

**Gadsden State Community College**  
**Disability Services and Resources Office (DSR)**  
**POLICY ON SERVICE ANIMALS**

**Policy Statement:**

This policy governs the presence of Service Animals on Gadsden State's campus and property. It applies to all individuals utilizing the assistance of a Service Animal, as well as others who may interact or come into contact with a Service Animal. Gadsden State is committed to compliance with federal and state disability rights laws and recognizes the importance of Service Animals to some individuals with disabilities. This policy sets forth general guidelines applicable to the presence of Service Animals to ensure these rights are upheld without interruption of campus functions and activities.

The ADA defines a service animal as a dog that has been 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. Tasks may include, but are not limited to, guiding individuals with impaired vision, alerting individuals with impaired hearing to intruders or sounds, pulling a wheelchair, or retrieving dropped items.

Other animals do NOT qualify as service animals. Dogs that are not trained to perform tasks that mitigate the effects of a disability, including dogs that are used purely for emotional support, are not service animals. (See Definitions)

There are instances when a service animal may be restricted, excluded or removed (see below).

Overall, it is the student's responsibility to ensure the control (and safety) of the animal. See Service Animals Procedures and Service Animals Request Form. While legal access rights are afforded to users of assistance animals, with that comes the responsibility of ensuring that the animal behaves and responds appropriately at all times.

**Restriction of the Service Animal:**

Under the ADA's regulations for service animals, service animals have a right to be anywhere that a human is, unless an entity can demonstrate that there would be either a direct threat or fundamental alteration in the program or activity with the presence of the service animal. Also, service animals are also restricted to entering labs unless they have the proper personal protective equipment.

- Service dogs entering laboratories must be protected while in that environment. This PPE shall be worn by the dog and purchased by the owner and include the following:
  - Disposable or reusable boots to cover the feet such as commercially available products (Pawz Rubber Dog Boots)
  - Disposable lab coats such as Maytex lab coat.
  - Disposable plastic-backed absorbent lab paper or pet pads for the dog to lie on during lab to protect them from whatever might be on the floor.
- If appropriate PPE is not brought to the lab, then the service dog will not be permitted into the laboratory.
- Service dogs can only be excluded from the laboratory if the dog is out of control and the handler does not take effective action to control it or if the dog is not housebroken.
- Faculty / Lab Assistants have a right to request the needs assessment provided by the Disability Services Office of the respective campus.

**Removal of the Service Animal:**

Gadsden State may temporarily remove or permanently exclude the Service Animal if:

- 1) The animal poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others;
- 2) The animal's presence results in a fundamental alteration of the college's programming;
- 3) The animal or its presence creates an unreasonable disturbance in or interference with the Gadsden State community; or
- 4) The Owner does not comply with this policy

In the event restriction or exclusion of a service animal is determined to be necessary, GSCC will take other actions to ensure that the individual with disabilities will still be offered the opportunity to participate in services, programs and activities provided by GSCC.

**Conflicting Disabilities:**

Individuals with medical issues that may be impacted by the presence of service animals should communicate with Disability Services and Resources if they have a concern about exposure to a service animal. The individual will be asked to provide documentation that identifies a disability and the need for an accommodation. DSR will facilitate a process to resolve the conflict that considers the disability-related needs/accommodations of all persons involved.

Questions not covered in this policy should be directed to the Disability Services and Resources Office.

**Gadsden State Community College**  
**Disability Services and Resources Office (DSR)**  
**PROCEDURES REGARDING SERVICE ANIMALS**

As a general rule, The College will modify policies, practices, and procedures to permit the use of a service animal by an individual with a disability.

**Students** should contact Disability Services and Resources office to complete a Service Animal Request form. Pam Clough (256) 549 – 8462, Joe Ford Center, Room 106.

**Employees** may request to have a service animal as a workplace accommodation through Disability Services and Resources - Pam Clough (256) 549 – 8462. Joe Ford Center, Room 106.

**Guests** may be accompanied by a service animal when participating in programs and accessing services without requesting an accommodation, but are welcome to contact GSCC's Disability Services and Resources office for information or guidance.

**REQUESTS:**

- New requests can be made by scheduling a meeting with the ADA Coordinator to discuss the accommodation request process. Please bring the Service Animal Request form and required documentation with you. Subsequent requests must be made on an annual basis; students submit the Service Animal Request Form with current documentation relevant for that academic year.

**RESPONSIBILITIES:**

**Individuals Using Service Animals**

- Ensure that the animal is under control of its handler by means of a harness, on a leash or tether in most cases. In instances where a person's disability or the service animal's performance of work or tasks precludes use of a harness, leash or tether, the service animal must still otherwise be under control (e.g. by voice control, signals, or other effective means).
- Responsible for the care and supervision of the service animal; animal must be as unobtrusive as possible.
- Assure that service animals control their waste elimination.
- Comply with GSCC's policies, rules or procedures.

