



Administrative Policy

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| Policy Type: | Environmental Health and Safety/Risk Management and ACCESS |
| Policy Title: | Service Animals Safety in Laboratories Guidance for Students, Faculty, and Staff |
| Office Responsible: | Environmental Health and Safety/Risk Management and ACCESS |
| Related Policies: | Service Animals Procedure |
| Related Laws: | Americans with Disabilities Act as amended in 2010; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; Michigan PA 144 of 2015 |

Purpose

This guidance is to be used in conjunction with the College's current [Service Animals Procedure](#) which also provides the definitions of Service Animals and Service Animals in Training. The College strives to provide a safe and healthy learning environment for all of its students, faculty, and staff. These guidelines adhere to the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 as amended in 2010, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as applicable, and the Michigan PA 144 of 2015. The College is committed to allowing persons with disabilities the use of Service Animals or Service Animals in Training on campus to facilitate their full participation and equal access to the College's programs and activities.

Scope

The College's Environmental Health & Safety/Risk Management team has developed this guidance to ensure the safety of students, faculty, staff, Service Animals, and Service Animals in Training at OCC laboratories. For students who anticipate working with a Service Animal or Service Animal in Training in the laboratory at any time over the course of their enrollment, the College strives to provide that opportunity without endangering the safety of the student, fellow students, faculty, staff, and the Service Animal or Service Animal in Training.

For its laboratories or any place where there are objective, reasonable and legitimate safety concerns for the student, the Service Animal, Service Animal in Training, or others, the College requires the student to seek advance permission from ACCESS to seek review and provide for appropriate safety arrangements. This review will include input from the campus ACCESS department, the Environmental Health and Safety / Risk Management department, the course instructor, and the student/trainer. The review must be conducted prior to commencement of classes.

Educational Laboratory Legitimate Safety Concerns

- a. The College's laboratories and procedures are designed for the safe use of the facilities by students, faculty, or staff. They are not designed for Service Animals or Service Animals in Training. As such, Service Animals may be exposed to hazards that would otherwise be controlled for human users.
- b. Depending on the class, laboratory hazards may include chemical hazards, fire hazards, electrical hazards, or physical hazards, among other things.
 - i. Chemical hazards include strong acids and/or bases, heavy metals, organic

- solvents, and other chemicals that may be corrosive, flammable, or toxic, among other things.
- ii. Fire hazards include the use of gas burners or other heating devices.
 - iii. Electrical hazards may be present, especially in Physics labs, but may be present anywhere electrical equipment is used.
 - iv. Physical hazards include water or ice on floors creating a slipping hazard, or broken glass.
- c. Hazards within the laboratories can result in illness or permanent injuries to the Service Animal or Service Animal in Training, including toxic reactions, blindness, chemical burns, or death.
 - d. Service Animals or Service Animals in Training are not allowed in a laboratory if they pose a direct or indirect risk of injury to other students and employees. Direct risks include aggressive behavior, or even innocent interactions with classmates during chemical or mechanical manipulations. Indirect risks include being underfoot and creating a trip hazard, urinating in the classroom creating a slip hazard, among other things.
 - e. In determining whether reasonable modifications in policies, practices, or procedures can be made to allow a miniature horse, or other Service Animal or Service Animal in Training, into a specific College facility including a laboratory, the College will consider the type, size, and weight of the animal, whether the animal is housebroken, whether the handler has sufficient control of the animal, and whether the animal's presence in a specific facility compromises legitimate safety requirements necessary for the safe operation of the facility.
 - f. Under normal circumstances, the College is not responsible for any injuries or illnesses suffered by a Service Animal or Service Animal in Training in College facilities.

Student Responsibilities and Required Precautions to Reduce the Risk of Injury

- a. Students utilizing the assistance of a Service Animal or Service Animal in Training are responsible for the behavior of the animal and are expected to take steps to ensure that negative impacts to fellow students, faculty, and staff are minimized.
- b. If a Service Animal or Service Animal in Training becomes disruptive to a class, the student and the animal may be asked to leave the lab until the disruption can be remedied. Similarly, if the animal is not housebroken, the student may be asked to remove the animal from the premises.
- c. Service Animals and Service Animals in Training must be under the control of the student and shall have a harness, leash or other tether, unless the student 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 animal's safe and effective performance of work or tasks, in which case, the animal shall be otherwise under the student's control. "Otherwise under the student's control" includes, but is not limited to, voice control or signals.
- d. Service Animals and Service Animal's in Training are required to wear the equivalent

personal protective equipment as students in the lab as a precaution to reduce the risks of illness or injury. Students must acquire goggles, foot coverings, and a raincoat (or other covering appropriate to the hazards) to help prevent contact with spilled or splashed chemicals, or broken glass. The purchase of this equipment is the sole responsibility of the student and the College cannot ensure the adequacy of such equipment in protecting against all hazards within the laboratory.

Change Log

01-21-2020 Effective date

09-01-2023 Revision [Addition of Service Animal in Training references]