

<b>CITY OF REDMOND</b>	
<b>Service Animals for People with Disabilities Policy</b>	<b>Number: GEN 100</b>
<b>Effective Date: 12/21/09</b>	<b>Approval: Assistant City Manager of Employee Services</b>

## **I. POLICY:**

The City of Redmond is committed to making reasonable modifications to its policies, practices, and procedures to permit the use of service animals by citizens with disabilities. Service animals play an important role in ensuring the independence of people with disabilities, and it is therefore our policy to welcome any animal that is individually trained to assist a person with a disability.

## **II. PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that people with disabilities can utilize service animals to gain access to City of Redmond programs and services.

## **III. DEFINITIONS:**

Service animals are individually trained to work or perform tasks for individuals with disabilities. Service animals are not always dogs; other animals may assist people with disabilities. "Service animal" is defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) as any guide dog, signal dog, or other animal individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including, but not limited to, guiding individuals with impaired vision, alerting individuals with impaired hearing to intruders or sounds, providing minimal protection or rescue work, pulling a wheelchair, or fetching dropped items.

Service animals come in all breeds and sizes, may be trained either by an organization or by an individual with a disability, and need not be certified or licensed. Service animals do not always have a harness, a sign, or a symbol indicating that they are service animals. A service animal is not a pet. Comfort or emotional support animals are not service animals as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act; they are not trained to perform a task. Service animals assist people with disabilities in many different ways, such as:

- Guiding people who are blind or have low vision and retrieving dropped objects for them;
- Alerting people who are deaf or hard of hearing to sounds and the presence of others;
- Carrying and picking up items, opening doors, or flipping switches for people with disabilities who have limited use of hands or arms, limited use of their legs, or limited ability to bend or stoop;

- Pulling wheelchairs;
- Alerting people with disabilities to the onset of medical conditions such as seizures, protecting them and cushioning them if they fall and reviving them.
- Doing work or performing tasks for persons with traumatic brain injury, intellectual disabilities, or psychiatric disabilities, such as reminding a person with depression to take medication or waking him up, helping people with traumatic brain injury to locate misplaced items, or follow daily routines.
- Providing physical support and assisting people with physical disabilities with stability and balance.

#### **IV. PROCEDURES:**

##### **Determining if an animal is really a service animal and not just a pet?**

Some, but not all, service animals wear special collars and harnesses. Some, but not all, are licensed or certified and have identification papers. If City representatives are not certain that an animal is a service animal, they may ask the person who has the animal if it is a service animal required because of a disability or what tasks the animal has been trained to perform on behalf of the disabled citizen. City representatives may not ask the individual what their disability is, as this is private and protected information. Documentation is not required as a condition for providing service to an individual accompanied by a service animal. You may not insist on proof of certification before permitting the service animal to accompany the person with a disability.

Questions that can be asked to determine service animal status:

- Is the animal required due to a disability?
- What task is the animal trained to perform on your behalf?

Animals not meeting the definition of a service animal according to the ADA and do not perform a trained task for the individual is not a service animal. The animal must be regarded as a pet and shall adhere to all policies governing pets in public facilities. For example: comfort or emotional support animals for citizens traveling by air that have a fear of flying, do not meet the definition of a service animal. The animal performs no specific tasks for the individual. This animal must be treated under the same procedures as any other pet. Some other terms for animals not qualifying as Service Animal under the ADA:

**COMPANION, COMFORT, SUPPORT and THERAPY ANIMALS** that provide comfort, companionship and emotional support **DO NOT** qualify as Service Animals. Under City of Redmond definitions, these animals are pets.