

# Service Animals Operating Procedure

**Approved By:** Vice President Human Resources, Student Services and International

**Approval Date:** June 2, 2025

**Replaces:** June 7, 2024

**Corresponding Policy:** [Service Animals Policy](#)

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## Purpose

To regulate service animals on Cambrian College ('the College') property and provide conditions that inform their presence and safety. This policy was developed under the scope of the [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act \(AODA\)](#) and the [Ontario Human Rights Code \(OHRC\)](#) in a manner consistent with the College's commitment to creating a campus community that is inclusive of all individuals.

## Scope

This policy applies to anyone requiring the use of a service animal on Cambrian College property, with the exception of NORCAT and Cambrian Residence facilities. The use of service animals by students living in on-campus residences owned by Cambrian College is covered by the policies held by [Campus Living Centre](#).

## Definitions

**College property:** Any land owned and controlled or leased by the College, inclusive of buildings, learning places, public places, and workplaces.

**Competing human rights:** In general, competing human rights involves situations where parties to a dispute claim that the enjoyment of an individual or group's human rights and freedoms, as protected by law, would interfere with another's rights and freedoms. This complicates the normal approach to resolving a human rights dispute where only one side claims a human rights violation. In some cases, only one party is making a human rights claim, but the claim conflicts with the legal entitlements of another party or parties.

**Emotional support animals:** Emotional support animals provide comfort and security and do not have training for specific tasks. Therefore, emotional support animals do not qualify as service animals. Accommodation requests for emotional support animals should be directed to the Glenn Crombie Centre (GCC) for Accessibility, Counselling and Wellness. Note that on occasions, emotional support dogs are intermittently brought onto campus under the direction of the Student Union or Student Services, or those staff certified under the Canine Ambassador Program (CAP). These dogs also require yearly certification and a specific Handler.

**Guide dog:** A type of service animal trained to lead a person with visual impairments.

**Service animal:** An animal for a person with a disability as noted under the [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, S.O. 2005, c. 11](#), if:

- it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to their disability.
- an animal that can be readily identified as a service animal based on visual indicators such as a vest or harness worn by the animal, or
- the person provides medical documentation from a physician or other regulated health professional confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to a disability, along with other pertinent information.
- it is not a pet or an emotional support animal.
- it is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including, but not limited to, guiding individuals with impaired vision, alerting individuals with impaired hearing to intruders or sounds, alerting individuals to low blood sugar levels, providing minimal protection or rescue work to an individual during a seizure, or retrieving out of reach items. The animal may wear specialized equipment such as a backpack, harness, or special collar, but this is not a legal requirement.

**Service animal handler/Handler:** A handler works with specially trained animals to assist with tasks and/or to alert them of a danger or onset of a medical condition. Handlers are responsible for their service animal and carry out the work for which the animal has been trained. Handlers live full-time with their animals. They feed and care for the animal every day, taking care of its needs. They are also responsible for the upkeep of the animal's daily training.

**Signal dog:** A type of service animal trained to alert a person whose hearing is impaired to sounds.

## Operating Procedure

### 1 Requirements

- 1.1 Service animals must be accompanied and always controlled by their handler.
- 1.2 The service animal must be always restrained on a leash and harness (no more than 5 feet) unless the animal is confined to a crate or is required to remain in close proximities (crated or not) while not interfering with the activities or tasks of the handler.
- 1.3 Handlers must remain in proximity (no more than 5 feet) to the service animal unless the handler is in an area where the animal is not allowed; at such times, the animal must be crated. When crated due to a variety of reasons (i.e., laboratories), the service animal is to remain in proximity.
- 1.4 Where appropriate for the type of service animal (i.e., service dogs), the animal should always be responsive to voice commands and visual cues and be under the full control of the handler.
- 1.5 Service animals must be housetrained.
- 1.6 Barking, growling, biting or any aggressive behaviour by a service animal will not be tolerated or permitted.
- 1.7 Service animals must not be disruptive to others. This includes but is not limited to interacting with others, disturbing the personal belongings of others, engaging in personal grooming in public settings, and blocking an aisle or passageway for fire and/or emergency exits.
- 1.8 The handler is responsible for any damage caused by their service animal.
- 1.9 Individual departments of the College may require additional regulations/ procedures/specialized contracts for service animals to ensure the health and

safety of their respective areas.

- 1.10 To be permitted in campus buildings, service dogs (with the exception of guide dogs and signal dogs) must have recent certification (within two years) under a comparable program recognized by the Canadian Kennel Club/[Good Neighbor Program](#).

