



## **CURRY COLLEGE**

### **Assistance Animals Policy**

Curry College (“Curry” or the “College”) is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with disabilities to facilitate equal access to the College’s programs and activities. In compliance with relevant federal and state law, including the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and amendments (the “ADA”), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (“Section 504”), the Fair Housing Act (“FHA”), and Massachusetts General Laws (Chapter 129, section 39F), individuals with disabilities who require the use of assistance animals as a reasonable accommodation due to their disability may be permitted to bring such animals to limited and defined areas of College property provided they comply with this Policy.

Students who seek to bring an assistance animal to campus must first contact the Office of Disability Services (“ODS”) at 617-333-2385 or [disabilityservices@curry.edu](mailto:disabilityservices@curry.edu). ODS will determine, on a case-by-case basis, and in collaboration with other departments on campus (as needed), whether to approve the individual’s request for an assistance animal on campus. In making this determination, ODS will consider the needs of the individual, as well as the impact of the animal on the campus community.

College employees who seek to bring an assistance animal to campus must first contact the Office of Human Resources (“HR”) at 617-333-2263. HR will determine, on a case-by-case basis, and in collaboration with other departments on campus (as needed), whether to approve the individual’s request for an assistance animal on campus. In making this determination, HR will consider the needs of the individual, as well as the impact of the animal on the campus community.

Conference Groups who seek to bring an assistance animal to campus must first contact Conference and Events at 617-333-2993. Conference and Events will determine, on a case-by-case basis, and in collaboration with other departments on campus (as needed), whether to approve the individual’s request for an assistance animal on campus. In making this determination, Conference and Events will consider the needs of the individual, as well as the impact of the animal on the campus community.

### **Section I: Coverage**

This Policy applies to all members of the College community, including students, faculty, staff, contractors, visitors and vendors.

This Policy is in effect on all College property, including the main campus in Milton and the Plymouth campus.

## **Section II: Definitions**

### **Assistance Animal**

This Policy applies to assistance animals that may be used by individuals with disabilities at the College. “Assistance animal” is an umbrella term that refers to both service animals and emotional support animals, as further defined below. An assistance animal is an animal that either (1) works, provides assistance, or performs tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability; or (2) provides emotional or other type of support that alleviates one or more identified symptoms or effects of a person’s disability.

### **Service Animal**

A “Service Animal” is defined as any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability. Other animals do not qualify as service animals. (In some limited circumstances which generally are not applicable to Curry’s campus, a miniature horse may be permitted as a service animal.) Examples of work or tasks include, but are not limited to, guiding an individual who is blind or has low vision with navigation, alerting an individual who is deaf or hard of hearing to the presence of people or sounds, and alerting and protecting an individual during a seizure. The work or task a service animal has been trained to provide must be directly related to the functional limitations of the person’s disability. Animals whose sole function is to provide comfort or emotional support do not qualify as service animals.

Examples of types of service animals include:

- Guide dog: A dog that is trained to serve as a travel tool for individuals who are blind or have low vision.
- Hearing dog: A dog that has been trained to alert deaf persons or those with significant hearing loss, to sounds such as knocks on doors, fire alarms, phone ringing, etc.
- Assistance dog: A dog that has been trained to assist a person with 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, assisting a person to get up after a fall, etc.
- Sig (signal) dog: A dog trained to assist a person with autism. The dog makes a person aware of movements, which may appear distracting to others and are common to those with autism. A person with autism may also have deficits in sensory input and may need service animals to provide similar assistance as is provided to a person who is blind or deaf.
- Seizure response dog: A dog trained to assist persons with seizure disorders. The method by which the dog serves varies depending on the individual's needs. Some dogs are able to predict seizures and provide advanced warning.

- Other types of service animals: The above is not an exhaustive listing. The College will allow service animals as permitted by applicable law.

