability the opportunity to obtain goods or service without the animal's presence" (U.S. Dept. of Justice, ADA, 2010, p.2).

### **Kenneling/Crating**

- While you are on campus, you are welcome to crate your service dog during times he/she cannot be with you. Please follow the directions of the Director of Education/Program Director on protocols for the specified room or location.
- Kenneling your dog in the dog runs is not allowed.
- Please note that if your service dog is disruptive or overly stressed when crated, you will be asked to find a solution other than crating immediately (e.g. take them home).