

FACILITIES

Animals in School and District Facilities

The Pasco School District welcomes service animals individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability subject to the conditions detailed below. However, pets, including therapy animals, are not permitted in district buildings or on district grounds unless specifically authorized in Policy No. 9350 and this Procedure. No staff member, student, or member of the public may have their pet such as a dog or cat in a district building. The only exceptions are animals permitted under Section 1, *Service Animals*, Section 2, *Animals in the Instructional Program*, and Section 3, *Facility Dogs*.

Section 1. Service Animals—Individuals with Disabilities

The use of a service animal by a student with a disability at school will be approved when the service animal has been trained to do work or perform tasks that assist or accommodate the student's access to the instructional program, school services, and/or school activities. A student request for the use of a service animal at school must be provided to the school principal for approval prior to the service animal accompanying the student at school.

The use of a service animal by an employee with a disability will be approved when it has been determined to be a reasonable accommodation to enable the employee to perform the essential functions of their job or access benefits of employment provided to employees in the same job classification. An employee request for the use of a service animal must be provided to the Employee Services administrator for approval before bringing the service animal to work.

Misrepresentation of an animal as a service animal is a civil infraction. It is also a violation of district policy, may be an act of unprofessional conduct, and may be grounds for discipline or corrective action.

A service animal must be licensed and immunized in accordance with the laws, regulations, and ordinances of the city of Pasco, Franklin County, and the state of Washington.

Before a service animal will be permitted in district facilities, on district property, or at district-sponsored events, the person requesting access for the service animal must provide a description of the task(s) the service animal is expected to perform in assisting the person with a disability. To determine whether an animal qualifies as a service animal, the district will not ask about the nature or extent of a person's disability. Additionally, the district will not require demonstration of the animal's service task or documentation or proof that the animal has been certified, trained, or licensed as a service animal. If it is not readily apparent that an animal is trained to do work or perform tasks for a person with a disability, the district may make the following two inquiries:

- a. Is the animal required because of a disability; and
- b. What work or task is the animal trained to perform.

The district will provide access to a person with a disability who needs a service animal provided that the tasks performed by the service animal are directly related to the disability, the animal is housebroken, is free of disease and parasites, and has a harness, leash or tether so it cannot run free and is under the control of the person with a disability.

Parents/guardians or animal handlers who will be present in school for the purpose of assisting a student with their service animal are required to submit to a sex offender registry and criminal background check. In addition, parents/guardians and handlers must comply with all standards of conduct that apply to school employees and volunteers.

The building principal or district administrator may request an individual with a disability to remove a service animal from school, a school sponsored activity, or school property if the animal is out of control and the animal's handler does not take effective action to control the animal. Examples of the animal being out of control include, but are not limited to the following:

- a. The presence of the animal poses a direct threat to the health and/or safety of others;
- b. The animal significantly disrupts or interferes with the instructional program, district or school activities or student learning. However, annoyance on the part of the others is not an unreasonable risk to property or others to justify the removal of the service animal;
- c. The presence of the animal would result in a fundamental alteration of any school program or district activity;
- d. The individual in control of the animal fails to adequately care for the animal, including feeding, exercising, taking outside for performance of excretory functions and cleaning up after the animal;
- e. The animal fails to consistently perform the function(s)/service(s) to assist or accommodate the individual with the disability;
- f. The animal is ill; or
- g. The animal is not housebroken.

If the district excludes a service animal, it will provide the individual with a disability the opportunity to participate in the service, program, or activity without having the service animal on the premises. A parent/guardian or employee whose service animal has been excluded or removed may appeal the decision under Procedure No. 3210P (5010P for staff).

Neither the district, nor its employees, are responsible for the cost, care, or supervision of the service animal. The owner/handler of the service animal is responsible for any and all damage caused by the service animal at school, on school premises or at school activities.

Section 2. Animals in the Instructional Program

This section applies to small animals maintained in enclosed habitats such as aquariums or vivariums inside a classroom or school building, and to animals visiting for presentations sponsored by outside organizations. This provision does not include Facility Dogs as defined in Section 3.

The use of the animal in the learning environment must be in support of a specific unit of study, making the animal's presence temporary in nature. Classroom pets are not permitted.

Requests from staff to include an animal in the school's instructional program must be made in advance and provided in writing to the school's principal and Safety/Risk Manager. Requests will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- a. Educational benefit of inclusion of the animal in the instructional program;
- b. Duration of the animal's presence in the classroom;
- c. Plan for control and care of the animal;

- d. Health and vaccination status of the animal or the possibility of disease transmission from the animal;
- e. Health concerns involving students or staff, including but not limited to allergies, anxiety/phobia;
- f. Sanitary precautions, including treatment of animal waste and hygiene of students and staff who will come in contact with the animal; and
- g. Plans for possible death of the animal.

