



POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

SUBJECT: SERVICE ANIMALS

CATEGORY: Operations & Guest Practices/Policies

POLICY

The Museum is committed to ensuring that all Museum visitors, including those who are assisted by service animals, are able to fully enjoy the grounds and facilities of the Museum. In order to also ensure the safety and well being of the animals under the Museum's care, the following ASDM definitions and procedures pertaining to service animals will be used.

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Title III, businesses and organizations that serve the public must allow people with disabilities to bring their service animals into all areas of a facility where customers are normally allowed to go. This federal law applies to all businesses open to the public, including restaurants, hotels, taxis and shuttles, grocery and department stores, hospitals and medical offices, theaters, health clubs, parks, and zoos.

Service Animals Definition

On March 15, 2011, new federal guidelines tighten the definition of services animals to just dogs and in some cases miniature horses. The Department of Justice (DOJ) now states that the dog must be "individually trained to work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability." Service animals may be any breed, size or weight. Some, but not all, service animals wear special collars and harnesses. Some, but not all, are licensed or "certified" and/or have identification papers. Service animals currently in training DO NOT QUALIFY for admission. Other species of animals, whether wild or domestic, trained or untrained, are not service animals for the purposes of this definition. Animals that simply provide "emotional support, well-being, comfort, or companionship" are not considered service animals under the new regulations.

Example of work or tasks as defined in the new regulations include:

- 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 non-violent protection or rescue work.
- Pulling a wheelchair.
- Assisting an individual during a seizure.
- Alerting individuals 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.

- Helping persons with psychiatric and neurological disabilities by preventing or interrupting impulsive or destructive behaviors.

The crime deterrent effects of an animal's presence and the provision of emotional support, well-being, comfort, or companionship do not constitute work or tasks for the purposes of this definition.

PROCEDURES

- 1) Service animals may only be excluded from the Museum when that animals' behavior poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others. Examples are vicious behavior towards other guests, a dog that is out of control and the handler cannot or does not regain control, or if the dog is not housebroken.

Note: If the work or tasks that the animal is trained to perform is not readily apparent, Visitor Services staff may ask if an animal is a service animal or ask what task the animal has been trained to perform. Visitor Services cannot require special ID cards for the animal or ask about a person's disability.

- 2) Once the service animal has been admitted to the Museum, the Radio Base operator will make a general broadcast announcing, "Base to all units (number, and type) service animal(s) is/are now on grounds." A representative from Security should acknowledge the notification via radio.
- 3) Any problems encountered because of the presence of a service animal should be reported immediately via radio. If there are any problems with a service animals' behavior, a Living Collections Curator will discuss the matter with ASDM's Controller, Safety & Security Manager, CFO, or Director of Human Resources prior to excluding any service animal. If a service animal is excluded, the individual with the disability who uses the service animal must have the option of continuing to enjoy the Museum without the service animal.
- 4) While on ASDM property a service animal must be on a harness or lead of no greater than six feet and under complete control at all times. Service animals are prohibited from crossing over barriers or otherwise going in close proximity to any ASDM collection animal. Service animals are allowed in all areas, including exhibit holding areas, areas without physical barriers (Hummingbird and mixed species aviaries) and all demonstration program areas including Raptor Free Flight, Live & (sort of) on the Loose, Running Wild, and Walk with a Keeper.)

Demonstration/stage animals in our Warden Oasis Theater may be sensitive to the presence of a service animal. We ask that you please consider the following:

1. Arriving prior to the scheduled demonstration start time;
2. Have the service animal remain out of view of the demonstration/stage animals.

- 5) If a service animal becomes seriously ill or injured and the owner requests or authorizes assistance, Mammalogy & Ornithology staff may render only such emergency first aid treatment as is necessary to enable the animal to be transported to another facility for treatment. Such treatment will be the responsibility of the owner or handler of the animal.
- 6) The Radio Base operator will initiate a general radio call once the service animal has left the grounds. A representative from Security will acknowledge the notification via radio.

Effective Date: 4/5/04; non-material revision April 2007; revised March 2011; revised January 2013

Approved By: Operating Council