

**THE PROTESTANT SEPARATE SCHOOL BOARD
OF THE TOWN OF PENETANGUISHENE**

POLICY MANUAL

POLICY TITLE:

SECTION/CODE:

Use of Service Animals by General Public

School Operations D – 16E

APPROVAL DATE:

SUPERSEDES:

NUMBER OF PAGES:

REVIEW DATE:

September 9, 2024

September 14, 2020

Page 1 of 2

September 2028

1. RESPONSIBILITY

The Supervisory Officer and Principal will ensure that all staff, volunteers and others dealing with the public are knowledgeable and prepared in how to interact with people with exceptionalities who are accompanied by a service animal.

2. TERMINOLOGY:

Service Animal - a certified animal (certified meaning that both the animal and the handler have had training from a recognized Canadian training institution and the animal is registered as such in Canada), that provides supports and accommodation to students with an exceptionality, where the accommodation allows a student to access the Ontario Curriculum.

Examples of service animals include dogs used by people who have vision loss, hearing alert animals for people who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing, and animals trained to alert an individual to an oncoming seizure and lead them to safety. The customer service standard's provisions also apply to animals providing other services to people with exceptionalities.

3. ACCESS TO BOARD PREMISES

3.1 Any person with an exceptionality at the School/Board Office who is accompanied by a service animal will be welcomed on Board and/or School premises with his or her service animal and will be accompanied by the service animal while on the premises. Access will be in accordance with normal security procedures.

3.2 This requirement applies only to those areas of the premises where the public or third parties customarily have access and does not include places or areas of the Board or School site where the public does not have access.

3.3 This procedure deals solely with the individual's right to be accompanied by a service animal. Access to classrooms for service animals used by students and staff is covered under separate procedures and is not covered by this administrative procedure.

4. EXCLUSION OF SERVICE ANIMAL

4.1 A service animal can only be excluded from access to the premises where this is required by another law. Examples include the *Health Protection and Promotion Act* and the *Food Safety and Quality Act*. The former Act prohibits service animals in places where food is prepared, processed, or handled (e.g., kitchen of school) although service dogs are permitted where food is served and sold.

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Page 2 of 2

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4.2 Where there is a risk to the health and safety of another person as a result of the presence of a service animal, consideration must be given to options available prior to exclusion of a service animal. An example would be a situation where an individual has a severe allergy to the service animal. It is the Board's expectation that the situation be fully analyzed and all measures to eliminate the risk be considered, e.g. creating distance between the two individuals concerned, making reasonable alterations to schedules, etc.

4.3 A service animal can be excluded if it is of a breed that is prohibited by law. An example would be the *Ontario Dog Owners' Liability Act* which places restrictions on pit bull terriers.

5. ALTERNATIVE MEASURES IF SERVICE ANIMAL MUST BE EXCLUDED

In the rare instance where a service animal must be excluded, the Board must make every effort to put alternative arrangements in place to provide the services required by the person with an exceptionality. This could involve leaving the animal in a secure area where it is permitted by law and discussing with the person how best to serve them, e.g., a person with a vision exceptionality might need someone (a member of staff or volunteer) to guide them.

6. WHEN IT IS NECESSARY TO CONFIRM AN ANIMAL IS A SERVICE ANIMAL

6.1 Where an animal is not a trained guide dog and it is not readily apparent that the animal is a service animal, the School or Board staff member may ask the person using the service animal for appropriate documentation confirming the animal is needed because of an exceptionality. The documentation does not need to identify the exceptionality, why the animal is needed or how it is used.

6.2 Where the person using the service animal regularly attends at the School or Board facility, the Principal may request to keep a copy of the documentation on file but only as long as required by the circumstances. Alternatively, the person using the service animal may be asked to bring the documentation with them on occasions when they visit the premises. The Principal shall preserve the confidentiality of the documentation, and shall not use or disclose the documentation except as provided for in the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.O. 1990, cM56*, or as otherwise required by law.

Acknowledgment

The Protestant Separate School Board of the Town of Penetanguishene acknowledges and appreciates the contribution of the Simcoe County District School Board in the development of this policy.