**Faculty, Staff, and Students**

- Allow service animals to accompany the person they are assisting in all areas of campus where members of the public, participants in services, programs or activities, or invitees are allowed.
- Do not distract a service animal in any way. Do not pet, feed, or interact with the animal without the handler's permission.
- Do not separate a disabled person from his or her service animal.
- Disability Services and Resources will contact faculty members of students who have requested and received the accommodation of a service animal. In all other cases, you may ask for clarification of an animal's status as a service animal only when it is not readily apparent that the animal is a service animal. You may only make two inquires to establish whether the animal is a service animal:
  1. Is the animal required because of a disability? and
  2. What work or task has the animal been trained to perform?

In no circumstances can you ask questions regarding the nature of the person's disability using the service animal.

**Gadsden State Community College**  
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**CLARIFICATIONS REGARDING SERVICE ANIMALS**

**DEFINITIONS:**

- **Companion animal:** In recent years, these animals have been prescribed as treatment for some disabilities for their calming influence, affections, stability or even a feeling of security. They are not trained and not afforded the legal protections of service animals. Extremely extenuating circumstances in the student's documentation would be necessary to permit a companion animal on campus. Accommodation of a companion animal is decided on a case-by-case basis depending on documentation from the medical professional.
- **A dog in training:** A dog being trained; however, it has the same rights as a fully trained dog when accompanied by a trainer and identified as such.
- **Partner/handler:** A person with a service or therapy animal. A person with a disability is called a partner; a person without a disability is called a handler.
- **Service Animal:** A dog individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability.
- **Team:** A person with a disability, or a handler, and his or her service animal. The two work as a cohesive team in accomplishing the tasks of everyday living.
- **Therapy Animal:** A therapy animal does not assist an individual with a disability in the activities of daily living, and historically they have not been protected by laws for service animals. The use of therapy animals for mental disorders, i.e., agoraphobia has assisted the individual to safely leave the house and participate in community and educational activities. Documentation needs to specifically address the need of a therapy animal.

**TYPES OF SERVICE DOGS:**

- **Guide dog** is a carefully trained dog that serves as a travel tool by persons who are blind or have severe visual impairment.
- **Hearing dog** is a dog who has been trained to alert a person with significant hearing loss or who is deaf when a sound, e.g., knock on the door, occurs.
- **Service dog** is a dog that has been trained to assist a person who has a mobility or health impairment. Types of duties the dog may perform include carrying, fetching, opening doors, ringing doorbells, activating elevator buttons, steadying a person while walking, helping a person up after the person falls, etc. Service dogs are sometimes referred to as assistance dogs.
- **Sig dog** is a dog trained to assist a person with autism. The dog alerts the partner to distracting repetitive movements common among those with autism, allowing the person to stop the movement (e.g., hand flapping). A person with autism may have problems with sensory input and need the same support services from a dog that a dog might give to a person who is blind or deaf.
- **Seizure response dog** is a dog trained to assist a person with a seizure disorder; how the dog serves the person depends on the person's needs. The dog may stand guard over the person during a seizure, or the dog may go for help. A few dogs have somehow learned to predict a seizure and warn the person in advance.

**Gadsden State Community College  
Disability Services and Resources Office (DSR)  
SERVICE ANIMALS REQUEST FORM**

For permission to bring a service animal on campus, schedule an appointment with the Disability Services and Resources office. (Pam Clough 256.549.8462, pclough@gadsdenstate.edu) Please complete this form and bring the required documentation to your appointment.

<b>Name:</b>		<b>Student #</b>		
<b>Email:</b>				
<b>Term:</b>		<b>Do you live in the Residence Hall:</b>	<b>Yes*</b>	<b>No</b>

**DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS:**

The handler of the service animal must show proof to the Disability Services Office that the animal has met the following regulations: (DSR personnel will copy documentation and initial this form).

\_\_\_\_\_ **Licensing:** The animal must meet the licensing requirements required by the state of Alabama. (For nonresidents, home state tags may be accepted.)

\_\_\_\_\_ **Health records:** The animal must have a health statement, including vaccinations from a licensed veterinarian dated within the past year. Preventative measures should be taken at all times for flea and odor control.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Minimum training standards:** Verification that the animal meets those minimum training requirements as prescribed by Assistance Dogs International or any other service animal training organization have been met.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Identification:** The animal should wear some type of commonly recognized identification symbol.

<b>Animal Name:</b>	<b>Breed / Size:</b>
<b>Most Recent Rabies Vaccination Date:</b>	<b>Spayed or Neutered Date:</b>

My signature below verifies that I have received, read and agree to abide by Gadsden State's Service Animals Policy and Procedures. Also, I understand that:

- I am financially responsible for the actions of the Service Animal including bodily injury or property damage and / or cleaning (e.g., replacement of furniture, carpet, window and wall coverings etc.)
- Gadsden State is not responsible for a Service Animal during a fire alarm, fire drill, or natural disaster.
- Care and supervision of the Service Animal is my responsibility and I am required to maintain control of the Service Animal at all times.
- Any violation of this policy may result in immediate removal of the Service Animal from any Gadsden State campus or property.

**Signature of Student:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

\*There is an additional policy for Service Animals in the Residence Hall which must be read, signed and attached to this form if applicable.