Service Animal Policies

I. Introduction

Hampden Sydney College is committed to the full participation of all students, faculty, staff, administrators and visitors with disabilities in its programs and activities. Subject to the provisions of this policy, Service Animals will be allowed anywhere in the College where non-disabled patrons are granted access. In general, reasonable Service Animal requests will be allowed in support of a person’s access to or participation in College facilities, programs or activities.

These procedures serve to operationalize the policy in regard to ensuring that students, employees, and guests with disabilities who rely on service animals can participate in and benefit from services, programs, and activities at the College, and to ensure that Hampden Sydney does not discriminate on the basis of disability as identified in Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

II. Primary College Contacts

A. Students may contact the Disability Services Coordinator in the Office of Academic Success (Bagby 207) for information or guidance.
B. Employees may request to have a service animal as a workplace accommodation through the college’s ADA Coordinator in Human Resources (Cabell 201).
C. Guests may be accompanied by a service animal when participating in programs and accessing services without requesting an accommodation, but are welcome to contact the college’s ADA Coordinator (Cabell 201) for information or guidance.

The Disability Services Coordinator can be reached by selecting the hyperlink.

Contact information for Hampden Sydney’s ADA Coordinator and HR Director can be found by clicking on the hyperlink provided.

III. Definitions

A. Service Animal

A service animal is any dog that has been individually trained to perform tasks for the benefit of a person 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 purpose of the definition. The work or tasks performed by the service animal must be directly related to the individual’s disability. Tasks may include, but are not limited to, guiding individuals with impaired vision, alerting individuals with impaired hearing to intruders or sounds, pulling a wheelchair, or retrieving dropped items.
The crime deterrent effects of an animal’s presence or the provision of emotional support, well-being, comfort, or companionship do not constitute work or tasks for the purposes of this definition. Dogs that are not trained to perform tasks that mitigate the effects of a disability and any animal that is used purely for emotional support, comfort, or companionship are not considered service animals.

In accordance with applicable laws and on a case-by-case basis at the request of a qualified disabled person, Hampden Sydney College may make an exception for a miniature horse or another assistance animal that does not meet the ADA definition of a service animal. For information about exceptions, please speak to one of the contacts listed above.

B. Psychiatric Service Animal

This term is sometimes used for a dog that has been individually trained to perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with an unobservable disability, such as a sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability. As an example, a disabled veteran with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) related to combat experience might use a service dog that is trained to go into the room, sniff for explosives then come back and signal that the room is clear, so that he or she is able to enter the room.

C. Trainee

A dog guide trainee for blind persons, hearing ear dog trainee, or other animal undergoing training to assist a person with a physical impairment will be granted the same rights as fully-trained service animals.

D. Therapy Animal

A therapy animal is an animal used within a therapeutic relationship whose function is to provide comfort, companionship, and/or a feeling of well-being. Animals whose sole function is to provide a therapeutic effect by being present are not service animals and are not generally allowed on campus, though they may be requested as an accommodation in housing.

E. Comfort Animal or Emotional Support Animal

An emotional support or comfort animal may well provide a benefit to the individual, but in a general manner that is not protected by law. Note that a service animal is different because it is has been specifically trained to recognize a condition, behavior or situation and is also trained to respond or perform specific tasks that aid the disabled person.

IV. General Rule Regarding Service Animals

As a general rule, The College will modify policies, practices, and procedures to permit the use of a service animal by an individual with a disability.
V. Restrictions and Exclusions

HSC may impose some restrictions or remove from campus a service animal that is out-of-control and the animal’s handler does not take effective action to control it, not housebroken, is in ill health, poses a direct threat to health and safety of others, or whose presence fundamentally alters a program, service, or activity. Restrictions or removals are considered on a case-by-case basis in accordance with applicable laws. Note: This is not intended to encompass behavior that is directly related to the service(s) an animal is trained to perform for a person with a disability.

In determining whether a service animal poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others, HSC will make an individualized assessment, based on reasonable judgment that relies on current medical knowledge or on the best available objective evidence, to ascertain: the nature, duration, and severity of the risk; the probability that the potential injury will actually occur; and whether reasonable modifications of policies, practices, or procedures or the provision of auxiliary aids or services will mitigate the risk.

In those circumstances where a service animal is believed to fundamentally alter a service, program, or activity, HSC has the burden of proving that a fundamental alteration would occur. The decision that allowing the service animal would result in a fundamental alteration must be made by the ADA Coordinator or Disability Services Coordinator in consultation with the pertinent campus partners. The disabled individual must be provided with a written statement of the reasons for reaching that conclusion.

In the event restriction or removal of a service animal is determined to be necessary, HSC will take other actions to ensure that the disabled individual will still be offered the opportunity to participate in services, programs and activities without having the service animal present.

Questions about restrictions on service animals should be directed to the contacts in Section II.

VI. Responsibilities of Individuals Using Service Animals

An individual with a service animal is responsible for the following:

A. Ensure that the animal is under the control of its handler by means of a harness, on a leash, or tether in most cases. In instances where a person’s disability or the service animal’s performance of work or tasks precludes use of a harness, leash or tether, the service animal must still otherwise be under control (e.g. by voice control, signals, or other effective means). If an animal is out of control and the animal’s handler does not take effective action to control it, the matter will be addressed individually by Campus Police.

