

Administrative Policy and Procedure Manual

Service Animals
Scope: Organizationwide

Effective Date: 4/16/2007
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I. Purpose

It is the philosophy of Children's Hospital of Chicago Medical Center and its affiliates (the "Medical Center") to deliver family-centered care to all patients and families and a safe work environment for staff that come to or work within the Institution. We will make every effort to address the needs of the patients and family members who have service animals. The needs of other patients and families, including those who have asthma, allergies and are hypersensitive to animal dander must also be addressed.

II. Definitions

Service Animal: Per the State of Illinois, a service animal is an animal individually trained to provide assistance to a person with a disability. An animal fitting this description is considered a service animal under the Americans with Disabilities Act ("ADA") regardless of whether the animal is licensed or certified by state or local government. Documentation is NOT required as a condition to permit entry of an individual accompanied by a service animal.

The *handler* is the person who has primary responsibility for the bringing the service animal to the Medical Center, in most cases, the parent of the patient.

III. Policy Statements

- A. Service animals are excluded from the Surgery Department, the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, the Stem Cell and Oncology/Hematology/Bone Marrow Transplant Unit, the Pulmonary and Transitional Care Unit, the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit, and any other area where access to the general public is restricted for reasons of infection prevention and control. Exceptions may be made where protective measures minimize risk.
- B. Service animals may be in the service of a patient, a family member, or visitor within the Medical Center.

IV. Procedure

- A. Service animals will be allowed in the healthcare facility with patients, family members or visitors who rely on their animals to provide services that are otherwise unmet with the permission of the unit charge nurse or his/her designee.. The unit should receive proper notification that a service dog will be on the unit. Upon arrival

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to the hospital the concierge will notify the unit charge nurse or designee that a service dog has arrived. The charge nurse is responsible for notifying staff and other patients/families if the dog will be in a semi-private room where another patient is assigned.

- B. A service animal is any guide dog, signal dog, or other animal individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability.
- C. Liability insurance covering the service animal is encouraged but, in compliance with the ADA, not required. A copy of any insurance policy offered when the service animal is in service for a patient should be kept by the nursing director or designee, to be referenced as necessary. The parents, guardians or patient of majority age who brings the service animal into the hospital or clinic area or any part of the Medical Center assumes full responsibility for the animal's behavior.
- D. An Information Sheet (Attachment 1) outlining the responsibilities of the service animal handler will be given to the handler by the bedside nurse or his/her designee. Service animals must remain on a leash or harness at all times and under the control of the animal handler.
- E. A service animal may have its access restricted by a clinic manager or unit charge nurse or his/her designee if the animal poses a direct threat to the safety of others. The ADA defines a direct threat as a significant risk to others' health and safety that cannot be eliminated by modifying organizational policies. As a guideline, the Institution will generally be justified in excluding a service animal from areas of heightened infection prevention and control or if the animal displays threatening behavior to employees patients, family members or visitors. The ADA requires that assessments of whether an animal is a direct threat be made on a case-by-case basis.
- F. The Medical Center is not responsible for the care or supervision of the service animal, including cleaning up after the animal. In the event that the handler and animal must be temporarily separated, the handler has the responsibility for securing caretakers for the animal.
- G. Handlers may be encouraged but not required to provide covering for their service animals (*e.g.*, t-shirts, animal jacket) that discourages shedding because of the patients, families, visitors and employees who have allergies and/or asthma.

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- H. After the service animal leaves an area within the Medical Center, Environmental Services should be contacted to do a thorough cleaning, including vacuuming of carpeted areas and/or washing the floor if the service animal was restricted to one area for a prolonged period of time in a clinical setting.
- I. In the clinics when a service animal accompanies a patient, family member or visitor a manager will be called by the staff member who registers the patient. The manager will make every effort to accommodate the presence of the service animal in the clinic while also considering the needs of other patients, families, visitors and staff including those who have asthma, allergies and are hypersensitive to animal dander.
- J. Animal-Assisted Therapy. Service animals may visit patients for therapeutic purposes. Consult Administrative Policy entitled “Animal Therapy: Pet Visitation” for guidance.
- K. Employee Rights. Reasonable accommodations will be made for staff members for reasons such as phobias, allergies or asthma. Accommodations will be determined by the clinic manager or unit charge nurse or his/her designee on a case-by-case basis designed to be least disruptive for both the employee and the patients and the families they serve.
- L. Other Patients/Families. Whenever possible, other patients, families, visitors and staff who will be in the same vicinity of the service animal will be notified beforehand.

V. Cross-References/Related Policies

Administrative Policy: “Infection Prevention and Control Program”

Administrative Policy: “Animal Therapy: Pet Visitation”

Administrative Policy: “Animal-Assisted Therapy Program”



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SERVICE ANIMAL HANDLER/OWNER RESPONSIBILITIES

The service animal handlers are required to comply with the policies of the Medical Center so that our ability to provide care to all patients/families is not hampered. Please take steps to ensure that we can deliver effective care to **all** patients.

1. The service animal handler must inform the nursing charge nurse or his/her designee that a service dog will be staying with the patient in the inpatient area .
2. The service animal should be under the control of a responsible handler while it is on hospital premises. The handler assumes full responsibility for the behavior of the service animal while on the premises of the Medical Center.
3. The service animal handler/owner will assure the safety of all patients, families, and employees when in the animal's presence.
4. The service animal handler/owner will control the service animal so as to not interfere with treatment of other patients and families.
5. The service handler/owner is responsible for the care, feeding, and walking of the service animal.
6. Service animals will be free of any external parasites. (No flea collars, spray or powder will be worn or used prior to visit in the facility. Please note: if you regularly use flea powder/spray, it is **not** a good idea to use these products on the day of the visit. Patients, families, or employees may have an allergic or unpleasant reaction to them.)
7. Grooming of the service animal within the hospital facilities is not permitted.
8. The service animal handler/owner should clean up after his/her animal if it defecates, urinates, or vomits. Appropriate cleanup includes disposal of materials in plastic bags in the proper area.

In the event of the pet defecates, vomits, or urinates on the floor or carpet; the responsible person will perform initial cleanup using gloves and a leak resistant plastic bag.

Note: Environmental Services must be notified by the staff to perform a thorough disinfection after the initial cleaning has been performed