

Policy & Procedure Guidance on Service Animals

Student Accessibility Services (SAS) – Merritt College

Service Animals

The Department of Justice published revised final regulations implementing the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) for title II (state and local government services) and title III (public accommodations and commercial facilities) on September 15, 2010, in the Federal Register.

These requirements, or rules, clarify and refine issues that have arisen over the past 20 years and contain new, and updated, requirements.

Service Animal: Definition.

A service animal is a dog that does work or performs tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability (including physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual/cognitive or other mental disabilities).

The dog has been individually trained to recognize individuals' need and respond accordingly.

If it is not a dog then it is not a service animal, and, unless it qualifies under the miniature horse regulations, the ADA does not obligate you to permit it.

Examples of tasks (provided by Department of Justice):

- Assist during seizure (alerting a seizure is imminent, nudging person to safer environment)
- Retrieving medicine or other items (from bags or backpacks)
- Helping individual with a psychiatric condition, such as dissociative identity disorder, to remain grounded
- Preventing/interrupting impulsive or destructive behavior
- Assisting with balance, stability
- Providing non-violent protection or rescue work (cannot qualify if behaves aggressively)

This list of tasks was added to the more traditional tasks that hearing dog and Seeing Eye dogs perform.

For further information, please see your SAS Counselor