



Housing & Conference  
Services

# Service Animal Agreement in Residence

McMaster University  
Housing & Conference Services

Please be aware this policy as of April 25, 2018 is  
subject to change.

McMaster University is committed to the inclusion and reasonable accommodation of students with disabilities. This includes the presence of Service Animals (as defined by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act, 2005) within aspects of University life, including Residences. In order to balance the health and safety of all residents with the presence of service animals in the Residence environment, the Resident will sign a Service Animal Agreement with Housing & Conference Services agreeing to abide by specific requirements and expectations that are in the best interest of all students.

### **Service Animal Definition**

According to the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act (AODA), 2005, the definition of a service animal is an animal performing tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability. This can be defined by;

- (a) if it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability; or
- (b) if the person's disability is not obviously apparent, a provided letter from a physician or nurse practitioner confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability

### **McMaster University Policy on Service Animals On-Campus**

McMaster University's policy permits service animals that assist students with physical, mental and/or sensory disabilities to live in residence. Service animals are not permitted in some areas on campus, with the exception of residences, such as, but not limited to; where food preparation is being undertaken; or, as otherwise disallowed by law. For complete detail please visit [here](#).

The following are the specific requirements and expectations of the Resident and the service animal to agree to before they move-in to residence and to abide by whilst living in residence at McMaster University.

#### **1. Service Animals in Residence**

Only approved service animals and their Resident that meet the criteria described below will be exempt from the standards that otherwise restrict or prohibit animals in residence.

##### **1.1 Requirements of Service Animals**

- Service Animals must be in good health. Any service animal occupying Residence must have certification of annual vaccinations from a veterinarian.
- Service Animals must wear a valid vaccination and identification tag.
- Service Animals must be able to behave safely in social settings. While the AODA customer standard doesn't require that all service animals are formally trained, it is an expectation that all service animals can behave safely in social settings.

- As Residence is a communal living environment, service animals are required to demonstrate, upon request by Housing & Conference Services staff that they can handle public access situations.
- All service animals need to demonstrate the ability to;
  - Master basic obedience commands such as, “sit, down, stay, come, etc.”
  - Promptly return to the Resident when called in the presence of high distraction.

## 1.2 Requirements and Expectations of the Resident

- To inform his/her Residence Manager (RM), Community Advisor (CA) and fellow residents during the first floor community meeting (Aug 28<sup>th</sup> at 4pm) of the identity and presence of the service animal, and to review the expectations/etiquette of the service animal, the Resident and the fellow residents living together in the community.
- To maintain control over the service animal at all times.
- To secure the service animal in the room (i.e., kennel, crate, etc.) when the Resident is not with the service animal for the safety and security of the service animal and McMaster University staff members who may enter during emergency situations and/or to complete a work order for facility-related issues. Should a McMaster University staff member request the service animal *not* to be present in their workplace for any reason, the Resident and the service animal will leave the room/area until the work is completed.
- To assume personal and financial responsibility for any damages caused by the service animal. This includes, but is not limited to; extra cleaning for animal waste, replacement of damaged furniture, pest control costs, etc.
- To take the service animal outside to relieve themselves.
- If physically able, to immediately clean up animal waste and properly dispose of it. Residents who are not physically able to pick up and dispose of waste are responsible for making necessary arrangements for assistance.
- When residence accommodation is in a traditional building, the service animal is prohibited from entering the hallway, bathroom, or floor/building common areas unless in the company of the Resident and appropriately secured on a leash.
- Have the service animal on a leash at all times while in public and common areas, including lobbies in residence.

- The service animal should be as unobtrusive as possible and not interfere with access or use of the residence living environment of other residents including, but is not limited to;
  - Service animals are not permitted on furniture in any shared or common areas.
  - Unreasonable noise from the service animal disrupting the residence community.
  - Fellow residents with a medical (i.e., diagnosed allergy/asthma), religious or psychological (i.e., phobia of animals) accommodation need.
- While not a legal requirement, it is highly recommended that the service animal wear some type of easily recognizable symbol (i.e., harness, backpack, special collar or scarf) that identifies it is a service animal.

If one or all of the above requirements and responsibilities are not met, it is reasonable grounds for requiring the Resident/service animal team to either be relocated to another residence room and/or building (where possible), or requiring the service animal to leave the residence. If the service animal is to be excluded from living in residence for any of the above reasons, the Resident will be given the option of continuing to live in residence without the service animal. If the Resident chooses to look for alternative accommodation off-campus with the service animal, Housing & Conference Services will provide assistance through the Off-Campus Resource Centre.

## **2. Emergency Situation**

Every effort will be made to keep the service animal with the Resident. However, the Resident is the institution's priority during any emergency situation. McMaster University Security Services will be aware the service animal is living in residence.

## **3. Student Residence Etiquette**

Students who reside in residence and Housing & Conference Services staff will be notified of the following etiquette requirements;

- Maintain a respectful distance from the service animal. It is not appropriate to pet, feed or startle a service animal. Ask permission before touching the service animal as this might distract from its work.
- Allow a service animal to accompany the Resident at all times and in all areas of residence where students customarily have access (i.e., common room, hallways).
- Speak to the Resident before giving attention to the service animal.
- Ensure that a person using a service animal is included and not isolated from others.

## Service Animal Agreement – Signature of Resident/Student

As the Resident of a service animal, I agree to abide by the specific requirements and expectations outlined in the McMaster University’s Service Animal Agreement whilst living in residence. I understand that these specific requirements and expectations are reasonable given that I will living in a communal living environment in residence.

Further, I agree to the following outlined below as part of the McMaster University’s Service Animal Agreement;

1. The Resident must demonstrate on August 17, 2018 to Jaimie Dickson, Manager of Residence Admissions and Marketing that the service animal understands the required basic commands to live in residence.
2. Vaccination records from a licensed veterinarian dated within the last 12 months be sent to Jaimie Dickson, Manager of Residence Admissions and Marketing no later than August 17, 2018.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_