B. Be responsible for the proper care and supervision of the service animal.
   a. Vaccination: The animal must be immunized against diseases common to that type of animal. Dogs must have had the general maintenance vaccine
series, which includes vaccinations against rabies, distemper, and parvovirus. Other animals must have had the appropriate vaccination series for the type of animal. All vaccinations must be current. Evidence showing inoculation for rabies is a prerequisite to obtaining a dog license (VA law 3.1-796.97). Dogs must wear a rabies vaccination tag.

b. Licensing: The Town of Farmville ordinance (Section 10-56) and the County of Prince Edward, following the Commonwealth of Virginia (3.1-796.97), require all dogs be licensed by the time they reach five (5) months of age. Dog guides, hearing dogs, and dogs serving mobility-impaired persons receive the license at no cost.

c. Owner ID and Other Tags: Farmville ordinance (Section 10-56) requires dogs to wear an owner identification tag at all times. The dog must also wear a current rabies tag and dog license tag.

d. Cleanliness: A partner with a service animal that is so unclean that it poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others or would cause a fundamental alteration to a campus facility, program, or activity may be asked to remove the service animal from campus facilities.

e. Health: The animal must be in good health. Animals to be housed in campus housing must have an annual clean bill of health from a licensed veterinarian.

C. Assure that service animals are housebroken (i.e., trained so that, absent illness or accident, the animal controls its waste elimination). Individuals with physical disabilities who cannot pick up and dispose of the animal’s waste should work with campus contacts to identify appropriate service animal toileting areas as the partner/handler is responsible for removing or arranging for the removal of the service animal's waste.

D. Comply with HSC’s policies, rules or procedures- see also Section V of this document.

VII. Requirements for Faculty, Staff and Students

Members of the HSC community are responsible for the following:

A. Allowing service animals to accompany the person they are assisting in all areas of campus where members of the public, participants in services, programs or activities, or invitees, as relevant, are allowed to go.

B. Not distracting a service animal in any way. Do not pet, feed, or interact with the animal without the handler’s permission.

C. Not separating a disabled person from his or her service animal.

D. Clarifying an animal’s status as a service animal only when it is not readily apparent that an animal is a service animal. In such cases, designated staff (i.e., Campus Police officers, program managers, or faculty) may not ask about the nature or extent of a person’s disability, but may make ONLY two inquires to establish whether the animal is a service animal:

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

Other questions regarding the status of a service animal should be referred to the contacts noted in Section II. HSC may take disciplinary action against any individual who fails to abide by these guidelines.

VIII. Protocol for Exclusion of Service Animals

A community member may report a concern regarding a service animal to Campus Police (434-223-6164 or 434-223-6300) in Gilkeson House.

A. In response to an immediate concern, Campus Police may determine that a service animal must be removed from campus on a temporary basis. The officer will notify the person with the disability of this decision and the incident will be turned over to the points of contact indicated in Section II.

B. The designated point of contact will investigate all reported concerns and cases where service animals have been temporarily removed from campus and will consult with appropriate college personnel to determine whether or not the animal should be excluded from campus on a permanent basis.

C. If it is appropriate for the animal to be excluded from campus permanently, the appropriate point of contact will work to ensure the individual receives appropriate accommodations in place of the use of a service animal.

D. An individual who does not agree with the resolution may file a complaint or grievance. Guidance on this process can be provided through the contacts listed in Section II or by visiting The Key.

IX. Conflicting Disabilities

Individuals with medical issues that may be impacted by the presence of service animals should communicate with the points of contact noted in Section II if they have a concern about exposure to a service animal. The individual will be asked to provide documentation that identifies a disability and the need for an accommodation. The appropriate HSC point of contact will facilitate a process to resolve the conflict that considers the disability-related needs/accommodations of all persons involved.

X. Emergency Situations

In the event of an emergency, the Emergency Response Team (ERT) should be trained to recognize service animals and to be aware that the animal may be trying to communicate the need for help. The animal may become disoriented from the smell of smoke from a fire or laboratory emergency, from sirens or wind noise, or from shaking and moving ground. The partner and/or animal may be confused by the stressful situation. The ERT should be aware that the animal is trying to be protective and, in its confusion, is not to be considered harmful. The ERT should make every effort to keep the animal with its partner. However, the ERT's first effort should be toward the partner; this may necessitate leaving an animal behind in certain emergency evacuation situations.
XI. Farmville Resources

**Dog Licensing:**
Town of Farmville Treasurer, 116 N. Main Street, Farmville, VA, 434-392-3333

**Veterinary Care:**
Ridge Animal Hospital, 1913 E. Third Street, Farmville, VA, 434-392-8222
Dr. Jennifer Kingsley, Small Animal Housecall Practice, 434-315-4037

[http://www.ada.gov/svcanimb.htm](http://www.ada.gov/svcanimb.htm)

**Document Development Resources:**

[http://www.ada.gov/service_animals_2010.htm](http://www.ada.gov/service_animals_2010.htm)
[http://www.pcc.edu/resources/disability/policies/service-animals.html](http://www.pcc.edu/resources/disability/policies/service-animals.html)