

 <b>Mid-Columbia Medical Center</b> 1700 East 19 <sup>th</sup> Street The Dalles, OR 97058	<i>Department:</i>		
	<i>Source:</i> ADA Federal Guidelines		
<i>Title:</i> <b>SERVICE ANIMALS</b>			
<i>Approved by:</i> Dianne Storby, Exec VP	<i>Origination Date:</i> 11/08	<i>Reviewed:</i> 1/09	<i>Revised:</i> 5/14

**Policy:**

Under the ADA, Mid-Columbia Medical Center allows service animals to accompany people with disabilities in all areas of the facility where the public is normally allowed to go. MCMC is not responsible for the care or feeding of service animals; therefore, if a handler is unable to manage all the care the animal will need (including feeding, routine care, taking the animal outside as needed and cleaning up after the animal), the hospital will not allow the animal to remain. The animal must be kept on a leash or held at all times. MCMC reserves the right to require that any animal that is disruptive must leave the building.

**Definitions:**

**Service Animal:** 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 during an anxiety attack, or performing other duties.

Service animals are working animals not pets. Dogs whose sole function is to provide comfort or emotional support do not qualify as service animals under the ADA.

**Procedure:**

**Where Service Animals Are Allowed**

Under the ADA, 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. For example, in a hospital it would be inappropriate to exclude a service animal from areas such as patient rooms, clinics, cafeterias, or examination rooms. However, it may be appropriate to exclude a service animal from operating rooms where the animal's presence may compromise a sterile environment.

**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 Related to Service Animals**

When it is not obvious what service an animal provides, only limited inquiries are allowed. Staff may ask only these two questions:

- Is the dog a service animal required because of a disability?
- 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
- ask that the dog demonstrate its ability to perform the work or task

**Exclusions Related to Service Animals**

1. A person with a disability cannot be asked to remove his service animal from the premises unless:
  - the dog is out of control and the handler does not take effective action to control it or
  - 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.

2. 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, they both should be accommodated by assigning them, if possible, to different locations within the room or different rooms in the facility.

3. 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.
4. Staff is not required to provide care or food for a service animal.
5. 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.

### **Miniature Horses**

In addition to the provisions about service dogs, the ADA regulations have a separate provision about miniature horses that have been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities. **(Miniature horses generally range in height from 24 inches to 34 inches measured to the shoulders and generally weigh between 70 and 100 pounds.) Entities covered by the ADA must permit miniature horses where reasonable. There are four assessment factors in determining whether miniature horses can be accommodated in the facility. The assessment factors are:**

- whether the miniature horse is housebroken
- whether the miniature horse is under the owner's control
- whether the facility can accommodate the miniature horse's type, size, and weight
- whether the miniature horse's presence will not compromise legitimate safety requirements necessary for safe operation of the facility

### **Reference Policies:**

Pet Visitation Program

Family Pet Visiting Procedure