

TRUMBULL PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION
POLICY MANUAL

SECTION: **6000**
CATEGORY: **Instruction**
POLICY CODE: **6163.32/Service Animals**

SERVICE ANIMALS

Policy Statement

The Trumbull Board of Education adopts this policy to ensure that individuals with disabilities are permitted to participate in and benefit from District programs, activities, and services, and to ensure that the District does not discriminate on the basis of disability.

“Service animal” means 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.

Consistent with federal and state statutes, upon request and submission of required documentation, the Board shall permit individuals with disabilities to use service animals in District buildings, on District property, and on vehicles that are owned, leased, or controlled by the District.

Adopted: 6/27/2016

References

- The Americans with Disabilities Act
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- Title 28 Code of Federal Regulations Parts 35 & 36
- Connecticut General Statutes §§ 46a-42, 46a-44 through 46a-64

Regulations

I. Admission of Service Animals to Schools

- A. A student or an employee with a disability may submit a request to bring a service animal to school for educational or employment purposes. However, there is no automatic right to be accompanied by a service animal in the school setting.
- B. Parents/Guardians of a student with a disability who believe the student needs to bring a service animal to school in order to receive a free and appropriate public education shall notify the Director of Pupil Personnel Services. The appropriate team shall evaluate the request to use the service animal in school, gathering necessary information to determine whether the student requires the service animal during the school day and/or at school activities. Any service animal accompanying a student with a disability to school or to school activities shall be handled and cared for in the manner detailed in the student's Individualized Educational Plan or Section 504 service agreement.
- C. Trained service animals shall be permitted in District buildings and on District property and vehicles for non-educational reasons under the following circumstances:
 - (1) A totally or partially blind individual may be accompanied by a trained guide animal.
 - (2) A deaf or hearing-impaired individual may be accompanied by a trained hearing animal.
 - (3) A mobility-impaired or other-disabled individual may be accompanied by a trained service animal.
 - (4) An individual conducting training of a service animal may be accompanied for the purpose of school business by a service animal in training, but training shall not normally occur in the classroom during instructional time.
- D. Before a service animal shall be allowed in a District building, or on District property or vehicles, the owner or handler of the animal shall submit to the Director of Pupil Personnel Services a written request and the following documentation from a certified professional:
 - (1) verification of the need for a service animal because of a disability; and
 - (2) description of the function(s) the service animal has been trained and is expected to perform in relation to the individual's disability.

II. Admission of Service Animals to Public Events

- A. An individual with a disability may be accompanied by his/her service animal while on District property for events that are open to the general public. This right of access does not extend to the schools generally or to other activities that are not open to the general public.
- B. District and/or school administrators may inquire of the owner or handler of an animal whether the animal is a trained service animal and the specific tasks that the animal has been trained and is expected to perform. However, questions may not be asked about an individual's disability.
- C. The District shall not require an owner or handler of a service animal to pay an extra charge for the animal to attend events for which a fee is charged.

III. Delegation of Responsibility

- A. The owner or handler of a service animal shall be solely responsible for:
 - (1) supervision and care of the animal, including any feeding, exercising, cleanup, and stain removal;
 - (2) leashing and properly restraining the animal at all times;
 - (3) damages to District buildings, property, and vehicles caused by the animal;
 - (4) injuries to students, employees, volunteers, and visitors caused by the animal; and
 - (5) annual submission of documentation of vaccinations and immunizations.
- B. All completed requests for an individual with a disability to be accompanied by a service animal shall be forwarded to the Director of Pupil Personnel Services, who shall respond to the request.

IV. Service Animals within the Educational Setting

- A. A District administrator may exclude a service animal from District buildings, property, and vehicles under any of the following circumstances:
 - (1) the presence of the animal poses a direct threat to the health and safety of others;
or
 - (2) the owner or handler of the animal is unable to control the animal; or
 - (3) the presence of the animal significantly disrupts or interferes with the educational process; or

- (4) the presence of the animal would require a fundamental alteration to the educational program; or
 - (5) the animal is not housebroken.
- B. If a service animal is out of control in the school setting or on District transportation, the matter shall be immediately reported to local law enforcement by the building or a District administrator or an authorized designee, and the permission granted pursuant to this policy may be immediately revoked. A parent/guardian of the student having custody and control of the service animal shall be required to remove the animal from District premises or transportation immediately.
- C. If any student or staff member assigned to a classroom in which a service animal is permitted suffers an allergic reaction to the service animal, the person having custody and control of the service animal will be required to remove the animal to a different location designated by the building or a District administrator or an authorized designee, and an alternative plan will be developed with District staff. Such plan could include the reassignment of the person having custody and control of the service animal to a different classroom. Such a response will also apply if an individual on District transportation suffers an allergic reaction; in that case, an alternate plan will be developed in coordination with appropriate building, District, and transportation administrators and with involvement of the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student.
- V. Oversight
- A. Forms to support the implementation of this policy will be developed and reviewed periodically by the Director of Pupil Personnel Services.