

Service Animals Policy

Policy Type: Corporate

Policy Owner: Vice President, Human Resources, Student Services and International

Approval Date: June 2, 2025

Replaces: June 7, 2024

Initial Year of Issue: 2024

Corresponding Procedures: [Service Animals Operating Procedure](#)

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: space – physical or digital – owned, controlled, or operated by the College.

Competing human rights: 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.

Emotional support animals (ESA): 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.

Policy Statements

1. Service animals are working animals. They perform tasks for a person with a disability/exceptionality such as, but not limited to:
 - a. Guidance around obstacles
 - b. Alerting a person to low blood sugar levels
 - c. Protecting a person during seizures
 - d. Calming a person in an environment with too much sensory stimulation and preventing behavioural outbursts
 - e. Retrieving out-of-reach objects
 - f. Alerting a person to sounds
2. Only approved service animals are permitted on campus. Personal pets, including emotional support animals, are prohibited from entry to all Cambrian College facilities/buildings unless approved by the College.
3. The use of service animals by students during off-campus learning activities is determined by the organization's policies and procedures, not the College.
4. All service animal handlers shall familiarize themselves and comply with their responsibilities under this policy and associated procedure.
5. The College will not issue academic credentials to service animals that attend learning environments with their handlers.
6. The College will accommodate service animal handlers to the point of undue hardship.
7. Where service animals are not permitted on or in a particular campus location or building due to health and safety laws or requirements, the College will endeavor to provide alternate support to permit access to goods and services or provide reasonable accommodation.
8. A service animal may be refused access onto College premises when any one of the following conditions exists, but not limited to:
 - a. The animal is disruptive, and the handler is not effectively controlling it.
 - b. The animal's presence, behaviour, or actions pose an unreasonable or direct threat to property or the health or safety of others. The risk may not be remote or

speculative, such as thinking an animal might bite someone or will annoy others. Allergies or a fear of animals are generally not sufficient conditions to exclude service animals.

9. The College is guided and will act in accordance with the [Ontario Human Rights Commission Policy on Competing Human Rights](#) and will address each scenario on a case-by-case basis.

Responsibilities and Accountability

Vice President, Human Resource, Student Services and International is responsible for:

- Ensuring that this policy and associated procedure are reviewed, communicated, and fully implemented.

Director, Human Resources, Equity, and Organizational Development, Director, Glenn Crombie Centre for Accessibility, Counselling and Wellness, and Manager of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion are responsible for:

- Supporting this policy and ensuring that handlers' human rights are respected.
- Reviewing concerns, complaints, or appeals regarding a service animal on premises.

Accessibility Advisors are responsible for:

- Working with handlers, reviewing all documentation, and approving or denying requests to have a service animal on campus based on the criteria described in the Service Animals Operating Procedure.

Service Animal Handlers are responsible for:

- Adhering to the requirements of this policy.

Procedures/Forms

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

Related Policies

- [Accessibility Customer Service Policy](#)

- [Code of Conduct Policy](#)

References

- [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act](#)
- [Blind Persons' Rights Act](#)
- [Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms](#)
- [Competing Human Rights](#)
- [Dog Owners Liability Act](#)
- [Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#)
- [Health Protection and Promotion Act](#)
- [Occupational Health & Safety Act](#)
- [Ontario Human Rights Code](#)
- [Ontarians with Disabilities Act](#)
- [Personal Health Information Protection Act](#)
- [United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#)

Acknowledgments

This policy was adapted from Durham College, Sheridan College, and St. Lawrence College and is used with permission.