No animal may be included in the instructional program until approved in writing by the school principal and Safety/Risk Manager. Animals that are not permitted include, but are not limited to:

- a. Animals that do not support a specific unit of study;
- b. Venomous or toxin-producing animals;
- c. Centipedes and millipedes;
- d. Dangerous, wild, or stray animals;
- e. Snakes larger than three (3) feet in length;
- f. “Hook-billed” or Psittacine birds (parrots, macaws, cockatoos, parakeets, etc.); and
- g. Live poultry or livestock (Exception: eggs/hatchlings are allowed if approved as per this procedure).

Student contact with the animal will be highly supervised and organized. All persons who handle the animal will wash their hands immediately after handling. Additional guidelines may be issued by the Safety-Risk Manager based on the specific request and their discretion.

Section 3. District Authorized Facility Dogs

The district recognizes that trained dogs with handlers have proven to be effective in providing emotional support to students and staff. The presence of a facility dog can help reduce stress in individuals and promote feelings of calm and relaxation. In addition, interactions with a facility dog can foster positive relationships and more open communication in a supportive environment. At the same time, it is the utmost responsibility of each school to maintain a safe and healthy environment for learning.

The primary role of a facility dog is to provide comfort by allowing unfamiliar people to make physical contact with it while remaining friendly, patient, confident, gentle, and at-ease in all situations. Handlers assume full responsibility for the safety of the dog and those near the dog.

In furtherance of these goals, Policy No. 9350 authorizes the creation of a facility animal program and the district has established this procedure for approval of Facility Dogs. This limited program will allow for the presence of a trained and supervised dog in a district school or facility through approved outside organizations or volunteer staff handlers as specified in these procedures.

A. Outside Organizations—Visiting Dogs—Social Emotional Support

The organization providing the dog(s) must provide the following verifications to the district in advance of the dog(s) visiting the district:

- a. They are licensed to do business in Washington, or are a government agency;
- b. They have liability insurance in an amount required by the district (minimum \$1,000,000 per occurrence);

- c. A criminal history and sexual offender registry background check has been completed within the last twelve (12) months for the handler(s) who will be on-site;
- d. The animal is trained for the approved purpose and will be under the control of the handler at all times;
- e. Proof of vaccinations; and
- f. Certification/training records of the handler(s) if requested by the district.

B. Facility Dog—Volunteer Staff Handler/Handler Team—Application for Approval.

A district staff member may apply to serve as a volunteer handler approved to bring a dog to their school or department only if they meet the following criteria and are able to provide the following verifications:

- a. Written recommendation and approval of the principal or program administrator, with assurance of only one dog per location;
- b. Verification the dog is trained and certified by an independent 3rd party to serve as a facility dog for public access;
- c. Verification the staff member is certified by an independent 3rd party as the dog's handler;
- d. The handler (or owner of the dog if not the handler) is solely liable for any harm or injury caused by the dog while on district premises. The handler (or owner) must provide proof of liability insurance in an amount no less than \$1,000,000 per occurrence, naming the district as an additional insured, and a signed release of liability for actions of the dog and negligence of the handler;
- e. Proof the dog has received and is current on all vaccinations;
- f. Description of the purpose of the dog, duration, and schedule;
- g. Documentation that the responsibilities of the handler will not interfere with the staff member's job duties;
- h. Documentation that a trained secondary handler will be present, and description of the supervision of the dog by the secondary handler;
- i. Proposed process for notification to students and staff, including the plan to address allergies and health conditions;
- j. Proof of sponsorship and/or supervision by a licensed organization; and
- k. Signed verification of rules and responsibilities provided by the district.

The facility dog must be clean, groomed, healthy, and current on heartworm and flea/tick prevention. The dog must be on a leash at all times or otherwise in the immediate control of the handler. Facility dogs are not permitted in kitchens or active food preparation areas (i.e. cafeteria during lunch or breakfast services). The dog must be housebroken. It is the responsibility of the handler to clean up after the dog.

No more than one dog may be approved for each building. A dog may not be left in a district facility overnight or beyond the handler's workday. The handler may bring the dog into the facility off-hours, outside the presence of staff and students, to acclimate the dog to the facility with prior approval.

Once a facility dog has been approved by the district, the building administrator is required to complete the following notifications:

- a. Maintenance and Operations department of the dog's presence and location in the building;
- b. Building staff of the dog's presence and provide an opportunity for staff to notify them of any allergies, health conditions, or other concerns;
- c. School nurse to check for known student allergies or health conditions;

- d. Students, parents/guardians, and families of the dog's presence and an administrator to contact in case of allergies, health conditions, or concerns; and
- e. Provide the handler with the name and contact information for the designated district staff to report any incident involving the facility dog.

The District reserves the right to terminate the dog's access to district facilities at any time for any reason. Situations in which a facility dog may be removed include, but are not limited to:

- a. The handler does not maintain adequate control of the dog;
- b. Presence of the dog interferes with the handler's professional responsibilities;
- c. The dog is not housebroken or otherwise interferes with the educational program;
- d. The dog is aggressive or behaves negatively towards students or staff;
- e. The dog poses a direct threat to the health and safety of others;
- f. The dog is not well-suited to the facility dog role; or
- g. The handler and/or building administrator have not complied with policies or procedures related to the facility animal.