

FACT SHEET:

Service animals

ALSAC is required by the ADA to make reasonable accommodations for employees and guests who require help from a service animal. If an ALSAC employee uses a service animal, the Americans with Disabilities Act protects his or her rights.

What is a service animal?

Under Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act a service animal is defined as:

- A **dog** that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability.

Title III covers public access areas, like the Hospital. So, while this definition is helpful, it does not preclude other types of service animals from being considered a reasonable accommodation under Title I, which covers employers. Therefore, employers will need to consider all requests made and work through the interactive process before denying a request to allow a service animal that is not a dog. Under Title I, an employer's touchstone will always be whether or not the request is a reasonable accommodation.

The ADA also says that the work or tasks performed by the service animal must be directly related to the individual's disability. This definition means that:

- The service animal must be trained to do a specific task for the disabled individual; and
- The individual must need this help for a specific disability.

What animals are **not** service animals?

- A dog used for **emotional support**
- Any animal used for emotional support

Under Title III, the ADA also says that employers can only ask two questions: 1) Is the dog a service animal required because of a disability? 2) What task is the dog trained to perform? A Title III Public Access Provider cannot ask for proof that the dog is a service animal; they cannot ask for any documentation or a demonstration. Their employees also should not ask about the nature of the disability. Under Title I, though, as an employer, ALSAC can request documentation. The catch though, is that there is no official "service animal training or certification" so we don't know what kind of documentation we would wind up with; **and**, even if the animal is just for emotional support, based on reasonable accommodation we might have to grant the request. We can ask for documentation for the individual's disability though.

Here at ALSAC we will require the dog to have an ALSAC ID Badge, with a photo.

Where can service animals go at ALSAC?

Generally, a service animal may be in any ALSAC area where employees are allowed, except for food preparation areas (break rooms). Service animals can go into bathrooms and can also go into vending

areas that are not food preparation areas. A service animal must always be on a leash or harness or in a crate, unless these devices interfere with the service animal's work or the person's disability prevents use of these devices; in such a case, the person must use voice, signal, or other effective means to maintain control of the animal. A service animal can even go over to the Hospital, including the Patient Care Center and cafeteria dining area. While the disabled individual is sitting at a cafeteria table, the service animal must be under the table. The disabled individual must supervise and control the service animal at all times. No one other than the handler (i.e., the disabled individual) should handle or supervise the service animal.

Where can service animals *not* go?

- Rooms with mechanical equipment.
- Closets with cleaning supplies.
- Areas where food is prepared.
- Areas that are dangerous for the animal.

In the Hospital, service animals cannot go into:

- Patients' rooms.
- Areas where clean or sterile linens or supplies are stored.
- Rooms used for surgery and other medical procedures, including rooms used before and after surgery.

If the disabled individual must go to an area of ALSAC or the Hospital where service animals are not allowed, then s/he must arrange for a sitter and must pay for the sitter.

What are the handler's responsibilities as a service animal handler?

Keeping the service animal clean, healthy, and safe.

The handler must do the following:

- Keep veterinary records that show that the service animal is healthy and has all current shots. These include shots to prevent rabies, bordetella, DHLPPv, canine distemper, hepatitis – CAV-1, leptospirosis, parainfluenza, Adenovirus-cAVO-2, and parvovirus.
- The handler must make sure that the service animal is bathed and brushed every week. The handler must make sure the service animal has no fever, stomach flu, fleas, ticks, skin sores, or parasites such as worms. The service animal must take medication to prevent fleas, ticks, and heartworm while at ALSAC.

Making sure the service animal does not affect the health, safety, or comfort of other ALSAC employees or anyone at the Hospital:

To do this, the handler must do the following:

- Make sure the service animal is housebroken.

- While on campus, the service animal must be harnessed, leashed, tethered, or in a crate at all times, unless these devices interfere with the service animal's work or the person's disability prevents use of these devices; in such a case, the person must use voice, signal, or other effective means to maintain control of the animal.
- Make sure the service animal does not bark or otherwise disrupt other employees or cause a disturbance in public areas or the Hospital.
- **Must not** allow other employees or visitors to campus to pet or play with the service animal. The service animal is here to perform a job for the disabled employee and has responsibilities s/he is performing. If any employee breaks the service animal's focus, it can disrupt the service animal's primary responsibility and may cause harm to the employee or others.
- Keep the service animal off all furniture, including chairs, desks, and couches.
- Follow safety and hand washing precautions to help protect other employees.
- Avoid injury to the service animal and others.

Caring for the service animal at all times.

The handler is responsible for walking, feeding, giving water, making sure the dog relieves itself when it needs to, and cleaning up any accidents. **Other ALSAC employees are not allowed to supervise, walk, give food or water to, or clean up after the service animal.**

What happens if the disabled employee/handler cannot be with the service animal for some reason?

- If the handler needs an animal sitter, the handler is responsible for arranging for the sitter and paying for the service.

How will the individual handle the service animal's need to relieve itself?

The service animal must relieve itself (urinate and pass feces) outside campus, along the fence at the edge of campus. The handler must pick up and, if necessary, clean up after the service animal. Waste must be put in an outside trash can.

What if the service animal has an accident inside?

If the service animal accidentally relieves itself inside, the handler is responsible for cleaning up the area. The handler must ask for protective gloves and cleaner from Environmental Services and dispose of the waste according to directions from the Environmental Services Staff.

When would ALSAC tell the handler that s/he must remove the service animal from an area?

- When someone in the area is allergic to the service animal or afraid of it.
- When the animal is out of control and the handler does not control it effectively.
- When the animal is a direct threat to other people's health or safety.

Questions?

If you have questions about service animals, please send an email to the attention of the HR team at *ALSAC Leaves* (alsacleaves@stjude.org) or you may contact the Legal Department.