
KITTITAS COUNTY EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

OPERATIONAL POLICY	DRAFT DATE: April 5, 2012	NUMBER: 9	SUPERSEDES DATE: N/A	PAGE: 1
SUBJECT: SERVICE ANIMALS ON EMS UNITS / TRANSPORTATION				

I. PURPOSE

- A. To assure the needs of patients with disabilities, that require the assistance of a service animal, are being met whenever possible.
- B. To assure the safety of EMS personnel whenever a service animal is part of patient care.
- C. To assure that the transportation or lack of transportation of a service animal with the patient will not jeopardize patient care.

II. PROCEDURES

- A. A service animal, utilized by a patient for a disability, shall be permitted to accompany a patient or guardian of a minor patient in the ambulance (EMS unit) unless the presence of the service animal will disrupt patient care, or there is some basis for the crew members to believe that the safety of the crew, the patient or others would be compromised by the presence of the service animal in the ambulance.
 - Growling may be considered threatening behavior in which case the service animal may be transported by other means. Barking may also be considered threatening, however, specific service animals are required to bark to get their owners attention.
- B. When transporting a patient with a service animal, every effort should be made to do so in a safe manner for the patient, the animal and the crew members. If possible, the animal should be secured in some manner in order to prevent injury to either the animal or the crew during transport. The patient should be loaded into the vehicle first, and then the service animal. Whenever possible, the receiving hospital should be notified that you are in route with a service animal.
- C. When the presence of a service animal in the ambulance might interfere with patient care, jeopardize the safety of the crew, the patient or others, personnel should make other arrangements for simultaneous transport of the service animal to the receiving facility.
 - Acceptable alternative methods of transporting a service animal to the receiving facility include, but are not limited to, family members, friends or neighbors of the patient, animal control, an EMS Supervisor, or a law enforcement official.
- D. Personnel should document on the Patient Care Report (PCR) instances where the patient or guardian accompanying a minor patient utilize a service animal and

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note whether or not the service animal was transported with the patient. If the service animal was not transported in the ambulance with the patient, the PCR should contain the reason(s) and the means by which the animal was transported

E. When it is not obvious what service an animal provides, only limited inquiries are allowed. Personnel may ask two questions:

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

Personnel cannot ask about the person's disability, require medical documentation, require a special identification card or training documentation for the dog, or ask that the dog demonstrate its ability to perform the work or task.

F. Allergies and fear of dogs are not valid reasons for denying access or refusing service to people using service animals.

III. DEFINITIONS

“Assistance Dogs International’s” Summary – Washington law requires that a specially trained Assistance Dog be allowed to accompany a blind, deaf, mentally or physically disabled person to all public accommodations and common carriers. Extra charges cannot be made due to the presence of the dog.

“Service Animal” (per RCW & ADA) – For these purposes; means any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability.

“Service Animals Must Be under Control” - Under the ADA, service animals must be harnessed, leashed, or tethered, unless these devices interfere with the service animal's work or the individual's disability prevents using these devices.

“Where Service Animals are Allowed” – Under the ADA, State and local governments, businesses, and nonprofit organizations that serve the public generally must allow service animals to accompany people with disabilities in all areas of the facility where the public is normally allowed to go.

IV. REFERENCES (links)

- RCW 49.60.218 - Use of dog guide or service animal — Unfair practice — Definitions. <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=49.60.218#>

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- ADA 2010 Revised Requirements – Service Animals
http://www.ada.gov/service_animals_2010.htm
- Washington State Human Rights Commission Q&A – Service Animals
<http://hum.wa.gov/FAQ/FAQServiceAnimal.html>
- RCW 49.60.370 – Liability for killing or injuring a dog guide or service animal – Penalty in addition to other remedies or penalties—Recovery of attorney’s fees and costs—No duty to investigate <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=49.60.370>
- Assistance Dogs International - Guide to Assistance Dog Laws
<http://www.assistancedogsinternational.org/index.php>

APPROVED BY KITTITAS COUNTY MPD:

Signature: *__Signed copy is on file.*_____

Name: **Jackson S. Horsley, MD**

RECOMMENDED BY KC EMS/TC COUNCIL:

Signature: *__Signed copy is on file.*_____

Name: **Craig McKee, Chairman**
Lee Hadden, Vice Chairman