

Flamingo Gardens Service Animal Policy

Flamingo Gardens welcomes everyone. It is the policy of Flamingo Gardens to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in all respects and to make every reasonable effort to ensure that the facilities and programs are accessible to all guests. For the health and well-being of the animals in our wildlife sanctuary, Flamingo Gardens generally prohibits all pets from entering, although exceptions are made for trained service animals.

Definition of Service Animal

A “service animal” is defined by the ADA as any dog or miniature horse that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks directly related to an individual’s disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability. In accordance with the ADA regulations, only trained service animals are permitted on grounds. Pets, exotic species, therapy or emotional-support animals are not permitted. The service dog must be fully trained; animals-in-training will not be permitted into the gardens.

Admission Procedures

Guests with service animals are encouraged to call ahead and alert our staff of their arrival at (954) 473-2955. Guests with service animals must check in at the Ticket Booth upon arrival. In order to determine if a dog is a service animal, Flamingo Gardens Staff may ask any of the following questions:

- Is the animal is a trained service animal?
- What work or task the animal has been trained to perform for the individual?

Staff may not inquire about or discuss the guest’s disability or ask for any form of certification for the animal.

General Guidelines

Under the ADA, service animals must be harnessed, leashed, or tethered, unless the device interfere with the service animals 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, and must be able to demonstrate that control to staff. The care and supervision of a service animal is solely the responsibility of the owner.

Restricted Areas

Flamingo Gardens retains the right to restrict service animals from the Aviary.

Our Everglades Wildlife Sanctuary is responsible for the health and well-being of a vast collection of permanently injured and, in many cases, threatened and endangered species of animals. Because we are subject to stringent regulations by the Animal Welfare Act, administered by the US Department of Agriculture, service animals may be restricted from the open-air exhibits like the Aviary where sanctuary animals have direct

interaction with guests. Direct exposure to and the presence of a dog may likely cause undue stress and agitation to the injured birds within the Aviary.

In its FAQ memo, the U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division states:

At a zoo, service animals can be restricted from areas where the animals on display are the natural prey or natural predators of dogs, where the presence of a dog would be disruptive, causing the displayed animals to behave aggressively or become agitated.

(https://www.ada.gov/regs2010/service_animal_qa.pdf)

Flamingo Gardens also retains the right to restrict a service animal if it displays aggressive behavior or poses a direct threat to health and safety of our other guests or our wildlife.

In the event that a service animal's presence is demonstrated (through prior or current displays of agitation) to cause sanctuary animals in that area undue stress or anxiety, or present the potential for injury, we reserve the right to designate such areas as restricted or sensitive and request that guests observe extra caution with service animals in these areas. Sensitive areas may be designated as a result of new births or hatchlings, nesting, or breeding behaviors in progress, or new animals in an exhibit.

Flamingo Gardens staff will notify visitors which areas may be restricted or sensitive for service animals upon entry. If a guest wishes to visit an area restricted to service animals, Flamingo Gardens will happily arrange for animal care staff to stay with the service animal while the guest visits the restricted area.

Guest Responsibilities

Responsibilities of the guests include:

- To care for and supervise the service animal at all times.
- To maintain control of the service animal at all times.
- To comply with all applicable laws and regulations including vaccinations, licensure, animal health and leash laws.
- To immediately clean up any and all waste from the service animal.
- To refrain from taking the service animal into restricted areas.
- To use extra care and caution approaching sensitive areas with the service animal.
- To remove the service animal from any site or situation when a conflict or potential conflict may occur. This includes roaming birds and animals (ducks, ibis, peacocks, iguanas, raccoons, etc.) or if sanctuary animals appear distressed or agitated by the sight, sound, or scent of the service animal.