

SERVICE AND EMOTIONAL SUPPORT ANIMALS

7.220100P
OPERATIONAL
PROCEDURE

OVERVIEW	MCC has established procedures to be followed when a student arrives on campus accompanied by a service animal or emotional support animal (ESA), whether in class, at any college facility, or at college-sponsored activities and events.
IDENTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS	There is no requirement for students to register their service animals in order for the animal to be allowed on campus, and the animal is not required to wear a vest or special harness for identification. Additionally, there is no requirement for documentation to prove that the animal has had particular training or is a “certified” service animal. Students who have questions regarding service animals on campus should contact a Disability Support Services office .
PROCESS	Students requesting to bring an emotional support animal on campus are required to follow the reasonable accommodation process through the campus Disability Support Services (DSS) office. This process may take some time to complete, so ESA requests should be made as early as possible. An ESA will not be allowed on campus until approval has been obtained. The allowance of an ESA for a student will be noted on the student’s Letter of Accommodation (LOA) that the student will submit to faculty each semester. Students seeking to bring an ESA on campus will be asked to provide documentation from a licensed, treating professional which includes the following information: • A current diagnosis and description of related to functional limitations • Information regarding the relationship between the disability and the relief that the animal provides • Information that demonstrates the ESA is necessary in order for the student to utilize and benefit from the College’s programs, services, or activities As part of the reasonable accommodation process, the College will consider the following factors in determining whether to approve and continue to allow a specific ESA in its facilities: • The size of the animal and whether it is too large for the classroom, office, or relevant space

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- Whether the animal's presence would prevent another individual from using that space due to that individual's disability. In this case, the College will consider the needs of both persons with disabilities in meeting its obligations to reasonably accommodate to resolve the problem as quickly and effectively as possible
- Whether the animal's presence would be disruptive to the environment
- Whether the animal poses or has posed a direct threat to the health and safety of others through injury or acting aggressively
- Whether the animal causes or has caused damage to College facilities or the property of others
- Whether the animal poses an undue financial and/or administrative burden

Individuals who wish to bring an ESA on campus who are both a student and an employee at MCC must initiate the accommodation process with both DSS and Human Resources. Approval of an ESA by one entity does not automatically apply to the other. DSS and Human Resources will collaborate during this process to enable uniformity, when possible.

HANDLER/OWNER
RESPONSIBILITIES

Service and emotional support animals must be under control of the handler at all times. The animal must be harnessed, leashed, or tethered while in public places unless these devices interfere with the service animal's work or the person's disability prevents use of these devices. In that case, the handler/owner must use voice, signal, or other effective means to maintain control of the animal. If the animal is not properly controlled, it is no longer providing a service and can be excluded from campus.

Service and emotional support animals must be house-trained. The handler/owner is required to clean up after and properly dispose of all waste created by the animal in a safe and sanitary manner. The handler/owner will be responsible for any and all damages or injuries caused by the animal and must take reasonable precautions to prevent property damage or injury caused by the animal.

The handler/owner must abide by current city, county and state ordinances, laws and/or regulations pertaining to the licensing, vaccination and other requirements of animal ownership. It is the handler's/owner's responsibility to know and understand all

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applicable ordinances, laws and regulations in addition to college policies applicable to animals on campus. The college may request documentation of compliance with such ordinances, laws and/or regulations, which may include presentation of vaccination certificate(s).

The handler/owner is solely responsible for caring for and supervising the animal, which includes toileting, feeding, grooming and veterinary care. Evidence of mistreatment, illness, abuse, neglect, extended absence or abandonment may result in the removal of the animal and/or other consequences under the Student Code of Conduct.

EMPLOYEE
RESPONSIBILITIES

College employees should not ask about the necessity of a service animal when it is apparent that the animal is trained to perform tasks for a student with a disability. In situations where it is not apparent that the animal is trained to perform tasks for the student with a disability, two inquiries may be made: 1) Is the animal required because of a disability, and 2) What work or task has the animal been trained to perform? Employees are not allowed to request any documentation for the dog, require that the dog demonstrate its task, or inquire about the nature of the person's disability.

For emotional support animals, college employees may ask to see a student's Letter of Accommodation as verification that the animal has been approved as an accommodation.

College employees shall not be required to supervise or otherwise care for any service or emotional support animal including, but not limited to, removing the animal during emergency evacuation for events such as a fire alarm.

ALLERGIES

If another individual (student or employee) has an allergy to a service or emotional support animal, that person may be accommodated by keeping that person's space free from the presence of an animal to the extent possible. If the person with the allergy is a student, (re)scheduling of classes to avoid the animal can often alleviate the issue. When the person with the allergy is a faculty member, the student might be asked to select another faculty member who teaches the same course, or if that is not feasible, the student can be accommodated through the use of online classes or the use of technology or some other means to allow the student access to course materials.

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EXCLUSIONS	A service animal may not be excluded based on assumptions or stereotypes about the animal's breed or how the animal might behave. Additionally, in most settings, the presence of a service animal will not result in a fundamental alteration. However, the College may restrict a student's use of a service or emotional support animal, pursuant to this policy, when the animal poses a substantial and direct threat to the health or safety of the College community, when the presence of the animal constitutes a fundamental alteration to the nature of the program or service provided by the College, or for the student's failure to comply with the responsibilities set forth under this policy. If an animal is excluded for such reasons, College employees will endeavor to work with the student to determine reasonable alternative opportunities to participate in the service, program, or activity without having the animal on the premises.
COMPLAINT PROCEDURE	If a decision is made to deny a request for an ESA or remove an ESA that had previously been approved, the student may file a complaint internally with the MCC Office of Civil Rights. Students may also choose to file a discrimination complaint externally through the Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights.
ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS	DSS should be notified when an approved ESA will no longer be on campus. Concerns regarding the behavior of animals on college property should be brought to the Dean of Students.
PROCEDURE MODIFICATION	This procedure must be reviewed regularly by the District Disability Support Services at a minimum of every five years.
ENFORCEMENT	This operational procedure and applicable regulations shall be strictly enforced. Violations may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.
VALUES ALIGNMENT	People

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NOTIFICATION

The responsible officer will ensure districtwide communication is made within 30 days of approval through the college-wide communication platform available.

REFERENCE

7.20000 BP Student Rights and Responsibilities
7.22000 DR Service and Emotional Support Animals
7.21500 DR Disability Support Services
7.21510 OP Disability Support Service