## **2 Care of a Service Animal on Campus**

- 2.1 The handler is responsible for providing water, food, and timely bathroom and exercise breaks each day and for generally adhering to appropriate standards of care for the animal.
- 2.2 When the service animal is left alone on campus, the handler is responsible for providing an appropriately sized, well-ventilated crate/cage for the animal and make appropriate arrangements through their academic school, College Residence, and/or the GCC for the container during these periods. If the handler is unable to provide a crate/cage, the College will endeavour to provide one.
- 2.3 The handler is responsible for the health of the animal and must provide verification to the GCC from a licensed veterinarian that all necessary vaccinations (including deworming and tick and flea treatment) appropriate for that type of service animal are current.
- 2.4 It is the responsibility of the handler to ensure their animal is kept clean, well-groomed, and odour free. The handler must arrange for any cleaning necessary due to the presence of the animal.
- 2.5 The handler must clean up after the animal on campus property, including the sanitary disposal of animal wastes.
- 2.6 The handler is responsible for seeking prompt veterinarian attention for their animal if it is displaying any signs of illness.

### **3 Maintaining an Inclusive Environment for Service Animals and Handlers**

- 3.1 A service animal should be allowed to accompany their handler in areas of the campus as specified in their approved accommodation letter.
- 3.2 It is recommended that the handler register the service animal with the Glenn Crombie Centre, Accessibility services to maintain an inclusive environment for both the handler and their service animal.
- 3.3 The College recommends that service animals wear specialized equipment such as a backpack, harness, tag, or special collar identifying them as a service animal, but this is not a legal requirement.
- 3.4 Students, employees, and volunteers must maintain a respectful distance from service animals. It is not appropriate to touch, feed, or startle service animals as this might distract it from its work/function.
- 3.5 Cambrian College will provide education and resources to foster inclusivity and minimize feelings of isolation by the person using a service animal.
- 3.6 Concerns related to the presence of a service animal on campus are to be directed to the GCC/EDI Office/Public Safety and not to the handler directly.

### **4 Competing Human Rights**

- 4.1 In general, competing human rights involve situations where parties to a dispute claim that the enjoyment of an individual or group's human rights and freedoms, as protected by law, would interfere with another's rights and freedoms. This complicates the normal approach to resolving a human rights dispute where only one side claims a human rights violation. In some cases, only one party is making a human rights claim, but the claim conflicts with the legal entitlements of another party or parties.
- 4.2 There may be circumstances where a handler's accompaniment by a service animal must be balanced with the health and safety needs of other students or

other College community members. Students with a medical condition(s) affected by a service animal should contact the GCC if they have health or safety concern about exposure to the animal.

- a. The student raising the issue will be asked to provide medical documentation that outlines the necessity, allowing a determination to be made as to whether the condition is disabling and whether there is a need for accommodation.
- b. Employees should follow the same process by speaking directly with their supervisors.

## **5 Approval Process for Service Animals**

- 5.1 All service animal handlers should be registered with the College and complete the appropriate forms to permit a service animal on campus. For students, documentation is to be submitted to the GCC. Employees must submit their documentation to Human Resources.
- 5.2 If the need for a service animal can be readily identified, no medical documentation is required. For example, a person with a visual impairment accompanied by a guide dog does not need to verify their need for the dog. Handlers are required to complete all other forms to permit the service animal on campus.
- 5.3 In situations where the need for a service animal is not readily apparent, the handler must present medical documentation to the GCC (for students) or Human Resources (for employees).
  - a. To respect the privacy of employees and students, any medical verification from a health care provider should not specify the diagnosis but rather verify the owner's required accommodation and need for the service animal.
- 5.4 Documentation confirming up-to-date vaccinations by a veterinarian must be submitted for service animals.
- 5.5 Once documentation is received and approved by the GCC/Human Resources, the handler will be required to complete and sign a Service Animal Agreement Form.

- 5.6 Faculty will be notified by email to review student accommodations for a service animal. College Security will also be notified to inform the presence of service animals on campus and to ensure safety.
- a. The type of animal that can be brought into College Residences must also be vetted and approved by the Director of Residence Services in addition to the GCC. Each case will be handled on a case-by-case basis.
  - b. For employees, Human Resources will evaluate the request using medical documentation from the employee and determine if the animal is a reasonable accommodation. The employee will also be required to complete the Service Animal Agreement Form and provide documentation confirming up-to-date vaccinations for the service animal.
  - c. If a handler obtains a new/different service animal to be used under the provisions of this procedure, the animal must be registered and approved by the GCC and, where applicable, College Residence or Human Resources.
  - d. In the event of a disagreement about the appropriateness of an accommodation, service quality, or animal exclusion, a student should confer with the Director of the Glenn Crombie Centre for Accessibility, Counselling and Wellness and/or Manager of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. An employee or student can appeal by lodging a complaint using the Cambrian College Complaint Form through the office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. The complaint will be reviewed, and a decision will be rendered upon consultation with parties involved, the Service Animals Policy, and other relevant information and documentation.

## Supporting Documents

- [Employee Service Animals Agreement Form](#)
- [Student Service Animals Agreement Form](#)