

# Washington State University – School of Biological Sciences (SBS) Guidelines regarding Service Animals in Teaching Laboratories

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Purpose

The Washington State University School of Biological Sciences (SBS) has developed this guidance to ensure the safety of faculty, staff, and service animals in teaching laboratories, and to ensure compliance with applicable Federal and State Laws, and the WSU Policy on Service and Support Animals, Executive Policy #39.

### 1.2 Scope

This guidance applies to WSU students with service animals who are enrolled in or otherwise have a need to access SBS Teaching Laboratories.

Employees with service animals who have a need to access SBS Teaching Laboratories should contact Human Resource Services – Disabilities Services unit for assistance in requesting a reasonable accommodation.

Service Animals in Training (SAiTs) are not allowed in SBS Teaching Laboratories.

This guidance is meant to address specific concerns about service animals in SBS Teaching Laboratories. In all cases, WSU Executive Policy #39 is the overriding policy. The policy can be found here:

<https://policies.wsu.edu/prf/index/manuals/executive-policy-manual-contents/ep-39-wsu-service-support-animals-policy/>

## 2. Authority and Responsibility

### 2.1 Department/Faculty/Supervisor/Instructors:

2.1.1 Taking the EP #39 Service and Support Animal Training for Staff and Faculty;

2.1.2 Regularly asking students who wish to bring an animal into the Teaching Laboratories, the two allowed questions\* (see end) to determine if it is a service animal, consistent with EP #39;

2.1.3 Ensuring that the handler is assigned to an appropriate laboratory station that can accommodate the service animal and avoid health and safety risks to others in the laboratory. If an appropriate space cannot be readily identified the Service Animal Administrator and/or the Disabilities Services Office should be contacted for assistance.

2.1.3 Monitoring the environment and responding to any disruptions by discussing the situation with the handler;

2.1.4 Contacting the Disability Services Office to request advice or assistance with any potential reasonable accommodation needs of the student;

2.1.5 Contacting the responsible supervisor and the Service Animal Administrator to report or request advice regarding concerns about the behavior of a service animal or to follow up after a request that the handler remove the service animal consistent with EP #39.

### 2.2 The Service Animal Handler:

2.2.1 Complying with the handler responsibilities as stated in EP #39

2.2.2 The handler assumes all risk of harm to the animal. Handlers with concerns for their service animal's safety should consider removing the animal or obtaining appropriate personal protective equipment for use on the service animal in the laboratory. Handlers should contact the SBS faculty with questions about the toxicity or hazard posed to a service animal in the laboratory;

### 2.3 Request for Removal of a Service Animal

The School of Biological Sciences follows the process outlined in EP #39 for requests for removal of a service animal as appropriate.

### 3. Recommendations

3.1 Potential health and safety risks to service animals Service animals entering laboratories may be exposed to various hazards. Handlers should consider utilizing personal protective equipment for their animal to prevent exposure to hazardous chemicals, broken glass, or other hazards that might be present in the laboratory environment.

3.1.1 Department/Faculty/Supervisor/Instructors are highly encouraged to provide information about specific safety and health risks that the lab facility or a specific lab session may pose to a service animal.

3.1.2 Handlers are highly encouraged to discuss potential safety risks to their service animal and potential methods to mitigate the risks or alternative accommodations that may be available through the Disability Services Office if the handler decides not to bring their service animal into the Teaching Laboratory due to safety concerns for their animal.

3.1.3 Recommended protective equipment includes, but is not limited to:

- Disposable or reusable boots to cover the feet, commercially available;
- Disposable lab coats;
- Mask/goggles; and
- Disposable plastic-backed absorbent lab paper or pet pads for the dog to lie on during lab to protect them from whatever might be on the floor.

### 3.2 Service animal tasks

Some service animals may be trained to perform tasks that may appear to others to be disruptive behavior or potentially unsafe behavior in a laboratory environment. Handlers should consider discussing in detail with the Department, Faculty, Supervisor, Instructors, the tasks that the animal is trained to perform to avoid potential misunderstandings if the animal needs to perform its disability related task.

## 4. Contacts and Resources

### 4.1 Service Animal Administrator -all campuses

Holly Ashkannejhad, ADA Coordinator & Sr. Compliance Coordinator  
WSU Office of Civil Rights Compliance & Investigation  
509-335-8288

[ada.coordinator@wsu.edu](mailto:ada.coordinator@wsu.edu)

### 4.2 Access Center -Pullman campus

509-335-3417

[access.center@wsu.edu](mailto:access.center@wsu.edu)

<http://accesscenter.wsu.edu>

### Access Center -Tri-Cities campus

509 372 7352

<https://tricitie.wsu.edu/current-students/access/>

### Access Center -Vancouver campus

360 546 9739

<https://studentaffairs.vancouver.wsu.edu/access-center>

4.3 School of Biological Sciences points of contact -Pullman campus

Kara McClanahan, SBS Instructional Lab Supervisor

509-335-3516 [karamac@wsu.edu](mailto:karamac@wsu.edu)

Edward Johnson, Scholarly Assistant Professor and Lab Coordinator  
[ekjohnson@wsu.edu](mailto:ekjohnson@wsu.edu)

Dave Evans, Professor and Associate Director of Undergraduate Studies  
509-335-7466 [rdevans@wsu.edu](mailto:rdevans@wsu.edu)

School of Biological Sciences points of contact -Tri-Cities campus

Contact your class Instructor

School of Biological Sciences points of contact -Vancouver campus

Dawn Freeman, Instruction and classroom support technician IV

360 546 9628

Or contact your class Instructor

\* Staff may ask two questions: (1) is the dog a service animal required because of a disability, and (2) what work or task has the dog been trained to perform?