### **Emotional Support Animal**

“Emotional Support Animals” (or “ESAs”) is a category of animals that may work, provide assistance, or perform physical tasks, for an individual with a disability and/or provide necessary emotional support to an individual with a mental or psychiatric disability that alleviates one or more identified symptoms of an individual’s disability, but which are not considered Service Animals under this Policy or relevant federal or state laws and regulations. Some Emotional Support Animals are professionally trained, but in other cases ESAs provide the necessary support to individuals with disabilities without any formal training or certification. Dogs and cats are commonly used as Emotional Support Animals, but any animal may serve a person with a disability as an ESA.

The question in determining if an Emotional Support Animal will be allowed in College housing is whether or not the ESA is necessary because of the individual’s disability to afford the individual an equal opportunity to use and enjoy College housing and its presence in College housing is reasonable. However, even if the individual with a disability establishes necessity for an Emotional Support Animal and it is allowed in College housing, an ESA is not permitted in other areas of the College (e.g. dining facilities, libraries, academic buildings, athletic building and facilities, classrooms, labs, individual centers, etc.). Dogs approved as ESAs are permitted in certain outdoor areas of the College, as described more fully in the College’s Pets Policy.

### **Approved Animal**

Under this Policy, an “Approved Animal” is an assistance animal that has been approved by the College to be on campus.

### **Pet**

A “Pet,” as described more fully in the College’s Pets Policy, is an animal kept for ordinary use and companionship. A pet does not do work, provide assistance, or perform tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability, and therefore is not considered to be an assistance animal.

### **Owner**

An “Owner” is a student, faculty or staff member, contractor, vendor, visitor, or other person who has requested an accommodation to bring an assistance animal on campus.

### **Student**

An individual enrolled in College classes (traditional day, Graduate, or Continuing Education programs) on the Milton or Plymouth campuses; may be a resident or commuter.

### **Employee**

A College staff or faculty member.

### **Visitor**

An individual, group, or organization accessing a public event or open indoor or outdoor open space on College property.

**Vendor or Contractor**

An individual, group or organization performing services on behalf of the College.

**Conference Group**

An individual, group or organization that rents, leases or otherwise uses by agreement space on College property.

**Section III: Procedures for Approving and Keeping Assistance Animals on Campus**

Subject to the rules outlined in this Policy, Curry College permits qualified individuals with a disability to bring a service animal to all areas of public accommodation where members of the public, students, faculty, employees, trustees, or guests are allowed to go (the subsection on Prohibited Areas below defines certain restricted locations on campus where animals of any kind are not permitted, including Service Animals). The service animal must be individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of a qualified individual with a disability.

Subject to the rules outlined in this Policy, Curry College permits qualified individuals with a disability to reside with an Emotional Support Animal in a College-owned residence. The residential space where an approved assistance animal is permitted is limited to a resident's room or suite (a dog approved as an Emotional Support Animal may also be allowed in certain outdoor public spaces on the College's campuses, consistent with the restrictions on outlined in the College's Pets Policy).

**Procedures for Non-Resident Students and Visitors to Request Approval**

Non-resident students seeking to bring a Service Animal to campus must make a formal request with the ODS. To do so, the individual must submit a completed Registration with Office of Disability Services form. Furthermore, the individual must contact the Director of Disability Services by telephone at 617-333-2385 or by appointment.

**Procedures for Resident Students to Request Approval**

A resident student requesting permission to keep an assistance animal in College housing must make a formal request with ODS. To do so, the individual must submit a completed Registration with Office of Disability Services form located on the portal. Furthermore, the individual must contact the Director of Disability Services by telephone at 617-333-2385 or by email at [disabilityservices@curry.edu](mailto:disabilityservices@curry.edu) and make an appointment.

Requests should be submitted as far in advance as possible of the semester the student wants to bring the assistance animal on campus. If the need for the assistance animal arises after the student is already living on campus, the student must complete the Registration with Office of Disability Services form and meet with the Director of Disability Services. The assistance animal must not be in residence prior to approval by the College.

