

# Policy for Service Animals on Museum Property

## Fenimore Art Museum and The Farmers' Museum

### Overview

- Beginning on March 15, 2011, **only dogs** are recognized as service animals under titles II and III of the ADA.
- A service animal is a dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for a person with a disability.
- In General, entities must permit service animals to accompany people with disabilities in all areas where members of the public are allowed to go.

### How "Service Animal" Is Defined

Service animals are defined as dogs that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities. Examples of such work or tasks include guiding people who are blind, alerting people who are deaf, pulling a wheelchair, alerting and protecting a person who is having a seizure, reminding a person with mental illness to take prescribed medications, calming a person with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) during an anxiety attack, or performing other duties. Service animals are working animals, not pets. The work or task a dog has been trained to provide must be directly related to the person's disability. **Dogs whose sole function is to provide comfort or emotional support do not qualify as service animals under the ADA.**

### Where Service Animals Are Allowed

Under the ADA, State and local governments, businesses, and nonprofit organizations that serve the public generally must allow service animals to accompany people with disabilities in all areas of the facility where the public is normally allowed to go.

### Service Animals Must Be Under Control

Under the ADA, **service animals must be harnessed, leashed, or tethered, unless these devices interfere with the service animal's work or the individual's disability prevents using these devices.** In that case, the individual must maintain control of the animal through voice, signal, or other effective controls.

### Inquiries, Exclusions, Charges, and Other Specific Rules Related to Service Animals

When it is not obvious what service an animal provides, only limited inquiries are allowed. Staff may ask two questions: (1) is the dog a service animal required because of a disability, and (2) what work or task has the dog been trained to perform. Staff cannot ask about the person's disability, require medical documentation, require a special identification card or training documentation for the dog, or ask that the dog demonstrate its ability to perform the work or task.

- Allergies and fear of dogs are not valid reasons for denying access or refusing service to people using service animals. When a person who is allergic to dog dander and a person who uses a service animal must spend time in the same room or facility, for example, in a school classroom or at a homeless shelter, they both should be accommodated by assigning them, if possible, to different locations within the room or different rooms in the facility.
- A person with a disability cannot be asked to remove his service animal from the premises unless: (1) the dog is out of control and the handler does not take effective action to control it or (2)

the dog is not housebroken. When there is a legitimate reason to ask that a service animal be removed, staff must offer the person with the disability the opportunity to obtain goods or services without the animal's presence.

- Establishments that sell or prepare food must allow service animals in public areas even if state or local health codes prohibit animals on the premises.
- People with disabilities who use service animals cannot be isolated from other patrons, treated less favorably than other patrons, or charged fees that are not charged to other patrons without animals. In addition, if a business requires a deposit or fee to be paid by patrons with pets, it must waive the charge for service animals.
- Staff are not required to provide care or food for a service animal.

The above policy pertains to the buildings and grounds of The Farmers' Museum and the interior spaces of Fenimore Art Museum, Research Library, White House and Iroquois Storage Facility.

Non- Service Dogs are permitted on the grounds of Fenimore Art Museum under the following conditions:

- The dog must be kept on a leash at all times and under control by their owner/handler.
- The dog must not cause any disturbance that interferes with or negatively impacts the visitor experience, museum programs or other activities held on the property.
- Owner/ handler must immediately remove any feces left by such dog on museum property and dispose of the same in a safe and sanitary manner.
- The museum retains the right to ask owner/handler to remove animal from museum property for any reason they deem appropriate to ensure the safety of persons or property.

Non- Service Dogs are only permitted on the grounds of The Farmers' Museum for demonstration purposes as part of pre-approved and planned museum activities such as Agility Dog Demonstrations during Harvest Festival.