

Minot State University Service Animal Policy

Introduction

Minot State University (MSU) follows the ADA and the most recent guidance from the Department of Justice (DOJ) regarding service animals. In accordance with ADA and DOJ, MSU suggest the following guidelines for service animals on campus.

Service Animals

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) defines service animals as “dogs that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities.” Examples of such work or tasks include guiding people who are blind, alerting people who are deaf, pulling a wheelchair, alerting and protecting a person who is having a seizure, reminding a person with mental illness to take prescribed medications, calming a person with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) during an anxiety attack, or performing other duties. Service animals are working animals, not pets. If an animal meets this definition, it is considered a service animal regardless of whether it has been licensed or certified by a state or local government or a training program.

The ADA allows service animals accompanying persons with disabilities to be on the Minot State University campus. A service animal must be permitted to accompany a person with a disability everywhere on campus except in situations where safety may be compromised or where the service animal may interfere with the fundamental nature of the activities being conducted.

The person a service animal assists is referred to as a handler. The handler’s disability may not be visible. Others, including faculty and staff cannot ask about the person’s disability, require medical documentation, require a special identification card or training documentation for the dog, or ask that the dog demonstrate its ability to perform the work or task. If others, including faculty and staff have concerns about the appropriateness of a service animal in a given location, contact the Access Services Office or campus security.

If the service animal resides in a residence hall, it will fall into the MSU Housing Policies and Procedures.

A service dog can be any breed or size. It might wear specialized equipment such as a backpack, harness, or special collar or leash, but this is not a legal requirement.

Faculty, staff, and students should know the following about service animals:

- Service animals are allowed to accompany the handler at all times and everywhere on campus, except where service animals are specially prohibited. This includes the right to bring the service animal into food service locations.
- Do not pet a service animal without first asking permission; touching the animal might distract it from its work.

- Speak first to the handler.
- Do not deliberately startle a service animal.
- Do not feed a service animal.
- Do not separate or attempt to separate a handler from his or her service animal
- In case of an emergency, every effort will be made to keep the animal with its handler.

The following are requirements of service animals and their handlers:

- The animal cannot pose a direct threat to the health and safety of persons on the college campus.
- Local ordinances regarding animals apply to service animals, including requirements for immunization, licensing, noise, restraint, and at-large animals. Dogs must wear a license tag and a current rabies vaccination tag.
- The handler must be in full control of the animal at all times. Service animals must be harnessed, leashed, or tethered, unless these devices interfere with the service animal's work or the individual's disability prevents using these devices. In that case, the individual must maintain control of the animal through voice, signal, or other effective controls.
- The handler is responsible for cleaning up the animal's feces. The handler should always carry equipment and bags sufficient to clean up and properly dispose of the animal's feces. Handlers who are not physically able to pick up and dispose of feces are responsible for making all necessary arrangements for assistance. The University is not responsible for these services.
- The handler is responsible for the care of the animal keeping the animal in good health and well-groomed.
- In keeping with appropriate University policies and procedures, the handler may be charged for damage caused by the handler or the service animal.
- A student with a disability planning to have a service animal in residence in campus housing should consult with Access Services.
- As much as possible, the handler should ensure that the service animal does not approach and sniff other individuals, dining tables, or the personal belongings of others.
- The handler must assure that the service animal does not block identified fire/emergency exits.
- The handler must assure that the service animal does not display behaviors or noises that are deemed disruptive to others, unless said noise/behaviors are part of the needed disability service to the handler.
- Repeat violations of the above responsibilities of the handler and their service animal will be the removal of the animal until significant steps to mitigate the behavior(s).

For additional information concerning the use of a service animal or other accommodations and services, please contact Access Services at 701-858-3371.