

SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS

File: KKA-R

SERVICE ANIMALS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Service Animals

1. Individuals with disabilities may be accompanied by their service animals while on school property for events that are open to the general public, such as athletic games or plays.
2. School officials may ask the owner or handler of an animal whether the animal is required because of a disability and what work or tasks that the animal has been trained to perform unless the answer is readily apparent.
3. School officials may not ask questions about the nature or extent of a person's disability and may not require documentary proof, certification or licensing as a service animal.

Requirements for Admission of Service Animals to Schools

1. A person with a disability who wants to be accompanied by a service animal must make a prior written request to the school's principal if the animal will come into a school
2. A written request must be filed with the Superintendent for a person with a disability to have a service animal accompany the person to any other locations within the school division.
3. All requirements outlined in Policy KKA shall be satisfied before the use of a service dog shall be allowed in a school.
4. Requirements regarding vaccination, health, and documentation of disability or need are described in Policy KKA.

Service Dogs in Training

1. Persons conducting training of a guide, hearing, or service dog may be accompanied by a dog in training while on school property for the purpose of school business.
2. Persons who are part of a three-unit service dog team also may be accompanied by a service dog while on school property provided that the person is conducting training of a service dog. The training cannot disrupt or interfere with a school's educational process.
3. It is expected that training would not normally take place in the classroom during instructional time.
4. The dog must be at least six months of age.

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5. Trainers must wear a jacket identifying the organization to which they belong.
6. Additional requirements for use of harnesses and leashes are located in Policy KKA.

Miniature Horses

1. For circumstances where a miniature horse has been trained as the service animal, the school division will work with the person with the disability and handler to accommodate the miniature horse as the service animal.
2. Specific factors to be considered with miniature horses are identified in Policy KKA.

Supervision and Care of Service Animals

1. The owner or handler of a service animal shall have the sole responsibility for the supervision and care of the animal, including any feeding, exercising and clean-up.

Damages to School property and Injuries

1. The owner or handler of a service animal is solely responsible for any damage to school property or injury to personnel or students caused by the animal.

Extra Charges

1. An owner or handler of a service animal shall not be required to pay an extra charge for the animal to attend events at a public school for which a fee is charged.

Excluding Service Animals From School Property

1. A public school may exclude a service animal from school property under the following circumstances:
 - A. The presence of the animal poses a direct threat to the health and safety of others;
 - B. The animal is out of control and the animal's handler does not take effective action to control it;
 - C. The animal is not housebroken; or
 - D. The presence of an animal would require a fundamental alteration to the program.

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Denial of Access and Grievance

1. If a school official denies a request for access of a service animal or a dog in training, the individual with disabilities or the parent/guardian can file a written grievance with the CCS Section 504 Coordinator.
2. The Director of Special Education and Student Services serves as the Section 504 Coordinator.
3. The procedure and forms for filing a grievance are located in the Special Education and Student Services Procedures Manual.

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Legal References: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended § 51.5-44

28 C.F.R. Part 35

Cross References:

DJG	Vendor Relations
GB	Equal Employment Opportunity/Nondiscrimination
JB	Equal Educational Opportunities/Nondiscrimination
JBA	Section 504 Hearing Procedures
JFHA/GBA	Sexual Harassment/Harassment Based on Race, National Origin, Disability and Religion
KK	School Visitors
KGB	Public Conduct on School Property
KN	Sex Offender Registry Notification