

Stanford Health Care – ValleyCare Hospital Wide Policy	Last Approval Date: January 2020
Name of Policy: Service Animals	Policy Section and Number: Patient Care - 133
Departments Affected: All Departments	Page 1 of 3



I. **Purpose:**

To ensure that all individuals requiring the use of service animals are treated in a non-discriminatory manner and are provided the same level of service and courtesy as all other patients.

II. **Policy:**

- A. Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), places that serve the public generally must allow animals to accompany people with disabilities in all areas of the facility where patients are normally allowed to go.
- B. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommends:
 - a. When a decision must be made regarding a service animal’s access to any particular area of the health-care facility, evaluate the service animal, patient, and health-care situation on a case-by-case basis to determine whether significant risk of harm exists and whether reasonable modifications in policies and procedures will mitigate this risk (U.S. Department of Justice: 28 CFR § 36.208).
 - b. If a patient must be separated from his or her service animal while in the health-care facility, 1) ascertain from the person what arrangements have been made for supervision or care of the animal during this period of separation; and 2) make appropriate arrangements to address the patient’s needs in the absence of the service animal.
- C. Patients with service animals will be placed in a private room.
- D. When it is not obvious what service an animal provides, employees may only ask:
 - a. If an animal is required due to a disability, and
 - b. What work or task the animal has been trained to perform
- E. Employees may not:
 - a. Ask about the person’s disability
 - b. Require medical documentation
 - c. Require a special identification card
 - d. Require training documentation for the animal
 - e. Ask that the animal demonstrate their ability to perform the work or task
- F. Patients with disabilities who use service animals cannot be charged extra fees, isolated from other patrons, or treated less favorably than other patients.
- G. Damages caused by a service animal may be charged to the owner of the animal.
- H. A person with a disability cannot be asked to remove his service animal from the premises unless:
 1. The animal is out of control and the animal’s owner does not take effective action to control it.
 2. The animal poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others or causes a fundamental alteration in the nature of services.
- I. Service animals are working animals, not pets.
- J. Do not touch or pet the service animal unless directed by the owner.
- K. Employees are not required to provide care or food for a service animal or provide a special location for it to relieve itself. The care or supervision of a service animal is solely the responsibility of his or her owner.

Stanford Health Care – ValleyCare Hospital Wide Policy	Last Approval Date: January 2020
Name of Policy: Service Animals	Policy Section and Number: Patient Care - 133
Departments Affected: All Departments	Page 2 of 3



- a. If a friend or family member is not available to assist the patient in caring for their service animal, employees or volunteers can accompany the patient outside with the pet for the purpose of allowing the pet to relieve itself.
- L. Service animals must be harnessed, leashed or tethered, unless these interfere with the service animal’s work, in which case the owner must maintain control of the animal through voice, signal or other effective controls.
- M. The plan of care will be individually designed to incorporate the facilitation of the patient’s special needs with regards to the service animal.
- N. The CDC recommends the following in its *Guidelines for Environmental Infection Control in Health-Care Facilities* (CDC Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, page 30, June 6, 2003):
 - 1. Minimize contact with animal saliva, dander, urine, and feces.
 - 2. Practice hand hygiene after any animal contact.
 - a. Wash hands with soap and water, especially if hands are visibly soiled or contaminated with proteinaceous material.
 - b. Use either soap and water or alcohol-based hand rubs when hands are not visibly soiled or contaminated.
- O. Violators of the ADA can be required to pay money damages and penalties
- P. If you have additional questions concerning the ADA and service animals, please call the U.S. Department of Justice ADA Information Line at (800) 514-0301 (voice) or visit the ADA Business Connection at ada.gov

III. Definitions:

- A. Service Animal: a 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.
- B. Work or Task: The work or task performed by a service animal must be directly related to the individual’s disability. Examples include, but are not limited to:
 - 1. Assisting individuals who are blind or have low vision with navigation and other tasks
 - 2. Alerting individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to the presence of people or sounds
 - 3. Providing non-violent protection or rescue work
 - 4. Pulling a wheelchair
 - 5. Assisting an individual during a seizure
 - 6. Alerting individuals to the presence of allergens
 - 7. Retrieving items such as medicine or telephone
 - 8. Providing physical support or assistance with balance and stability to individuals with disabilities
 - 9. Helping persons with psychiatric and neurological disabilities or preventing or interrupting impulsive or disruptive behaviors

IV. Compliance:

- A. All workforce members including employees, contracted staff, students, volunteers, credentialed medical staff, and individuals representing or engaging in the practice at SHC-VC are responsible for ensuring that individuals comply with this policy;

Stanford Health Care – ValleyCare Hospital Wide Policy	Last Approval Date: January 2020
Name of Policy: Service Animals	Policy Section and Number: Patient Care - 133
Departments Affected: All Departments	Page 3 of 3



B. Violations of this policy will be reported to the Department Manager and any other appropriate Department as determined by the Department Manager or in accordance with hospital policy. Violations will be investigated to determine the nature, extent, and potential risk to the hospital. Workforce members who violate this policy will be subject to the appropriate disciplinary action up to and including termination.

V. Related Documents

A. None

VI. Appendices:

A. None

VII. Document Information

A. Legal References / Regulatory Requirements:

1. California Hospital Association Consent Manual 2019
2. <http://www.ada.gov/qasrvc.htm>
3. <http://www.ada.gov/svcanimb.htm>
4. U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division Disability Rights Section ADA retrieved 6/2014 from: http://www.ada.gov/service_animals_2010.htm
5. U.S. Dept. of Justice: 28 CFR § 36

B. Policy Owner/Date History:

1. Author Unknown
2. Shannon Stewart Owner 12.2019

Distribution and Training Requirements:

1. This policy resides in the Hospital Wide Policies of Stanford Health Care – ValleyCare.
2. New or revised documents will be distributed to all impacted employees and posted where accessible by all staff members.

C. Review and Renewal Requirements:

1. This policy will be reviewed and/or revised every three years or as required by change of law or practice.

D. Review and Revision History:

1. Shannon Stewart BSN RN Revised 12.2019

E. Approvals:

1. Nurse Manager/Director – 1/2020
2. Patient Care Services – 1/2020

“This document is intended for use by staff of Stanford Health Care – ValleyCare. No representations or warranties are made for outside use. Not for outside reproduction or publication without permission.”