



EL PASO COMMUNITY COLLEGE PROCEDURE

For information, contact Institutional Effectiveness: (915) 831-6740

FAB-1 Service Animals

APPROVED: November 8, 2012 **REVISED:** September 27, 2023
Year of last review: 2024

AUTHORIZING BOARD POLICY: FAB

Classification: Administrative

Responsible Vice President or Associate Vice President: Vice President of Student and Enrollment Services

Designated Contact: Director Center for Students with Disabilities

OBJECTIVE: To describe the process by which El Paso Community College addresses the use of service animals to assist individuals with disabilities to access College facilities. This procedure does not apply to therapy or emotional support animals.

PROCEDURE:

I. GENERAL

A. Purpose

Consistent with the *Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA)*, it is the policy of El Paso Community College (EPCC) to allow service animals to accompany people with disabilities in all areas of the College where the public is allowed to go. There may be exceptions in situations where safety is compromised or where the service animal may interfere with the activities' fundamental nature.

Violations of this procedure that involve students will be referred to the Vice President of Student and Enrollment Services. The EPCC Police Department will address violations by all others.

B. Definitions

ADAAA defines service animals as dogs or miniature horses trained to work or perform tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability, including: a physical, sensory, psychiatric, neurological, intellectual, mental, or any other disability. Other species of animals, whether wild or domestic, trained or untrained, are not identified as service animals. Service animals are considered working animals, not pets.

The work or task performed by a service animal must be directly related to the handler's disability. Examples of work or tasks include, but are not limited to:

- Assisting individuals who are blind or have low vision with navigation and other tasks
- Alerting individuals who are deaf or hearing-impaired to the presence of people or sounds
- Pulling a wheelchair or retrieving items
- Providing physical support and assistance with balance and stability
- Calming a person with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) during an anxiety attack, or performing other duties
- Helping persons with psychiatric and neurological disabilities by preventing or interrupting impulsive or destructive behavior

By law, only two questions may be asked regarding a service animal's purpose if it is not apparent:

1. Is this a service animal?
2. What work or task has the service animal been trained to perform?

II. PROCESS – REQUIREMENTS FOR SERVICE ANIMALS

Service animals must follow all applicable state dog laws and county regulations, following all requirements for tags and vaccinations:

- Service animals must be on a harness/leash at all times, unless it interferes with the service animal's work or task
- The handler must be in complete control of the service animal at all times
- Service animals must be in good health
- The handler of the service animal is responsible for any damage to College property

A person with a disability cannot be asked to remove the service animal from the premises unless:

- It is out of control, and the handler does not take effective action to control it
- It expresses aggressive behaviors such as: growling, repeated barking or poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others
- It expresses disruptive behaviors such as: whining, wandering, sniffing (people, tables in the eating area, others' belongings), or the initiation of contact outside of the working role
- Consideration of others must be taken into account by providing proper care and cleaning up after the animal

III. MINIATURE HORSES

According to ADA, regulations for miniature horses individually trained to work or perform a task for a person with a disability regularly range in height from 24 inches to 34 inches measured at the shoulders and generally weigh between 70 and 100 pounds. Four assessment factors to be considered are:

- Is the miniature horse housebroken?
- Is the miniature horse under the handler's control?
- Can the facility accommodate the miniature horse's type, size, and weight?
- Whether the miniature horse's presence will not compromise legitimate safety requirements necessary for the safe operation of the College's facilities.

IV. REGISTRATION

The College invites service animal handlers to voluntarily register with the Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) offices.