

The Grand Rapids Public Schools prohibits bringing a pet (a domestic animal kept for pleasure or companionship) to work or school or having a pet in GRPS controlled buildings and premises.

Admission of Service Animals

A person with a disability uses a service animal as an auxiliary aid. "Service Animal" means 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. Except as provided by law, other species of animals, whether wild or domestic, trained or untrained, are not service animals for purposes of this definition.

Access

Employees, parents/guardians, students, and visitors with disabilities may be accompanied by their service animals at District functions including class, meetings or other events and in all areas of the District's facilities where members of the public, participants in services, programs or activities, or invitees, as relevant, are allowed to go. Service animals are also allowed in District vehicles. However, certain grounds may exist to exclude the service animal as outlined in this policy.

Identification of Service Animal

A service animal must always be on a harness, leash or other tether unless either the handler is unable because of a disability to use a harness, leash or other tether, or the use of a harness, leash, or other tether would interfere with the service animal's safe, effective performance of work or tasks, in which case the service animal must be otherwise under the handler's control (e.g., voice control, signals, or other effective means).

Miniature Horses

Individuals with disabilities may be accompanied by miniature horses to the extent necessary to avoid discrimination on the basis of disability. However, a miniature horse may not accompany such individual if it would require the District to fundamentally alter its services, programs or activities or is otherwise determined by the District to be unreasonable.

In evaluating "reasonableness," the District shall consider:

- The type, size, and weight of the miniature horse and whether the facility can accommodate these features;
- Whether the handler has sufficient control of the miniature horse;

Section 5000 – Personnel

5050 Service Animals (Cf. 8930)

5050

- Whether the miniature horse is housebroken; and
- Whether the miniature horse's presence in a specific facility compromises legitimate safety requirements that are necessary for safe operation.

If the District determines that an individual with disabilities may be accompanied by a miniature horse, the provisions of this policy relating to services animals shall apply.

Exclusion of Service Animal

The District may exclude a Service Animal from District facilities, vehicles, grounds or functions under the following circumstances:

- The animal is out of control, and the animal's handler does not take effective action to control it;
- The animal is not housebroken;
- The animal poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others; or
- For any other reason permitted by law.

Direct threat is defined as a significant risk to the health and safety of others that cannot be eliminated by a modification of policies, practices, or procedures, or by the provision of auxiliary aids or services. In making any determination that an individual with a disability's use of a service animal would pose a direct threat to the health and safety of others in a particular setting or activity, the District will make an individual determination based on reasonable judgment that relies on current medical knowledge or on the best available objective evidence, to ascertain the nature, duration and severity of the risk, the probability that the potential injury will actually occur, and whether reasonable modification of policies, practices or the provision of auxiliary aids or services will mitigate the risk.

If the District excludes a Service Animal, it shall provide the individual with a disability the opportunity to participate in the service, program or activity without the Service Animal on the premises.

Complaints about violations of this policy shall be directed to Superintendent or designee as outlined in the District's Non-Discrimination and Complaint Procedures Policy 8015 and Rules 8015-R and Policy 5030 and Rule 5030-R or with appropriate agencies.

Approved: March 7, 2016

LEGAL REF: Americans with Disabilities Act ("ADA"), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ("IDEA"),