



CENTRAL DUPAGE HOSPITAL  
EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES SYSTEM  
POLICY & PROCEDURES

TITLE: SERVICE / EMOTIONAL SUPPORT ANIMAL(S)

SECTION: LEGAL

POLICY NUMBER: C-16

APPROVED BY: DR. STEVE GRAHAM EMS MEDICAL DIRECTOR

EFFECTIVE DATE: 01 DECEMBER 2019

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**PURPOSE:** To provide guidance on interacting with patients who have Service / Emotional Support animals within the Central DuPage Hospital Emergency Medical Services System (CDHEMSS).

**POLICY:**

**Service Dog / Miniature Horses**

A service dog is defined as dogs that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities. Examples include but may not be limited to:

1. Guiding blind or visually impaired
2. Alerting people who are deaf
3. Pulling a wheelchair
4. Alerting and protecting a person who is having a seizure
5. Reminding a person with a mental illness to take prescribed medications
6. Calming a person with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

A service miniature horse generally range in height from 24-34 inches tall and weigh between 70-100 lbs. A service horse is defined as a miniature horse that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities. Examples include but may not be limited to:

1. Guiding blind or visually impaired
2. Alerting people who are deaf
3. Pulling a wheelchair
4. Alerting and protecting a person who is having a seizure
5. Reminding a person with a mental illness to take prescribed medications
6. Calming a person with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

When encountering a patient with a service dog or miniature horse the Americans with Disabilities act allows only the following 2 questions to be asked:

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

CDHEMSS providers are not allowed to ask about the person's disability to verify the need for the animal, however may request the information as part of their patient assessment only as it relates to

medical care. Additionally, CDHEMSS providers cannot request medical documentation to validate the need for the animal, nor can they request documentation to verify the need for the animal.

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. In that case, the individual must maintain control of the animal through voice, signal, or other effective controls.

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

A person with a disability cannot be asked to remove their service animal from the ambulance or healthcare facility unless the animal is out of control and the handler does not take effective action or control it or the animal is not house broken.

### **Emotional Support Animals**

Emotional support animals (including dogs) who's sole purpose is to provide comfort or emotional support do not qualify as a service animal under the ADA. Crews should contact medical control for direction when encountering emotional support animals.

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