

FILE: INGA

MEDFORD AREA PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT

DATE ADOPTED: October 15, 2009 FILE SECTOR: INSTRUCTION
DATE REVISED: February 20, 2014 POLICY TITLE: SERVICE/COMPANION
ANIMALS IN SCHOOL

It is the policy of the Medford Area Public School District that service/companion animals assisting individuals with disabilities are generally permitted in all facilities and programs of the school district as described below. Student requests for service/companion animals at school are determined by a properly convened Individual Education Plan (IEP) Team or Section 504 Team.

The district will comply with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and any other applicable laws in implementing this policy, including but not limited to, laws regarding the training of service/companion animals. The district will also consider whether the animal will have a harmful impact on other students or staff members.

Service Animals

The district may permit students to use service animals in district facilities and at school events under the following circumstances:

1. The student's parent(s)/ guardian(s) provide evidence of the medical necessity of the service animal;
2. The student's parent(s)/ guardian(s) provide evidence of the animal's certification or appropriate evidence of the animal's training to provide the required assistance; and
3. The student's parent(s)/ guardian(s) provide certification that all required animal immunizations are current.

Companion Animals

If parent(s)/ guardian(s) believe their student requires the assistance of a companion animal to effectively participate in the educational programs of the district, the parent(s)/ guardian(s) shall provide:

1. A physician's written confirmation of the necessity of the animal;
2. A veterinarian's written confirmation of the animal's appropriate immunizations; and
3. A copy of the animal's certification.

The parent(s)/ guardian(s) shall meet with the Director of Student Services or, if the student is a student with a disability, the Director of Special Education and the student's IEP Team or Section 504 Team, to identify other conditions under which the companion animal may present in the classroom.

Companion animals may, with administrative approval, be permitted at after school and evening co-curricular and extra-curricular events.

Dogs must be on a leash at all times, unless impracticable or unfeasible due to owner/keeper's disability. The owner/keeper of the animal must be in control of the animal at all times. The care and supervision of a service animal is solely the responsibility of the owner/keeper.

The owner/keeper of the service/companion animal must clean up after the animal.

The owner/keeper of a service/companion animal may be asked to remove the service/companion animal from a district facility or activity if the animal's behavior or presence poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others.

Any person dissatisfied with a decision concerning a service/companion animal can appeal that decision to the District Administrator.

If approved, a written copy of the initial approval, including the timelines for review of the decision shall be given to the parent(s)/ guardian(s) and to each of the student's teachers.

The Director of Student Services, or, if the student is a student with a disability, the Director of Special Education and the student's IEP Team or Section 504 Team, shall periodically review the impact of the animal on the student's academic performance and/or behavior.

CROSS REFERENCE:

LEGAL REFERENCE: 106.52(3)(am) Wis. Stats., IDEA, Section 504 Rehabilitation Act