

Service Animals for Students

The Rainier School District prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability and reasonably accommodates all students with disabilities as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act, §504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Washington law. The Board of Directors recognizes that some students with disabilities may need service animals in order to access district facilities and educational opportunities.

I. Definitions

- a. "Service Animal" means any dog or other common domestic animal that is: individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of a qualified individual with a disability, including but not limited to, guiding individuals who are blind or have low vision, alerting individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to the presence of people or sounds, providing minimal protection or rescue work, pulling a wheel chair, fetching items, assisting an individual during a seizure, retrieving medicine or the telephone, providing physical support and assistance with balance and stability to individuals with mobility disabilities, and assisting individuals, including those with cognitive disabilities, with navigation.
 - i. The term service animal includes individually trained animals that do work or perform tasks for the benefit of individuals with disabilities, including psychiatric, cognitive, and mental disabilities.
 - ii. The term service animal does not include wild animals (including nonhuman primates born in captivity), reptiles, rabbits, farm animals (including any breed of horse, miniature horse, pony, pig, or goat), ferrets, amphibians, and rodents.
 - iii. Animals whose sole function is to provide emotional support, comfort, therapy, companionship, therapeutic benefits, or to promote emotional wellbeing are not service animals.
- b. Under the Americans with Disabilities Act, a person with a disability is defined as:
 - i. "An individual with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities," or
 - ii. "An individual with a record of a substantially limiting impairment,"
 - iii. "An individual who is perceived to have such an impairment."

II. Right to Access District Facilities and Services

- a. A student with a disability who needs a service animal has the right to access all district facilities and services, including district transportation, with the animal, provided that:
 - i. The tasks performed by a service animal are directly related to the student's disability.
 - ii. The animal has been individually trained to perform a task.
 - iii. The animal is house broken.
 - iv. The animal is clean and free of disease and parasites.
 - v. The animal has a harness, leash, or tether, so it cannot run free.
 - vi. The animal is under the control of the student, or other effective provisions have been made to control the animal.
- b. District personnel may verify that the animal is a service animal.
- c. District personnel may inquire what task or function the animal performs for the individual.

III. Removal of Service Animal

- a. The Rainier School District may immediately remove a service animal or ask an individual with a disability to remove a service animal from the premises if:
 - i. The animal displays aggression or behavior that is disruptive to the educational environment;

Rainier School District No. 307
Policy: 3225
Section: 3000 – Students

- ii. The animal poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others that cannot be eliminated by reasonable modifications.
- b. If a student's service animal is excluded, The Rainier School District will ensure that the student can access district facilities and benefit from his or her educational program.
- c. Reentry of the service animal into the school will be conditioned on demonstration and documentation that the aggression or disruptive behavior has been extinguished.

Legal References: 42 U.S.C. § 12102(2)
29 C.F.R. § 1630.2(g)
RCW 49.60.010
RCW 49.60.030
RCW 49.60.040
RCW 70.84.010
RCW 70.84.021
RCW 70.84.070

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