



# LAUDERDALE COMMUNITY HOSPITAL

## PATIENT CARE POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL

Effective Date: 3/2018 Header Revision: 3/2018	<b>SERVICE ANIMAL AND PET VISITATION</b>
Last Revision/Rev:	
Reference #: PC.0002.00.SAPETVISTATION	

**PURPOSE:** This policy shall set forth guidelines for service animals and visitation of pets for therapeutic or personal purposes. It is the policy of Lauderdale Community Hospital to comply with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended, and the Department of Justice's implementing regulation Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, that broadest access be provided to service animals and that persons using service animals be afforded independent access to the hospital. Except as specified below, it is anticipated that a person using a service animal shall generally be afforded the same access to the hospital as that afforded the public in general.

### Definitions:

**Disability-** An "individual with a disability" means a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities including, but not limited to: walking, talking, seeing, breathing or hearing.

**Service Animal-** Any guide dog or signal dog individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including but not limited to:

Guide Dog or Seeing Eye Dog is a carefully trained dog that serves as a travel tool for persons who have severe visual impairments or are blind.

Hearing or Signal Dog is a dog that has been trained to alert a person who has a significant hearing loss or is deaf when a sound occurs, such as a knock on the door.

Psychiatric Service Dog is a dog that has been trained to perform tasks that assist individuals with disabilities to detect the onset of psychiatric episodes and lessen their effects. Tasks performed by psychiatric service animals may include reminding the handler to take medicine, providing safety checks or room searches, or turning on lights or persons with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder,

interrupting self-mutilation by persons with dissociative identity disorders, and keeping disoriented individuals from danger. SSigDOG (sensory signal dogs or social signal dog) is a dog trained to assist a person with autism. The dog alerts the handler to distracting repetitive movements common among those with autism, allowing the person to stop the movement (e.g., hand flapping).

Seizure Response Dog is a dog trained to assist a person with a seizure disorder. How the dog serves the person depends on the person's needs. The dog may stand guard over the person during a seizure or the dog may go for help. A few dogs have learned to predict a seizure and warn the person in advance to sit down or move to a safe place.

Blood Sugar Response Dog is a dog trained to detect changing blood sugar levels in a person with Diabetes. The dog may alert the person that their blood sugar is too high or too low. The dog may be trained to alert a caregiver to check on the diabetic person or to aid in retrieving necessary items like glucometers, food or drinks.

**Direct Threat-A** significant risk to the health or safety of others that cannot be eliminated or mitigated by a modification of policies, practices, or procedures, or by the provision of auxiliary aids or services. In determining whether a service animal, therapy animal or personal animal poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others, LCH shall make an individualized assessment, based on reasonable judgment that relies on current medical knowledge or on the best available objective evidence, to ascertain: the nature, duration and severity of the risk; the probability that that the potential injury will actually occur; and whether reasonable modifications of policies, practices, or procedures will mitigate the risk.

**Therapeutic Animal-** Therapy animals are not service animals and do not have special training to perform tasks that assist people with disabilities. A therapeutic animal is any dog or other animal that is certified to perform pet therapy tasks, including but not limited to: companionship, relieve loneliness, help with depression, anxiety, phobias, emotional support, PTSD support, animal-assisted therapy, animal-assisted activities, coping, comfort and enjoyment.

**Personal Animal-** Any dog or other animal that is brought in for the personal support or enjoyment of the patient, visitor, or employee.

**Policy:**

- A. Service, Therapy, or Personal Animal Handler:
  - a. Controls the animal and provides the animal with food, water and other necessary care or to make such arrangements through family members, friends or accompanying person (not including staff).
  - b. Keeps the animal under their direct control at all times, such as by a harness, leash, or other tether; however, if the use of a harness, leash, or other tether interferes with the service animal's safe, effective

performance of work or tasks, or if the owner's disability prevents the use of such devices, then the animal must be under the owner's control through voice control, signals or other effective means.

