

## **SERVICE ANIMAL POLICY**

Culver-Stockton College is committed to promoting full participation and equal access to college programs and activities for all individuals with disabilities and to complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Students with disabilities who require the use of service animals are permitted to bring such animals on campus provided they do not pose a substantial and direct threat to the health and safety of others, and provided that the presence of the animal does not constitute a fundamental alteration to the nature of Culver-Stockton College's policies, practices, and procedures, including the college's academic requirements. The college may place other reasonable conditions or restrictions on a service or assistance animal depending on the nature or characteristics of the animal.

### **I. Definition of Service Animal**

The Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) defines a service animal as "a dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities."<sup>1</sup> In some cases, miniature horses may be service animals. Service animals are working animals, not pets. The work or task(s) a service animal has been trained to provide must be directly related to the person's disability. Emotional Support Animals are not considered service animals.

### **II. Guidelines for Service Animals at Culver-Stockton College**

Service animals are permitted inside all Culver-Stockton College buildings and facilities, including residence halls, pursuant to the requirements listed below. Requests for exceptions to this policy will be considered on a case-by-case basis and in accordance with applicable laws regarding reasonable accommodations.

Service animals are allowed to accompany their handlers at all times and everywhere on campus, except in areas where specifically prohibited due to health, environmental, or safety hazards, and areas where there is a danger to the animal, such as some food preparation areas, rooms with heavy machinery, custodial closets, and areas where protective clothing is required. Service

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ada.gov/resources/service-animals-2010-requirements/>

animals may also be prohibited when their presence fundamentally alters the nature of a program or activity.

### **III. Exclusion of a Service Animal**

Consistent with federal and state laws, Culver-Stockton College may exclude or remove a service animal if:

1. The animal is not housebroken.
2. The animal is out of control.
3. The animal presents a direct threat to others and the handler does not take effective action to control it.

If the animal is excluded or removed from campus, the college will give the handler the option of returning to the College activity without the animal.

### **IV. Service Animals in College Housing**

Students wishing to utilize a service animal in campus housing are encouraged to provide advance notice (at least thirty (30) days) to the Office of Accessibility & Accommodations. Advance notice will enable the college to provide appropriate accommodations for the student while also addressing the needs of other students in the housing unit. In the event a student does not provide advance notice, Culver-Stockton College will make a good faith effort to accommodate the student with the service animal to the furthest extent possible.

### **V. Responsibilities of the Handler**

#### **A. Care, Control, and Behavior**

The care and supervision of a service animal is solely the responsibility of its Handler.

Service animals whose behavior poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others or are disruptive to the Culver-Stockton College community may be excluded from campus, regardless of training or certification. In the event of exclusion, the handler will be given the option to return to campus without the animal. Disruptive or dangerous behavior should be reported to Campus Safety and the Office of Accessibility & Accommodations.

The handler must be in full control of the service animal at all times. Service animals must be harnessed, leashed, or tethered at all times unless these devices interfere with the service animal's work or the individual's disability prevents using these devices. In such circumstances, the handler must maintain control of the animal through other effective controls, such as voice commands or other signals.

The handler of a service animal that is not housebroken or that is unruly or disruptive (e.g. barking, running around loose, nipping, bringing attention to itself, or otherwise not under control) may be asked to remove the animal from campus or from college facilities. If the improper behavior happens repeatedly, the handler may be required to take significant steps to mitigate the behavior before bringing the animal back to campus or into any college facility. Mitigation may include muzzling a barking animal, obtaining refresher training for both the animal and the handler, or other appropriate measures.

Culver-Stockton College is not responsible for the care or supervision of service animals. The handler of the service animal is responsible for the cost, care, and supervision of the service animal.

The handler of the service animal is solely responsible for any damage to persons or property caused by the animal. The handler is responsible for designating an alternative caregiver for the service animal in case of an emergency.

## **B. Identification, License, & Tags**

If there is no visible harness, identification tag or other gear readily identifying an animal as a service animal, Culver-Stockton College officials may ask two questions:

1. Is the animal required because of a disability?
2. What work or task(s) has the animal been trained to perform?

## **C. Health & Sanitation**

The service animal must be in good health. Service animals to be housed in campus housing must have an annual clean bill of health from a licensed veterinarian. A service animal must be clean and well groomed, and measures should be taken at all times for flea and odor control. The service animal must have current vaccinations and immunizations against diseases common to that type of animal. All service animal must wear a current rabies vaccination tag.

Handlers are responsible for ensuring the immediate clean-up and proper disposal of all animal waste, and for any damage caused by the waste or its removal.

## **VI. Interacting with Service Animals**

Members of the Culver-Stockton College community are required to abide by the following practices:

1. Allow a handler to be accompanied by a service animal at all times and places on campus except where animals are specifically prohibited.
2. Do not inquire for details about the handler's disability. The nature of a person's disability is a private matter.
3. Do not pet a service animal without permission from the handler. Service animals can be very protective, and petting may distract them from the task at hand.
4. Do not separate or attempt to separate a handler from their service animal.
5. Do not ask for the service animal to demonstrate its ability to perform the work.

## **VII. Conflicting Disabilities**

Persons with medical condition(s) that are affected by animals (e.g. respiratory diseases, asthma, severe allergies) should contact the Office of Accessibility & Accommodations at [accommodations@culver.edu](mailto:accommodations@culver.edu) if they have a health or safety related concern about exposure to a Service Animal. The individual with the medical condition will be asked to provide sufficient information to identify the condition or disability and the need for an accommodation. When seeking an efficient resolution, the college will consider the needs of both individuals.

## **VIII. Permissible Inquiries**

Members of the Culver-Stockton College community who have questions or concerns regarding the behavior of a service animal in a campus facility should not direct their concerns to the handler. Rather, direct all questions and concerns to the Office of Accessibility & Accommodations at [accommodations@culver.edu](mailto:accommodations@culver.edu).