Review of completed requests for an assistance animal will be conducted by ODS. ODS will collaborate with other College offices, including the Student Affairs office, to determine if there are any student

conduct issues that may negatively impact the requesting student's ability to effectively control and provide a safe environment for the assistance animal. Once ODS reviews the request, the decision will be provided in writing to the individual.

If the request for an assistance animal is approved, Residence Life and Housing staff will make a reasonable effort to notify the other residents in the hall where the assistance animal will be located. This notice will be limited to information about the animal's presence as an accommodation to a student with a disability; there will be no disclosure of the student's disability.

If the request for an assistance animal is denied, the requesting individual may appeal the denial to the College's Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students within five (5) business days. The decision of the Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students is final.

### **Procedures for Resident and Non-Resident Employees to Request Approval**

Non-resident College employees seeking to bring a Service Animal, as defined by this Policy, should contact the Office of Human Resources at (617) 333-2263 for further information.

College employees who reside in College housing and want to bring an assistance animal (either a Service Animal or an Emotional Support Animal, as defined by this Policy) to reside in College housing should contact the Office of Human Resources at (617) 333-2263.

These Employee procedures are applicable to both faculty and staff at the College. Contractors and vendors doing business on the College campus shall also follow these Employee procedures.

If the request for an assistance animal is denied, the requesting individual may appeal the denial to the College's Vice President for Human Resources within five (5) business days. The decision of the Vice President for Human Resources is final.

### **Documentation for Review of Requests for Assistance Animals**

When the need for an assistance animal is not readily apparent, the College may request:

- (1) In the case of a Service Animal, additional documentation in support of the request for the purpose of determining whether an animal qualifies as a service animal, namely:
  - a. that the service animal is required due to the functional limitations of the requesting individual's disability, and
  - b. what work or tasks the service animal has been trained to perform for the benefit of the requesting individual.
  
- (2) In the case of an Emotional Support Animal, additional information from a physician, psychiatrist, social worker, or other licensed medical health professional not related to the individual, including:
  - a. verification of the disability,
  - b. a statement on how the animal serves as an accommodation for the documented disability, and,

- c. a statement of how the need for the assistance animal relates to the ability of the student to use and gain benefit from Curry housing.

Please note that registration of an ESA with and/or certification by an external accrediting organization is neither recognized nor required for approval of a request.

Any necessary documentation must be dated within the last 12 months.

### **Owner's Responsibilities for Approved Animals**

The following pertains to the health and wellbeing of an approved assistance animal:

- Identification, License, and Tags:
  - A service animal should wear a harness, identification tag or other gear that identifies its working status. If there is not a visible tag, College officials may ask the Owner if the service animal is a working animal.
  - When applicable, an Emotional Support Animal should wear an identification tag or the Owner should have the animal's identification paperwork available at all times.
- Vaccination: In accordance with local ordinances and regulations, the approved assistance animal must receive all required and/or recommended immunizations against diseases. Assistance animals, if required by law or regulation, must have current vaccination against rabies and wear a rabies vaccination tag. Local licensing requirements must be followed, if applicable to the particular breed and type of approved animal. The College may request updated verification regarding an approved assistance animal's vaccinations at any time during the animal's residency.
- Health: Assistance animals must be in good health as documented annually by a licensed veterinarian. Appropriate documentation will be determined on a case-by-case basis, but may include a vaccination certificate or veterinarian's statement regarding the animal's health. The College has authority to direct that the assistance animal receives veterinary attention in appropriate circumstances.
- Control: The owner must be in full control of the assistance animal at all times. The service animal must be on a leash, harness or tether at all times, or in the case of an Emotional Support Animal remain in the assigned residential unit (dogs may use outdoor public space, in accordance with the limits discussed in the College's Pets Policy). Exceptions may occur when the animal is performing a specific duty that requires it to be unleashed or where the nature of the Owner's disability limits such control. In such cases, alternative control measures may be considered during the request and approval process.
- Cleanliness: It is the owner's responsibility to remove and properly dispose of any waste. An assistance animal must be clean and well groomed, and measures should be taken at all times for flea and odor control. If fleas, ticks, or other pests are detected through inspection, the residential housing unit will be treated using approved fumigation methods by College approved pest control service. The owner will be billed for the expense of any pest treatment above and beyond normal

required pest management. The owner will be held responsible for any room damages including the excessive cleaning or replacement of the carpet.