- c. Ensures the animal does not disturb or disrupt normal hospital functions.
  - d. Complies with any relevant city, county, and/or state license and leash laws while the animal is on hospital premises.
  - e. Cleans up promptly after the service, therapy, or personal animal.
  - f. If the service, therapy or personal animal becomes out of control and the handler has not brought the animal under control within a reasonable amount of time, the handler must immediately remove the animal from LCH or have family members, friends or accompanying persons do so.
- B. Service, Therapy and Personal Animals:
- a. If a staff member is not certain that an animal is a service animal (as opposed to a therapy/personal animal), he or she may ask only the following of service animal handler/s:
    - i. Whether the service animal is required because of a disability; and
    - ii. What work or task the animal has been trained to perform.
  - b. Service animal handler/s must not be asked about the nature of their disability or for medical documentation of it. Handler/s may not be asked for a special registration, identification card, license, or other documentation that the animal is a service animal, or to demonstrate the animal's ability to perform work or tasks.
  - c. If the animal is a service, therapy or personal animal, it will have an annual medical evaluation and must always meet the following health requirements:
    - i. Be under a veterinarian's care.
    - ii. Be parasite free and on a flea control program
    - iii. Have current immunizations
    - iv. Be free of lesions or hair loss.
    - v. Be bathed and have reasonable oral hygiene with trimmed nails.
    - vi. Maintain appropriate temperament.
- C. Permitted Areas for Service, Therapy or Personal Animals:
- a. Service Animals:
    - i. A service animal shall be permitted in any area of the hospital that is unrestricted to inpatients, outpatients, or visitors provided that the service animal does not pose a direct threat and that the presence of the service animal would not require a fundamental alteration in the hospital's policies, practices, or procedures. Any decision to exclude a service animal from a particular area of the hospital shall be made by competent medical personnel based on an individualized assessment as set forth in Definitions (Direct Threat).
    - ii. Areas where a service animal shall generally not be permitted access include operating rooms and patient units where a patient is immunosuppressed or in isolation for respiratory, enteric or infectious precautions, unless in a particular circumstance a service animal does not pose a direct threat and that the presence of the service animal would not require a fundamental alteration in the policies, practices, or procedures.

- iii. Service animals shall generally be permitted in inpatient and outpatient areas provided that the service animal does not pose a direct threat and would not require a fundamental alteration in the policies, practices, or procedures.
  - 1. The only time that a service animal can be excluded from an inpatient room is after the hospital staff makes an individualized assessment, based on reasonable judgment that relies on current medical knowledge or on the best available objective evidence, to ascertain: the nature, duration, and severity of the risk; the probability that the potential injury will actually occur; and whether reasonable modifications of policies, practices, or procedures will mitigate the risk.
  - 2. If a determination is made that the service animal cannot remain in the inpatient room assigned to the patient, the patient shall be offered the option of being placed in another comparable room with comparable privacy and amenities.
  - 3. If a determination is made that the service animal cannot remain in the outpatient area, the patient shall be offered the option of removing the animal or having family, friends, or accompanying persons remove the animal so the patient may continue with the visit.

b. Therapy or Personal Animals:

- i. Therapy and personal animals will not be allowed in areas where food is being prepared.
- ii. Therapy animal visits should be prearranged in advance so appropriate preparation and accommodations can be organized.
- iii. Therapy animals shall generally be permitted in inpatient and outpatient areas provided that the therapy animal does not pose a direct threat and would not require a fundamental alteration in the policies, practices or procedures.
  - 1. Therapy animals will only be used with patients who have no contraindications for animal-assisted therapy (i.e., allergies, fear of animals, aggressive behavior, open sores, neutrophils <1000, HIV infection, or immunoglobulin deficiencies).
- iv. Personal animals shall only be permitted in private inpatient rooms, common areas such as the waiting room or activity room and in private offices/designated sleeping areas as long as the personal animal does not pose a direct threat and would not require a fundamental alteration in the policies, practices or procedures.
  - 1. Personal animals will only be allowed in private inpatient rooms if everyone in the room agrees to the animal visit.

D. Allergies/Phobias:

- a. In the event a patient or staff member is allergic to or has a phobia about animals, the hospital shall modify its policies, practices, and procedures to permit a service animal to remain with a patient in an inpatient room by, for example, moving the patient to another comparable room, changing staff schedules, or using other nondiscriminatory methods so that the

presence of the service animal would not pose a direct threat and would not require a fundamental alteration in the hospital's policies, practices or procedures. Any patient or staff member with an allergy to animals shall provide verification within a reasonable time frame of request.

- b. These modifications do not extend to therapy and/or personal animals. In the event a patient is allergic or has a phobia about animals, animal assisted therapy will not be offered. In the event a patient or staff member is allergic to a personal animal, the visitation may take place in a common area such as the waiting room or the activity room away from the person with the allergy/phobia.

E. Visitors:

- a. Visitors who use service animals shall be permitted to bring the animal to any areas of the hospital outlined in Section C above.
- b. Visitors who bring therapy animals to the hospital for participation in animal-assisted therapy or animal-assisted activities should pre-arrange the visit with departmental personnel and will be permitted to areas of the hospital outlined in Section C above.
- c. Visitors who bring personal animals to the hospital for any reason should notify the departmental personnel upon their arrival so an individualized assessment can be completed to determine safety and appropriate visitation location.