



Rowan College of South Jersey

Administrative Procedure: 9009 ANIMALS ON CAMPUS

Many people with disabilities use a service animal in order to fully participate in everyday life and daily activities. A service animal is defined as a dog individually trained to do work or perform tasks for an individual with a qualifying disability (i.e., physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability). The task(s) performed by the dog must be directly related to the person's disability. Examples of tasks performed by service animals include, but not limited to, assistance to the blind, pulling a wheelchair, seizure alerts, retrievals, and balance/stability functions. Other species of animals are not service animals for the purpose of this administrative procedure (see 28 CFR§ 36.104). Emotional support animals (ESA), such as therapy, comfort or companion animals have only limited protections, and such animals do not qualify as service animals.

Rowan College of South Jersey (“RCSJ” or “College”) supports the use of a service animal to assist people with qualifying disabilities and will make reasonable accommodations in order that the disabled employee or student can participate in College programs or activities. The following guidelines are provided for the safety and well-being of the entire College community.

Guidelines

- It is highly recommended a student with a service animal should notify the Office of Special Services. The Office of Special Services will assist the student in optimizing and receiving services to best support success while attending RCSJ.
- In situations when it is not obvious the dog is a service animal, only two specific questions may be asked of the owner/handler:
 - Is the dog a service animal required because of a disability?
 - What work or task has the dog been trained to perform?
- Staff may not ask about the person’s disability, seek medical documentation, require a special identification card or training documentation for the dog, or ask for the dog to demonstrate its ability to perform the work or task.
- Under the ADA, service animals must be harnessed, leashed, or tethered, unless the individual’s disability prevents using these devices or these devices interfere with the service animal's safe, effective performance of tasks.

- Allergies and fear of dogs are not valid reasons to isolate people with disabilities from other students/staff/visitors without animals.
- The owner/handler of the service animal is responsible for caring for and supervising the service dog, which includes toileting, feeding, grooming, social distancing (when required), and veterinary care (i.e. township/city required vaccinations, registration, and licensure).
- The owner/handler is strongly encouraged to maintain liability insurance coverage for the service animal in order to protect the owner/handler and family from risk of significant legal and financial liability. The owner/handler will in all cases be held financially responsible for the actions of the service animal, including any incident where the service animal causes bodily injury to another person, regardless of whether the owner/handler has obtained insurance coverage. The owner/handler shall have no claim against RCSJ for any financial obligations resulting from the actions of the service animal.
- A complaint or concern regarding a service animal can be reported to the Office of Special Services.

Exclusions

- Under ADA guidelines, RCSJ is not required to modify policies, practices, or procedures if it would “fundamentally alter” the nature goods, services, programs, or activities provided to the public. Therefore, the service animal can be restricted to enter an area where the health and/or safety of students, staff, program/activity, or the animal could be compromised.
- The service dog can only be excluded or removed when it is out of control, a direct threat to the health and/or safety of others, has a history of behaving in a way that is a direct threat to the health and/or safety of others, and the owner/handler does not take effective action to control it or if it is not housebroken. A person with a disability cannot be asked to remove the service animal from the premises without cause recognized under the New Jersey Law Against Discrimination (“NJLAD”).

Area: Safety and Security
Approved: 10/15/24

President’s Authorization: 

References:

Rowan College of South Jersey Board of Trustees Policy Manual, *9009 Animals on Campus*
Americans with Disabilities Act, (ADA) Title II and Title III, U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division, *Disability Rights Section*
New Jersey Law Against Discrimination (NJLAD) (N.J.S.A. 10:5-1 et seq.)

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