



Accommodating Students with Service Animals in Teaching Laboratories

PREPARED BY THE CHEMICAL SAFETY COMMITTEE IN
COOPERATION WITH DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES AND
THE OFFICE OF EQUITY AND COMPLIANCE

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GUIDANCE FOR LAB EMPLOYEES

Scope

This guidance applies to University employees who need to accommodate students with conditions or disabilities (permanent or temporary) that require a service animal. This is not intended to substitute for guidance from Disability Support Services (DSS), nor does this override the University policy for Animals in Buildings. All students with disabilities are encouraged to access the services available through DSS, however, students who require a service animal are not required to contact DSS. This guideline is intended for teaching laboratory employees but may be used for research laboratory applications as well.

Definition

The ADA defines a service animal as:

“any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability. Other species of animals, whether wild or domestic, trained or untrained, are not service animals for the purposes of this definition.” 28CFR Part 35

A provision of the final rule covers miniature horses that have been trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability; 28 CFR 35.136(i).

Goal

The University intends all students to be safe and successful in the laboratories. We welcome students to share any personal information they feel is pertinent for their instructors to have in order to help the student be successful.

Lab Employee Information

Service animals are permitted to accompany people with disabilities in all areas of a facility where the person is allowed to go. If a student brings any animal *except a dog or miniature horse*, the employee can prohibit that animal from being in the lab. For a dog/ horse, the employee can ask 2 questions:

- Is the animal a service animal required because of a disability?
- What work or task has the animal been trained to perform?

As long as the animal is under control of their handler at all times, the service animal is permitted in the laboratory. Service animals can only be excluded or asked to leave the room if:

- The animal is out of control and the handler does not take effective action to control it.
- The animal is not housebroken.
- For miniature horses only – if the size, weight and type of horse cannot be accommodated in the lab.

If the animal behaves inappropriately, tell the service animal handler to leave the lab with their animal, then seek assistance from DSS or the ADA Coordinator for guidance on how to proceed in addressing the situation.

Employees need to inform all students of the potential hazards present in the laboratory. Students requiring a service animal will take this into consideration when making decisions about their animal and what level of protection they will provide.

Safety Equipment

Occupants in teaching and research laboratories are to be appropriately clothed and don personal protective equipment (PPE), depending on the PPE requirements of the area, to prevent exposure to hazardous chemicals, broken glass, or other hazards that might be present in the laboratory environment. A service animal handler may wish to provide PPE such as disposable or reusable boots to protect the feet, disposable lab coats, goggles, and disposable plastic-backed absorbent lab paper or pads for the animal to lie on to protect them from whatever might be on the floor. Animal beds or fabric pads are not appropriate for use in the lab.

Service animal PPE appropriate for laboratory use must be water-proof and cut/tear-resistant to offer protection similar to lab coats, disposable gloves, closed-toe and –heel shoes, and safety glasses or chemical splash goggles. The items do not have to be purchased from the vendors listed below, but the items must be of similar type and materials, and provide the same level of protection. Some vendors are:

Pawz Dog Boots <https://pawzdogboots.com/>

Maytex (for disposable lab coats) http://www.maytexcorp.com/products_apparel.htm

Eye Protection – Rex Specs <https://www.rexspecs.com/>

– Doggles <https://woof.doggles.com/shop-for-dogs/eyewear/dgil-doggles-ils>

Needs Assessment (for use by Lab Staff, Instructors, or PIs)

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

Lab Employee: _____

1. If the student brings an animal (dog or miniature horse only) to the lab, the following questions should be asked:

- a. **Is the animal a service animal required because of a disability?** Yes No
- b. **What work or task has the animal been trained to perform?**

2. The “Guidance for Service Animal Users” sheet must be provided, discussed and signed. See pages 4 and 5.

Students may or may not provide additional information about their service animal, at their discretion. You may encourage them to speak with you or your lab coordinator/ supervisor about how UAA can help them in the lab.

Lab employee keeps original

GUIDANCE FOR SERVICE ANIMAL USERS

Information

The University of Alaska Anchorage is committed to your safety and success in the laboratory. If that success includes the use of a service animal, we want to make sure your animal is also safe and secure. Laboratories are not hazard-free areas. Hazardous chemicals, open flames, glassware, and electrical equipment are all used.

The following equipment is highly suggested and the behavior expectations are required for your animal's safety and for the safety of the other laboratory occupants.

Potential Hazards

Glassware such as beakers, pipets, and flasks are common equipment in science laboratories. Glass shards may remain on the floor after the clean-up in the event glassware breaks.

Chemicals are another hazard present in laboratories, especially in chemistry, art, and certain engineering labs. These chemicals may be corrosive – hydrochloric acid, sulfuric acid, sodium hydroxide; flammable – alcohols, ether, solvents; toxins – sodium fluoride, sodium barbital; or reactives – ammonium nitrate, bleach, metallic sodium. Solutions or solid chemical may spill on the floor and traces may remain after clean-up.

Ask your instructor what hazards are present in your laboratory and where chemical information (safety data sheets, SDSs) can be found.

Personal Protective Equipment

Service animal handlers may wish to prevent exposure to hazardous chemicals, broken glass, or other hazards that might be present in the laboratory environment. This PPE would include disposable or reusable boots to protect the feet, disposable lab coats, goggles, and disposable plastic-backed absorbent lab paper or pads for the animal to lie on to protect them from whatever might be on the floor. Animal beds or fabric pads are not appropriate for use in the lab.

Service animal PPE appropriate for laboratory use must be water-proof and cut/tear-resistant to offer protection similar to lab coats, disposable gloves, closed-toe and –heel shoes, and safety glasses or chemical splash goggles. The items do not have to be purchased from the vendors listed below, but the items must be of similar type and materials, and provide the same level of protection. Some vendors are:

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– Doggles <https://woof.doggles.com/shop-for-dogs/eyewear/dgil-doggles-ils>

Behavior Expectations

Service animals must remain under the handler’s control at all times. Animals must not show aggression toward other animals or people in the laboratory. Animal owners are responsible for any damage or mess caused by the animal. If you wish to grant permission for anyone in the lab to interact with your service animal, doing so must not disrupt laboratory work or instruction.

If the animal behaves inappropriately, you will be asked to remove your service animal from the lab.

I have read and agree to these stipulations and requirements.

Name (Print): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Employee Signature: _____ Date: _____

Lab employee keeps original.

Student receives a copy.