

Animals in the Workplace Policy

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PURPOSE

This policy provides direction on the types of animals county employees may bring into a King County workplace.

POLICY APPLICABILITY

The Animals in the Workplace Policy applies to all employees in the executive branch departments, offices, divisions and agencies, including the Assessor's Office and King County Elections. Departments may have additional rules relating to animals in the workplace due to the nature of their operations.

DEFINITIONS

"*Disability Services*" means the sections within the Department of Human Resources (DHR) and the Metro Transit Department (MTD) that assist employees and applicants in identifying and implementing reasonable accommodations in employment to qualified individuals with disabilities.

"*Employee*" means all career service, provisional, temporary, probationary, and appointed employee of King County.

"*Pet*" means any animal not classified as a Service or Assistance Animal.

"*Reasonable Accommodation*" is defined within the [Reasonable Accommodation Policy](#) and may include:

- A modification or adjustment to the job application process that enables a qualified applicant with a disability to be considered for the position the qualified applicant desires;
- A modification or adjustment to the work environment and/or the manner under which a position is customarily performed that enables a qualified individual with a disability to perform the essential functions of the job;

"*Service or Assistance Animal*" (Service Animal) means a guide dog, signal or hearing dog, seizure response dog, therapeutic companion animal or other animal that does work, performs tasks or provides medically necessary support for the benefit of an individual with a disability (K.C.C. 12.22.020(N)).

POLICY

Animals classified as pets are prohibited from the workplace. Employees are only allowed to bring an animal into the workplace if it is classified as a service animal and is approved as part of a reasonable accommodation. Employees and their use of service animals shall be subject to the *Rules and Guidelines for Service Animals in the Workplace* section of this policy.

Reasonable Accommodation and the Use of Service Animals

A qualified individual with a disability has the right to request a reasonable accommodation when applying for employment and during employment. Employees shall work with Disability Services to request the use of a service animal in the workplace as a reasonable accommodation.

- a. Once the use of a service animal has been approved as a reasonable accommodation, the employee shall complete and sign a form acknowledging their understanding of, and agreement with, the terms of this policy.
- b. Disability Services will submit a Badge Request Form to the ID Access Office within the Facilities Management Division (FMD). FMD will provide an identification badge for the approved service animal and the badge will need to be displayed on the service animal's collar, vest or leash while in the workplace.
- c. Throughout the duration of the accommodation, there will be regular check-ins with the employee, their division management, and Disability Services.
- d. Per the [Reasonable Accommodation Policy](#), the accommodation process is ongoing; therefore, changes to the employee's essential functions or workplace may necessitate a re-evaluation of the use of a service animal in the workplace.
- e. If concerns arise regarding the service animal, the employee's division management, in consultation with Disability Services and/or FMD, will work to address those concerns.

Rules and Guidelines for Service Animals in the Workplace

An employee's service animal shall be subject to the rules and guidelines below.

1. Service animals must be kept on a harness or leash or in a carrier, except when such tethering or crating would interfere with the service animal's ability to perform its work.
2. Service animals must always remain with the employee, except when the animal needs to seek assistance for its handler from others as part of its work.
3. The employee must be always in full control of the animal.
4. Service animals will not be allowed to freely roam the office/building.
5. Service animals must not exhibit aggressive behavior.
6. Service animals must not jump on or disturb other individuals in the building.
7. Service animals may not bark (unless as an alert to a medical episode) or cause disturbances in the office/building.
8. Service animals must be housebroken and must relieve themselves outdoors.
9. Employees must clean up all animal waste both inside and outside of the building and properly dispose of such waste. If there is an accident in a building, the employee must contact FMD customer care (customercareservices@kingcounty.gov) to evaluate if additional cleaning is needed.
10. The employee must ensure the service animal is in good health and free from communicable disease.
11. Service animals must be clean and free of fleas, ticks and other pests.
12. Service animals must be licensed and must wear a current rabies vaccination tag.
13. Interaction with the service animal is at the discretion of the employee.

Failure to follow these rules may result in the employee being asked to remove the service animal from the building. Depending on the situation, the removal may be temporary or permanent and may prompt a re-evaluation of the service animal as a reasonable accommodation.

QUESTIONS

Refer questions or comments to your department's [Human Resources Manager](#) or the Department of Human Resources.