- Behavior: The assistance animal must be well behaved. The owner must ensure that the assistance animal refrains from behavior that threatens the health and safety of others.
- Overnight: The assistance animal may not be left overnight in a residence hall without the Owner. Approved assistance animals must be taken with the Owner if the Owner leaves campus overnight and during breaks.
- Other Conditions: The offices of Disability Services and/or Residence Life and Housing may place other reasonable conditions or restrictions on the assistance animal depending on the particular facts and circumstances, including the nature and characteristics of the assistance animal.

### **Guidelines for Maintaining an Assistance Animal**

Curry College may remove an assistance animal when (i) the assistance animal poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others; (ii) the assistance animal's presence results in a fundamental alteration of the College's program; or (iii) the owner does not comply with his/her responsibilities in College housing, facilities, and/or at campus events.

The owner of an assistance animal that is unruly or disruptive may be asked to remove the animal from College facilities. If the improper behavior happens repeatedly, the owner may be required to take significant steps to mitigate the behavior before bringing the assistance animal on to College property or into any College facility. Mitigation may include, but is not limited to, muzzling a barking animal, obtaining refresher training for both the assistance animal and the owner, and other appropriate measures.

The owner of an assistance animal is solely responsible for any damage to persons or College property caused by his/her assistance animal.

### **Notice and Education to College Community**

#### **Public Etiquette by Community Members**

Individuals should not:

- Pet an assistance animal while it is working. Assistance animals are trained to be protective of their Owner and petting distracts them from their responsibilities.
- Feed a working assistance animal.
- Deliberately startle, tease or taunt an assistance animal.
- Separate or attempt to separate an assistance animal from his/her Owner.

- Hesitate to ask an Owner if he/she would like assistance if he/she seems confused about a direction in which to turn, an accessible entrance, the location of an elevator, etc.

Where appropriate in the sole discretion of the College, ODS may provide notice or offer targeted training to members of the Curry community most likely to come in contact with a service animal.

### **Prohibited Areas**

Certain locations are considered to be unsafe for assistance animals, such as medical facilities, laboratories, mechanical rooms, etc. If a location is determined to be unsafe, reasonable accommodations will be provided to ensure the Owner equal access to the activity.

### **Section IV: Conflicting Disabilities**

Allergic reactions to assistance animals are common. Persons with asthma, allergies, respiratory diseases, or other medical conditions affected by the presence of an assistance animal are asked to contact ODS. The person impacted by the presence of an assistance animal must provide verifiable medical documentation to support his/her claim. Such affected students may be eligible for a disability accommodation if living on campus and in proximity to an assistance animal. The needs of both persons will be considered in resolving the issue.

### **Section V: Temporary Visitors/Conference Groups**

All temporary campus visitors (e.g., those attending events, workshops, etc.) must adhere to the guidelines outlined in this Policy. Please contact the Office of Disability Services at (617) 333-2385 or [disabilityservices@curry.edu](mailto:disabilityservices@curry.edu) for further information.

All Conference Groups must adhere to the guidelines outlined in this Policy. Please contact the Conference Center Coordinator at (617) 333-2993 for further information.

### **Section VI: Questions**

Students or visitors that have questions regarding this Policy should contact the Director of Disability Services at (617) 333-2385 or [disabilityservices@curry.edu](mailto:disabilityservices@curry.edu).

Employees (faculty or staff), contractors or vendors that have questions regarding this Policy should contact the Vice President of Human Resources at (617) 333-2263.

Conference Groups that have questions regarding this Policy should contact the Conference Center Coordinator at (617) 333-2993.



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