I. Title: Animals on Campus

II. Policy

A. UT Health San Antonio (“University”) allows individuals to bring animals on University property in accordance with federal laws and in other situations subject to the rules outlined in this policy. This policy applies to all faculty, staff, students, residents, trainees, visitors, and guests of the University.

B. Service animals play an important role in helping to overcome the limitations often faced by persons with disabilities. The University prohibits discrimination and permits the use of service animals in accordance with Titles II and III of the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendment Act (ADAAA). Service animals and service animals in training are permitted on campus grounds and in University buildings open to the public, such as offices, hallways, waiting rooms, and lobbies.

C. Emotional support animals are permitted on campus grounds, however, are not allowed in University buildings. Special consideration will be given to campus clinics or counseling centers, when necessary to facilitate patient care, with the permission of the appropriate director and supervising Dean or Vice President. For questions about emotional support animals in non-clinical settings, please contact the ADA Office or the Office of Human Resources.

D. This policy does not apply to the following animals:

1. Animals involved in authorized research;
2. K-9 animals (police dogs); and
3. Animals used for performance or for therapeutic purposes on premises or involved in a University sponsored activity.

III. Definitions

A. SERVICE ANIMALS: Dogs that are 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 are working animals, not pets.
B. **SERVICE ANIMALS IN TRAINING:** Dogs undergoing training by an approved trainer who is an agent of an organization generally recognized by agencies involved in the rehabilitation of persons who are disabled as reputable and competent to provide training for assistance animals, and/or their handlers.

C. **EMOTIONAL SUPPORT ANIMALS:** Support animals, including comfort animals and therapy animals, that provide comfort or companionship but that do not require special training. Support animals are not considered service animals under the ADAAA.

D. **INDIVIDUAL WITH A DISABILITY:** A person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activity, or has a record of such an impairment, or is regarded as having such an impairment.

**IV. Owner Responsibility**

A. Animals are permitted on campus grounds and, in some cases, University buildings, provided the animal’s owner follows federal, state, and local laws and the rules outlined in this policy. Animals must be attended at all times.

1. Animals on campus grounds must have a valid license as evidence of current vaccinations, or they are subject to removal.

2. Animals must be under the complete control of the owner at all times and present no hazard to people or property. The wearing of a muzzle by a dog shall not be regarded as control by its owner.

3. Animals must be securely confined in a cage, or similar restrictive conveyance, or be secured to a leash, cord, chain, or similar control of a maximum of six (6) feet, the other end of which is restrained by a person. If this constraint interferes with a service animal’s work or if the individual’s disability prevents using these devices the individual must maintain control of the animal through voice, signal, or other effective controls.

4. Animals must not be tethered to a stationary fixture or tree or left unattended on campus.

5. Animals must not be left in a vehicle while unoccupied. The University may take reasonable efforts to remove an animal confined in a vehicle when there appears to be imminent danger to the animal. The University is not liable for any associated damages or loss for this action and the animal’s owner assumes full responsibility.

6. The University retains the right to take action to remove an animal from the University premises if the safety of others, destruction of property, or disturbance warrants such removal. The removal of any animal and any cleaning, repairs, and/or pest control will be done at the expense of the owner. This action may also extend to cases involving service and support animals.
7. In all cases, the owner is responsible for the animal’s behavior.

**Service Animals**

B. In accordance with law, the University permits service animals inside campus buildings where other animals would normally be excluded. Faculty, staff, or students who have a service animal are required to notify the ADA Compliance Office or Office of Human Resources for assistance in accommodating a service animal while on campus. Environmental Health and Safety should be contacted to perform a risk assessment for faculty, staff, or students requiring a service animal in a lab.

1. **Criteria for Service Animals in Campus Buildings:**

   a. The service animal must be trained as a service animal in the work or tasks directly related to the person’s disability. The individual must be in control of the service animal at all times.

   b. Individuals are permitted with their service animal in all areas of public accommodation and where appropriate to have a service animal, including mental health clinics or during clinical trials. Service animals will not routinely be permitted in University areas not open to the public. Due to patient safety and infection control concerns, service animals may not be permitted in surgical procedure rooms or areas, such as labs, where animals may compromise a sterile environment.

2. **Staff cannot ask about the nature of a person’s disability, require “proof” of the animal’s training, or identification of the person’s disability as that inquiry violates ADA and other federal nondiscrimination laws. Staff may only ask:**

   a. Is the animal required because of a disability?

   b. What work or task has the animal been trained to perform?

3. **The animal must be well groomed and appear healthy. Health conditions that may exclude an animal from a clinical or educational setting include, but are not limited to, gastroenteritis, obvious flea or mite infestation, or skin lesions.**

4. **The individual who is assigned a service animal must ensure the service animal is fed, given water, and provided other services, as needed. No staff will be required to take care of a service animal.**

5. **If a service animal has unacceptable behavior and the owner does not take effective action to control it, staff may request that the animal be removed from the premises. The staff must offer the owner the opportunity to obtain services without the animal’s presence. Unacceptable animal behavior includes but is not limited to: growling, excessive whining, uncontrolled barking, jumping on other people, inappropriate elimination, outward display of aggressive behavior, and/or if the animal’s behavior poses a direct threat to the health and safety of others.**
6. Allergies or fear of dogs are not valid reasons for denying access or refusing service to people using service animals. If an individual with allergies must spend time in the same area as a service dog, both the individual and the owner should be accommodated.

V. Grievances

A. All incidents involving actions against individuals and/or their animals will require departmental documentation. Documentation should include reason(s) as to why the animal posed a direct threat to the safety or health of others under the control of the handler. The incident report will be forwarded to their department manager for disposition. An individual who feels they have been unfairly denied the ability to bring or maintain an animal on University property may contact the ADA Compliance Office.

VI. Contacts

A. Academic, Faculty and Student Ombudsperson and ADA Compliance
   http://uthscsa.edu/eco/
   (210) 567-2691

B. Office of Human Resources
   http://uthscsa.edu/hr/
   (210) 567-2600

C. Environmental Health and Safety
   http://research.uthscsa.edu/safety/
   (210) 567-2955

D. UT Police Department
   http://www.uthscsa.edu/police/home
   (210) 567-2800