



# RIVER VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT

660 West Daley Street

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Spring Green, Wisconsin 53588

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Phone: 608-588-2551

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## Service Animals

“Service animal” is defined as any guide dog, signal dog, or other animal that is individually trained or being 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. The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the individual's disability.

A service animal is the personal property of ~~the student and/or parents/guardians.~~ **the owner.** The District does not assume responsibility for training, daily care, or healthcare of service animals. The District does not assume responsibility for personal injury or property damage arising out of or relating to the presence or use of service animals on District property or at District-sponsored events.

Service animals, must meet every veterinary requirement set forth in State law and County and Local regulation/ordinance, including vaccinations or other inoculations required for the animal to be properly licensed.

## Service Animals for Employees

In accordance with Section 504/ADA Prohibition Against Disability Discrimination in Employment, the District provides qualified individuals with disabilities with reasonable accommodation(s). An employee with a disability may request authorization to use a service animal while on duty as such an accommodation. The request will be handled in accordance with the ADA mandated interactive process.

## Service Animals for Parents, Vendors, Visitors, and Others

Individuals with disabilities who are accompanied by their service animals are permitted access to all areas of the District's facilities where members of the public, as participants in services, programs or activities, as vendors, or as invitees, are permitted to go. Individuals who will access any area of the District's facilities with their service animals should follow the building's standard visitor registration procedures and must notify the Principal that their service animal will accompany them during their visit.

## Service Animals for Students

A service animal is permitted to accompany a student ~~with a disability~~ to whom the animal is assigned anywhere on the school campus where students are permitted to be.

A service animal that meets the definitions set forth in the ADA and this policy shall be under the control of the student ~~with a disability~~, or a separate handler if the student is unable to control the animal. A service animal shall have a harness, leash, or other tether, unless either the student ~~with a disability~~ 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 student's control (e.g., voice control, signals, or other effective means), or under the control of a handler other than the student.

If the student **with a disability** is unable to control the service animal and another person serves as the animal's handler, that individual shall be treated as a volunteer and, as such, will be subject to Policy 861 (School Volunteers). The District is not responsible for providing an animal handler.

### **Removing and/or Excluding a **Student's** Service Animal**

If a service animal demonstrates that it is not under the control of the **student-owner** or its handler, the Principal is responsible for documenting such behavior and for determining if and when the service animal is to be removed and/or excluded from school property.

Similarly, in instances when the service animal demonstrated that it is not housebroken, the Principal shall document such behavior and determine whether the service animal is to be removed and/or excluded from school property.

The Principal should notify the District Administrator prior to or as soon thereafter as is practicable when a service animal has been removed and/or excluded, and, immediately subsequent to such notification, document the reasons for the removal and/or exclusion.

The Principal's decision to remove and/or exclude a service animal from school property may be appealed in accordance with the complaint procedure set forth in Policy 411 – Nondiscrimination and Access to Equal Educational Opportunity.

The procedures set forth in Policy 411 – Nondiscrimination/Equal Education Opportunities do not intend to interfere with the rights of a student and his/her parents or an eligible student to pursue a complaint of legally prohibited discrimination with the United States Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights or the Department of Justice.

### **Eligibility of a **Student's** Service Animal for Transportation**

A student **with a disability** shall be permitted to access School District transportation with his/her service animal. There may also be a need for the service animal's handler, if the handler is someone other than the student, to also access School District transportation.

When a service animal is going to ride on a vehicle owned, leased, or contracted by the District, the student and his/her parents/guardians, or eligible student, and the handler, if s/he is someone other than the student, shall:

- A. meet with the principal to discuss critical commands needed for daily interaction and emergency/evacuation, and to determine whether the service animal should be secured on bus/vehicle with a tether or harness.
- B. At the discretion of the Principal, an orientation will take place for students and staff who will be riding the bus/vehicle with the service animal regarding the animal's functions and how students should interact with the animal.
- C. The service animal shall board the vehicle by the steps with the student, not a lift, unless the student uses the lift to enter and exit the vehicle. The service animal must participate in bus evacuation drills with the student.
- D. While the vehicle is in motion, the service animal shall remain positioned on the floor, at the student's feet. A determination shall also be made regarding whether the service animal should be secured on the vehicle with a tether or harness.

Situations that would cause cessation of transportation privileges for the service animal include:

- A. The student, or handler, is unable to control the service animal's behavior, which poses a threat to the health or safety of others; or
- B. The service animal demonstrates it is not housebroken on the vehicle.

The student and his/her parents/guardians shall be informed of behaviors that could result in cessation of transportation privileges for the service animal, in writing, prior to the first day of transportation.

Although transportation may be suspended for the service animal, it remains the District's responsibility to transport the student. Furthermore, unless the behavior that resulted in the service animal's removal from the vehicle is also documented during the school day, the service animal may still accompany the student in school.

Legal Reference:       The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)  
                              The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)  
                              Wis. Stat. 106.52, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504)

Cross Reference:       **Policy 834.1 Certified Therapy Animals**  
                              Policy 836 Animals on School Premises  
                              Policy 861 School Volunteers  
                              **Policy 751.3 Bus Rules and Regulations**  
                              Policy 411 Nondiscrimination/Equal Education Opportunities

APPROVED:           July 11, 1991  
REVISED:             March 12, 2020  
APPROVED:           June 11, 2020  
REVISED:             April 8, 2021  
APPROVED:           May 13, 2021