

SCHOOL FACILITIES

Animals in School and District Facilities

A. Service Animals

It is the policy of Pasco School District to permit students and adults with disabilities to be accompanied by a service animal as required by state and federal law. In accordance with this policy, the district will develop procedures governing the presence of service animals in schools and district facilities and property, including school buses and school activities.

A “service animal” means any dog or miniature horse that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability. The work or tasks performed by the service animal must be directly related to the individual’s disability. The crime deterrent effects of an animal’s presence and/or the provision of emotional support, well-being, comfort, or companionship do not constitute work or tasks. It is a violation of state law to misrepresent an animal as a service animal.

Examples of work or tasks included, but are not limited to the following:

- Assisting individuals who are blind or have low vision with navigation and other tasks,
- Alerting individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to the presence of people or sounds,
- Providing nonviolent protection or rescue work,
- Pulling a wheelchair,
- Assisting an individual during a seizure,
- Alerting an individual to the presence of allergens,
- Retrieving items, such as medicine or the telephone,
- Providing physical support and assistance with balance and stability to individuals with mobility disabilities, and
- Helping persons with psychiatric and neurological disabilities by preventing or interrupting impulsive or destructive behaviors.

If a student with a disability needs to bring a service animal to school, the parent or guardian must submit a written request to the building principal. If an employee with a disability needs to bring a service animal to work, the employee must submit a request in writing to Employee Services. For both students and employees, the written request must provide a description of the task(s) the service animal is expected to perform in assisting the person with a disability. In consultation with the Sec. 504 coordinator, the district designee will determine whether to permit the service animal. If it is not readily apparent that the animal is trained to perform work or do tasks for the person with a disability, the district may ask each of the following questions in making the determination:

- Is the animal required because of a disability; and
- What work or task has the animal been trained to perform?

The district may not ask about the nature or extent of a person's disability, for purposes of this determination. The district may cause an approved service animal to be removed from the school, worksite, or property if the animal cannot be effectively controlled by the handler.

B. Animals in the Instructional Program

Animals may be permitted in classrooms as part of the instructional program at the discretion of the Principal. Health issues such as allergies, vaccinated status of the animal, and trauma response to animals involving students and staff will be addressed before permission is given to allow the animal in the school.

If the instructional program involving the animal is ongoing and the animal will remain at school when school is not in session, appropriate arrangements for the animal's care must be made by the classroom teacher.

Animals that are part of the instructional program will be under the control of their adult-owner, the teacher or designated students at all times. Such animals may normally not be transported in a district vehicle.

C. District Authorized Facility Animals

A "facility animal" means an animal that is trained to provide affection and comfort, and to support to people who are not the animal's handler or owner, often in settings such as hospitals, schools, and nursing homes. The Superintendent or designee may establish a facility animal program and develop governing procedures to include the following requirements:

- The organization or individual providing the facility animal must be properly licensed to do business in Washington and must provide proof of liability insurance in an amount determined adequate by the District;
- Animals must have documented training suitable for the facility animal program;
- Animal handlers must have sufficient training and familiarity with the facility animal to maintain effective control of the animal during interaction with staff, students, and patrons;
- Animals must never be left unattended by the animal handler;
- Individuals or the organization's volunteers or staff providing the facility animals must adhere to the District's criminal background check procedures before coming into contact with students;
- Written notice must be provided in advance of a facility animal .

The district reserves the right to terminate a facility animal program at any time, for any reason.

Legal Reference: RCW 28A.635.060

Defacing or injuring school property —
Liability of pupil, parent, or guardian
— Withholding grades, diploma, or
transcripts — Suspension and
restitution — voluntary work
program as alternative — Rights
protected

WAC 392.347.023

State Assistance in Post 1993 facilities

Adoption Date: April 23, 2024