

## Service Animals

### 319.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines to ensure that the rights of individuals who use service animals to assist with disabilities are protected in accordance with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Members should also be aware of the County Policy pertaining to Service Animals. It is found here: [County Service Animal Policy for Disabled Patrons](#)

#### 319.1.1 DEFINITIONS

Definitions related to this policy include:

**Service animal** - A dog that is trained to do work or perform tasks to benefit an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability. The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the individual's disability (28 CFR 35.104; Health and Safety Code § 113903).

Service animal also includes a miniature horse if the horse is trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities, provided the horse is housebroken, is under the handler's control, the facility can accommodate the horse's type, size, and weight, and the horse's presence will not compromise legitimate safety requirements necessary for safe operation of the facility (28 CFR 35.136(i)).

### 319.2 POLICY

It is the policy of the Humboldt County Probation Department (HCPD) to provide services and access to persons with service animals in the same manner as those without service animals. Department members shall protect the rights of persons assisted by service animals in accordance with state and federal law.

### 319.3 IDENTIFICATION AND USE OF SERVICE ANIMALS

Some service animals may be readily identifiable. However, many do not have a distinctive symbol, harness, or collar.

Service animals may be used in a number of ways to provide assistance, including:

- Guiding people who are blind or have low vision.
- Alerting people who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- Retrieving or picking up items, opening doors, or flipping switches for people who have limited use of their hands, arms, or legs.
- Pulling wheelchairs.
- Providing physical support and assisting with stability and balance.

## *Service Animals*

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- 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.
- Alerting a person with anxiety to the onset of panic attacks, providing tactile stimulation to calm a person with post-traumatic stress disorder, assisting people with schizophrenia to distinguish between hallucinations and reality, and helping people with traumatic brain injury to locate misplaced items or follow daily routines.

### **319.4 MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES**

Service animals assisting individuals with disabilities are permitted in all public facilities and areas where the general public is allowed. Department members are expected to treat individuals with service animals with the same courtesy and respect that the HCPD affords to all members of the public (28 CFR 35.136).

#### **319.4.1 INQUIRY**

If it is apparent or if a member knows that an animal is a service animal, the individual generally should not be asked any questions as to the status of the animal. If it is unclear whether an animal meets the definition of a service animal, the member should ask the individual only the following questions (28 CFR 35.136(f)):

- Is the animal required because of a disability?
- What task or service has the service animal been trained to perform?

If the individual explains that the animal is required because of a disability and has been trained to work or perform at least one task, the animal meets the definition of a service animal and no further questions as to the animal's status should be asked. The individual should not be questioned about the disability nor should the person be asked to provide any license, certification, or identification card for the service animal.

#### **319.4.2 CONTACT**

Service animals are not pets. Department members should not interfere with the important work performed by a service animal by talking to, petting, or otherwise initiating contact with a service animal.

#### **319.4.3 REMOVAL**

If a service animal is not housebroken or exhibits vicious behavior, poses a direct threat to the health of others, or unreasonably disrupts or interferes with normal business operations, an officer may direct the handler to remove the animal from the premises. Barking alone is not a threat nor does a direct threat exist if the person takes prompt, effective action to control the service animal (28 CFR 35.136(b)).

Each incident must be considered individually, and past incidents alone are not cause for excluding a service animal. Removal of a service animal may not be used as a reason to refuse service to

# Humboldt County Probation Department

Probation Manual

## *Service Animals*

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an individual with disabilities. Members of this department are expected to provide all services that are reasonably available to an individual with a disability, with or without a service animal.