

## **SIMMONS UNIVERSITY SERVICE ANIMAL POLICY**

### **Policy Statement**

Simmons University is committed to the full participation of all students, faculty, staff, administrators and visitors with disabilities in its programs and activities. Subject to the provisions of this policy, Service Animals will be allowed anywhere in the University where their non-disabled peers are granted access. In general, reasonable Service Animal request will be allowed in support of a person's access to or participation in University facilities, programs or activities. This policy is aligned with the University's broader mission to remove barriers that prevent qualified individuals with disabilities from enjoying the same employment, education, and other opportunities that are available to persons without disabilities.

### **Definitions**

A "Service Animal" means a dog that is specifically trained to perform work or tasks for a person with a disability. The work or task must be directly related to the individual's disability, such as guiding a person with impaired vision, alerting a person who is hearing impaired, pulling a wheelchair, or alerting and protecting a person in a medical emergency such as a seizure.

### **Determining Whether a Service Animal will be Accommodated**

With respect to Service Animals, University employees with a business reason to know may ask the student only if the dog is a Service Animal that is required because of a disability and what work or task the dog has been trained to perform. In general, if the work or task relates to a person's disability, the Service Animal will be accommodated subject to the review and approval of the request for an accommodation. University employees may not ask about the person's disability, request medical documentation of the disability, require a special identification card or other documentation for the Service Animal, or ask that the animal demonstrate its ability to perform the work or task.

The University need not accommodate a Service Animal if:

- the student cannot care for it;
- the student cannot effectively control it;
- it is not housebroken;
- it would pose a direct threat to the health and safety of others;
- it would cause substantial physical damage to the property of the University or others;
- it would pose an undue financial and administrative burden on the University; OR
- it would fundamentally alter the nature of the University's operations.

## **Responsibilities of the Student**

The student who requires the assistance of a Service Animal is responsible for keeping the animal harnessed, leashed, or tethered at all times, unless these devices interfere with the Service Animal's work or the individual's disability prevents using these devices, in which case the students must maintain control of the animal through voice, signal, or other effective controls.

The student who requires the assistance of a Service Animal is responsible for:

- feeding and otherwise caring for the animal;
- properly disposing of the animal's waste or, if unable to properly dispose of the animal's waste without assistance, coordinating with University staff for the proper disposal of the animal's waste; and
- maintaining the animal's health and keeping up to date with immunizations/vaccinations.

The student who requires the assistance of a Service Animal is also personally and solely responsible for any harm or damage that the animal causes to persons or property.

## **Making Requests**

Student requests for accommodation and/or questions pertaining to this policy should be directed to the Disability Services Office. The Disability Services Office may be reached at (617) 521-2474 or via e-mail at [stephanie.hackett@simmons.edu](mailto:stephanie.hackett@simmons.edu).