

Subject: Service Animals	Doc ID #: ADM-AODA-IAS-03
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1. PURPOSE:

This policy is intended to meet the requirements for service animals in the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, Integrated Accessibility Standards 191/11 and all related standards and regulations introduced under this legislation, ensuring that persons with disabilities are provided equal opportunities and standards of service.

The customer service standard requires a provider to ensure that a person with a disability is permitted to be accompanied by his or her guide dog or other service animal in the areas of their premises that are open to the public or third parties. This means that the provider must allow the animal onto their premises and allow the person with a disability to be accompanied by the animal.

Service animals are used by people with many different kinds of disabilities.

Examples of service animals include:

- Dogs used by people who are blind
- hearing alert animals for people who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing
- Animals trained to alert an individual to an oncoming seizure and lead them to safety

2. POLICY/PROCEDURE/STANDARD:

POLICY:

- Persons with disabilities may enter premises owned and/or operated by the Red Lake Margaret Cochenour Memorial Hospital accompanied by their service animal and keep that animal with them in areas/premises that are open to the public, when accessing goods and services provided by the hospital, unless the animal is otherwise excluded by legislation.
- In the event that a service animal is otherwise prohibited by law from the premises, the RLMCMH will ensure that alternate means are available to enable the person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the RLMCMH's goods and services.
- The requirements of the standard only apply to those areas of the premises where the public or third parties customarily have access.
- Guide dogs and other Service animals are **not** permitted where sterile procedures occur in accordance with the Health Promotion and Protection Act including but not limited to:
 - Operating Rooms,
 - Minor Procedure Rooms or Rooms where sterile interventional procedures are occurring
 - In any room where radiation exposure occurs (X-ray)
 - Rooms in which transmission based precautions are in place (Isolation rooms)
- Ontario Regulation 562 under the Health Protection and Promotion Act states that animals are not allowed in places where food is manufactured, prepared, processed, handled, served, displayed, stored,

sold or offered for sale. It does make an exception for service dogs to allow them to go where food is normally served, sold or offered for sale. Other types of service animals are not included in this exception.

- If in accordance with this policy, it becomes necessary to separate the Guide dog or Service animal from its owner, healthcare personnel will make all reasonable efforts to help facilitate the transfer of the animal to a designated person.
- The service animal must be clean and in good health with proof of applicable immunizations available upon request.
- Service animals must be supervised by their owners and be kept in control at all times.
- A patient admitted with a Guide dog or Service animal will be accommodated in a private room at no extra charge.

Clinical Note:

Guide dogs and Service dogs are not pets but working animals.

A guide dog is a dog that has been trained at one of the facilities listed in Ontario Regulation 58 under the Blind Persons' Rights Act to act as a guide dog for people who are blind.

PROCEDURE:

- The Manager and/or Administrative Person on Call must be contacted whenever a patient with a Guide dog or Service animal is admitted to the hospital or, whenever there is a concern regarding the safety and/or security of persons in the area.
- Refrain from touching or petting the guide dog or other service animal.
- There may be rare circumstances where, for the reasons of health and safety of another person, allowing a person with a disability to enter a premise and be accompanied by their service animal needs to be considered. In the rare situation where another person's health and safety could be seriously impacted by the presence of a service animal on premises open to the public, the provider should fully analyse all options for safely allowing the service animal. In general, people with allergies to animals are affected if they touch the animal or are in very close proximity for a lengthy period of time. Some of the options to consider may be:
 - √ creating distance between two individuals
 - √ eliminating in-person contact
 - √ changing the time the two receive service
 - √ using air purifiers and any other measures that would allow the person to use their service animal on the premises.

The organization must consider all relevant factors and options in trying to find a solution that meets the needs of both individuals.

- Collaborate and discuss with the person with a disability areas where the presence of a Guide dog or Service animal is not allowed prior to their arrival (where possible).

- Develop alternate arrangements. The manager, staff and person with a disability will collaborate, discuss and develop an accessibility plan identifying necessary support arrangements.
- If the person with the service animal agrees, this might mean leaving the animal in a secure area where it is permitted by law. It might also mean offering to serve the person outside or in another location where the animal is permitted.
- Consider the needs of the person with a disability if his or her service animal is excluded. For example, a person with a vision disability might need someone to guide him or her. The important thing is to ensure that other measures are explored when a person’s service animal is excluded.
- The Integrated Accessibility Standard provisions also apply to other service animals, including animals used by people with autism, mental health disabilities, those with physical or dexterity disabilities as well as others. Where an animal is not a trained guide dog and it is not readily apparent to an average, informed person that the animal is a service animal, you may ask the person using the service animal for a letter from a regulated health professional that confirms that the person needs the service animal for reasons relating to their disability. The letter need only explain that the animal is required because of a disability. The letter does not need to identify the disability, why the animal is needed or how it is used.
- In some circumstances, such as where you are providing ongoing service to a person with a service animal or in other special circumstances, you may wish to maintain a copy of the letter on the patient record. You should be mindful of the privacy issues that may arise from collecting this information and obligations that you may have with respect to this type of information under the Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004.

GUIDELINES:

Tips on interacting with a customer who uses a service animal:

- A Service animal is a working animal, not a pet.
- Avoid touching or addressing Service animals: they are working and are required to pay attention at all times.
- Avoid making assumptions about the animal. Not all Service animals wear special collars or harnesses. If you are not sure if the animal is a pet or Service animal, ask the person with a disability.
- The patient is responsible for the care and supervision of their Service animal. Staff is not expected to provide care or food for the animal, however, staff can provide water for the Service animal if the patient requests this.

3. RESOURCES:

LEGISLATION

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 ONTARIO REGULATION 191/11

Integrated Accessibility Standards

<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/110191?search=accessibility>

4. APPENDIXES:

Examples of Service Animal Key Tasks and Users

The following table is examples of service animals, their key tasks, and their users.

Service Animal	Key Tasks	Users
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Autism assistance or service dog.	Keeps a child from running into danger and provides assistance when sensory stimulus is heightened. Dog is attached to the child's waist by a belt and a leash held by an adult.	People with autism or other developmental/intellectual disabilities.
Guide dog, dog guide or seeing eye dog.	Follows directions of owner, alerts owner to changes in elevation (e.g., curbs, stairs) and obstacles.	People with vision loss.
Hearing ear, hearing, sound alert or hearing alert dog, cat or animal.	Alerts owner to sounds often by a nudge or pawing and leads him/her to the source of the sound. May use a special signal to alert owner to fire alarm	People who are Deaf, oral deaf, deafened or hard of hearing.
Psychiatric service dog.	Retrieves and prompts the person to take medicine, retrieves or activates medical alert, leads person out of crowds, etc.	People with mental health disabilities.
Service or mobility dog or animal, special skills dog or animal (Small ponies or miniature horses are used but are not as common).	May pull wheelchairs, carry objects, pull items, and turn handles or push buttons such as door openers. Larger dogs may provide balance support.	People with physical disabilities.
Seizure, seizure alert, seizure assist or seizure response dog or animal.	Steers owner from danger during a seizure, activates medical alert. Can alert owner to an oncoming seizure.	People who have epilepsy.