



Scarborough Fire Department

B. Michael Thurlow, Fire Chief

GENERAL ORDER

TO: ALL PERSONNEL

ORDER #: 17-003

DATE ISSUED: 01/23/2017

SUBJECT: CARING FOR PATIENTS WITH SERVICE ANIMALS

DATE RECORDED:

PER ORDER OF: *B. Michael Thurlow*, Fire Chief

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), The Maine Human Rights Commission and Maine State Law grants access by service animals to any place the public is allowed. Regulations require State and local agencies that provide services to the public to make "reasonable modifications" in their policies, practices, or procedures to accommodate people with disabilities.

- **Service animals must be allowed to accompany people with disabilities in Scarborough Fire Department ambulances unless the animals are deemed to be in an uncontrolled state or present a direct threat to the health or safety of others.**
- A service animal is a dog (and in some cases, a miniature horse) that has been individually trained to provide assistance to an individual with a disability by doing work or performing tasks. A service animal is a working animal, not a pet. Although not mandated, they are routinely identified by wearing a vest or harness to indicate they are in work mode.
- Upon arrival at a scene with an animal (dog) present, determine if the animal is a family pet or a true service animal. The law permits you to ask these two questions only:
 - Do you need the animal because of a disability?
 - What tasks related to your disability has the animal been trained to do?
- Falsely representing a pet as a service or assistance animal is a civil violation.
- If it is not possible to keep a handler and their animal together ensure a responsible official such as a police officer, supervisor, or someone given permission by the handler, can transport the animal safely to the handler's destination and reunite them as soon as possible.
- If handlers are alone and the dog is loose, ask if they have a leash you can get for them.
- If the handler is not in a condition to control the animal, procure proper movement and transport of the service animal.
- Load and unload service animals via the side door when possible.
- To lift a dog put one arm behind the back legs and the other in front of the chest and gently lift.
- Load the dog last and unload it first, to minimize the risk of injuring the animal.
- A seat belt or other restraint may be used to keep the service animal safe when transporting. Most service dogs are trained to lie in place on command and may lie at the foot or side of the stretcher.