



Northeastern Catholic District School Board

STUDENT USE OF GUIDE DOGS AND SERVICE ANIMALS

Policy Number: E-22

Authority: 20-04/22-130

POLICY STATEMENT

The Northeastern Catholic District School Board (NCDSB) is committed to the learning of all students and provides a range of differentiated placements, programs and interventions to support student success. It is the policy of the NCDSB, in accordance with its obligations pursuant to the Ontario *Human Rights Code*, to provide individualized accommodation to students with disabilities to enable them to have meaningful access to education services.

REFERENCES

Human Rights Code, RSO 1990, c.H.19
Education Act, RSO 1990, c.E2, s. 170(1), s.265(1); O. Reg. 298, s.11
J.F. v. Waterloo Catholic District School Board, 2017 HRTO 1121 (CanLII)
Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, SO 2005, c.11
Blind Persons' Rights Act, RSO 1990, c.B7,
Dog Owners' Liability Act, RSO 1990, c.D16
Health Protection and Promotion Act, RSO 1990, c.H7
Food Safety and Quality Act 2001, SO 2001, c.20
Policy Program Memorandum (PPM)
163 School Board Policies on Service Animals
NCDSB Administrative Procedure
APE022 Student Use of Guide Dogs and Service Animals

DEFINITIONS

Accredited training organization

Refers to a guide dog or service dog trainer that is accredited by:

- i) International Guide Dog Federation ("IGDF"): which develops and ensures compliance with the standards by which Guide Dogs for the blind/low vision are trained by its member organizations; or
- ii) Assistance Dogs International ("ADI"): which develops and ensures compliance with the standards by which Guide, Hearing and Service Dogs are trained by its member organizations; or
- iii) A Guide Dog or Service Dog trainer that attests to compliance with the Meghan Search and Rescue Standard in Support of Accessibility: Persons with a Disability Teamed with Service Dogs standard for training (MSAR).

Adult student

A student who is 18 years of age or older or 16 or 17 years of age and has removed themselves from the care and control of their custodial parent.

Disability

Any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device, a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability, a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language, a mental disorder, or an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan establish under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.

Guide Dog

A dog trained as a guide for a blind person and having the qualifications prescribed by the regulations pursuant to the *Blind Persons' Rights Act*.

Handler

Refers to the individual trained by an Accredited Training Organization who is managing the Guide Dog / Service Dog and in most cases will be the student for whom the Guide Dog / Service Dog is provided.

Parent

Shall be defined to mean a custodial parent of the student or a guardian pursuant to the *Education Act*.

Service Dog

A dog which has been certified after successfully completing a training program provided by an Accredited Training Organization.

Service Animal

Includes a therapy dog, companion animal, comfort animal and emotional support animal and includes a dog or other domesticated animal that may legally reside in an urban, residential home, that is not highly trained to perform particular tasks to assist with a student's disability-related needs, but provides emotional support (and/or companionship, calming influence) for a student with a disability-related mental health and/or psychological need and/or comfort during a difficult period.

POLICY REGULATIONS

- 1.0 In circumstances where a parent or adult student requests to have the student's Guide Dog, Service Dog or Service Animal accompany the student while attending school or a school-related event, each such request shall be reviewed individually by the NCDSB considering the student's dignity, integration, independence and disability-related learning needs and the accommodations available to enable meaningful access to education.

- 2.0 Pursuant to the *Education Act* and regulations, a school building is not a place to which the public is customarily admitted.
- 3.0 The process of accommodation shall also consider the competing human rights of other students and staff; the impact of the Guide Dog, Service Dog or Service Animal on the learning environment; and the health and safety of all individuals who are or might be in the school, on school grounds or at a school-related event.
- 4.0 The NCDSB shall retain data regarding the requests for Guide Dogs, Service Dogs and Service Animals.
- 5.0 Administrative procedures and guidelines will be developed and revised as necessary to ensure standards of practices in all matters relating to Student Use of Guide Dogs and Service Animals.