

DEAN COLLEGE

POLICY ON SERVICE AND ASSISTANCE ANIMALS

Policy Statement

Dean College is committed to reasonably accommodating students, employees, and visitors with disabilities who require the assistance of a service animal. Subject to the provisions of this policy, **service animals** will be allowed anywhere in the College where students, visitors or the public, as the case may be, are normally allowed to go, and no reasonable service animal request will be denied so as to limit a person's access to or participation in College facilities, programs or activities. In addition, subject to the provisions of this policy, **assistance animals** will be permitted in College housing, and no reasonable assistance animal request will be denied so as to limit a person's ability to reside in College housing. This policy is aligned with the College's broader mission to remove barriers that prevent qualified individuals with disabilities from enjoying the same employment, education, and other opportunities that are available to persons without disabilities.

Definitions

A "service animal" means a dog that is individually trained to perform work or tasks for a disabled person. The work or task must be directly related to the individual's disability, such as guiding a person with impaired vision, alerting a person who is hearing impaired, pulling a wheelchair, or alerting and protecting a person in a medical emergency such as a seizure.

An "assistance animal" is an animal that alleviates one or more identified symptoms or effects of a person's disability and is necessary to afford the person with a disability an equal opportunity to use and enjoy College housing. There must be an identifiable relationship or nexus between the disability and the assistance that the animal provides. An assistance animal may be any animal and need not be individually trained. The College is not required to allow an assistance animal anywhere on campus other than the College housing that is occupied by the person who requires the assistance animal.

Determining Whether a Service or Assistance Animal Will Be Accommodated

College employees may ask the handler of a service animal only if the dog is a service animal that is required because of a disability and what work or task the dog has been trained to perform. If the work or task relates to a person's disability, the service animal will be accommodated subject to the conditions of this policy. College employees may not ask about the person's disability, request medical documentation of the disability, require a special identification card or other documentation for the service animal, or ask that the animal demonstrate its ability to perform the work or task.

With respect to assistance animals, a request for accommodation must be made to the Office of Accessibility Services at least 30 days before the handler desires to bring the assistance animal into College housing. Accessibility Services staff may require appropriate documentation from a medical or mental health professional with respect to the handler's disability and the manner in which the animal alleviates one or more of the identified symptoms or effects of the disability.

The College need not accommodate a service or assistance animal if:

- the owner cannot care for it;
- the owner cannot effectively control it;
- it is not housebroken;
- it would pose a direct threat to the health and safety of others;
- it would cause substantial physical damage to the property of the College or others;
- it would pose an undue financial and administrative burden on the College; OR
- it would substantially disrupt or fundamentally alter the nature of the College's operations or some aspect thereof.

Responsibilities of the Handler

1. **Leash:** The person who requires the assistance of a service animal is responsible for keeping the animal harnessed, leashed, or tethered at all times, *unless* these devices interfere with the service animal's work or the individual's disability prevents using these devices, in which case the handler must maintain control of the animal through voice, signal, or other effective controls. It is the responsibility of the handler to ensure that while the service animal is working, no other person touches or pets the animal.
2. **Care:** The person who requires the assistance of a service or assistance animal is responsible for:
 - feeding and otherwise caring for the animal;
 - properly disposing of the animal's waste; and
 - maintaining the animal's health and keeping up to date with immunizations/vaccinations.
3. **Responsibility for harm or damage:** The handler is responsible for any harm or damage that the service or assistance animal causes to persons or property.
4. **License and Tags:** To the extent required by federal, state, or local law, service and assistance animals must wear an owner identification tag along with other required tags. All dogs should be licensed.
5. **Health:** Service and assistance animals should be in excellent health. If a service animal is to live in residence, it must receive an annual clean bill of health from a licensed veterinarian. All vaccinations and immunizations against diseases common to dogs must be current, and the service animal must wear current rabies vaccination tags. Unhealthy service animals should not be taken into public areas. The College reserves the right to have an unhealthy service animal removed from College facilities.

Accessibility Services

Requests for accommodation and questions about this policy should be directed to the Office of Accessibility Services. Accessibility Services may be reached by phone at 508-541-1769.

Appeals Process

A person who is dissatisfied with a decision of the College concerning a service or assistance animal may file an appeal with the Appeals Board by calling 508-541-1768.