

**Document Code No.:** FES-7-3-1-PR

**Title:** Animals in King County Facilities

**Effective Date:** [Note: 30 days after filing with ARMMS]

**Authorities:** Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Washington Law Against Discrimination (WLAD), King County Code

**Keywords:** service animals, therapy animals, emotional support animals, pets, dogs, miniature horses

**Sponsoring Agency:** Department of Executive Services- Facilities Management Division



**King County**

**Signature:** Lorraine Patterson-Harris

**Date signed:** April 13, 2024

## I. Purpose

This rule provides direction to members of the public, county employees, and county agencies regarding animals that are brought into King County managed buildings ("County Facilities").

### Applicability and Audience

This rule applies to King County employees, visitors, and tenants in County Facilities. The use of service animals by employees is governed by the Department of Human Resources Policy "Animals in the Workplace." This rule applies in general to public and people doing business in County Facilities.

## II. Definitions

### 1. Service Animal:

"Service or assistive animal" means a dog guide, 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.

### 2. Therapeutic Assistance Animal:

"Therapeutic Assistance Animal" means a county agency sponsored animal trained with a handler to provide comfort and support to people in an individual or group setting. These animals are used in county business to meet operational objectives. They are considered pets and have no special rights under law.

*Examples of Therapeutic Assistance Animals include animals used in courts to comfort victims during interviews and questioning.*

### 3. Pet:

A "Pet" means any animal not classified as a Service Animal or an approved Therapeutic Assistance Animal.

### 4. Animal Handler:

An animal's "Handler" means the individual who assumes the responsibility and supervision of the Service Animal or Therapeutic Assistance Animal in County Facilities.

### **III. Rule**

#### **1. Rule for Service Animals—Public**

- a. Service Animals are allowed County Facilities as long as they and their Handlers observe all applicable Federal, State Laws, Local City, and County Ordinances. For example, service animals are not allowed in portions of buildings that by virtue of their purpose are not suitable for service or other animals to be present. Examples include clean rooms or portions of medical facilities, or County kitchen or food preparation areas. In addition, there may be areas in County Facilities where members of the public must be escorted or where there are other conditions for entry that may affect the appropriateness of Service Animal presence. In those instances, Animal Handlers will observe and cooperate with restrictions.
- b. All Animal Handlers must follow the rules and guidelines outlined in Sections 4 and 5 of this rule. Failure to follow these rules will result in the Animal Handler being asked to remove the animal from the building. The handler will be able to continue business in county buildings once the animal is removed and may seek alternative accommodations in lieu of being accompanied by a service animal.

#### **2. Rule for Therapeutic Assistance Animals—County Agency Sponsors**

- a. County agencies wishing to use animals in the course of county business, such as Prosecuting Attorney Office animals used to comfort victims during interviews and questioning, must complete an agency sponsored [Therapeutic Assistance Animal Application Form Animals](#). (internal link).
- b. Animal Handlers of Therapeutic Assistance Animals must follow the rules and guidelines outlined in Sections 4 and 5 of this rule.
- c. The Therapeutic Animal Request Form must be approved and signed by the requesting agency's director and submitted to FMD Customer Care Services.

#### **3. Policy for Pets**

- a. Pets are not allowed in County Facilities. This county rule supersedes any lesser space policies.

#### **4. Rules for all animals allowed in County Facilities**

- a. All animals must be kept on a harness, leash, or in a carrier, except where such tethering or crating would interfere with a Service Animal's ability to perform its duties.

- b. All animals must remain with their Animal Handler at all times. Animal Handlers must be in full control of the animal at all times, except when, in performing its duties, the animal is seeking assistance for its handler from others.
- c. Animals cannot freely roam the County Facilities.
- d. Animals must not exhibit aggressive behavior toward other people or animals. This may include, but is not limited to, non-duty barking, lunging, snapping, jumping, or running directed to or affecting other people or animals in vicinity of the animal.
- e. Animals must not jump on or disturb other individuals in the County Facilities.
- f. Animals may not bark unless as an alert to a medical episode or other function of its duties or cause disturbances in the building/facility.
- g. Animals must be housebroken and must relieve themselves outdoors.
- h. Animal Handlers must clean up all animal waste both inside and outside of the building and properly dispose of such waste. If an animal relieves themselves indoors, the Animal Handler must contact FMD customer care (206-477-9400; [customercareservices.fmd@kingcounty.gov](mailto:customercareservices.fmd@kingcounty.gov)) to ensure additional cleaning is initiated, if needed.
- i. The Animal Handler must ensure their animal is in good health and free from communicable disease by adhering to local animal control and public health requirements.
- j. Animals must be clean and free of fleas, ticks, and other pests.
- k. Animals must be licensed and must wear a current rabies vaccination tag.
- l. Interaction with animals is at the discretion of the Animal Handler.

##### **5. Exceptions to this Rule**

- a. King County animal shelter buildings, structures, and ingress and egress paths are exempt from the pet portion of this rule.
- b. Regional Animal Services of King County officially sponsored adoption events
- c. King County Sheriff's Office and other police or law enforcement jurisdiction's K-9 Officers while on duty.
- d. King County owned Housing Program buildings and facilities

- e. Departments may request specific and temporary exceptions to this rule to allow for the presence of animals in County Facilities during special events, such as Employee Giving Program, or other King County sponsored events. Requests must be submitted in writing to FMD Customer Care Services at [customercareservices.fmd@kingcounty.gov](mailto:customercareservices.fmd@kingcounty.gov).

#### IV. **Implementation Plan**

1. This rule becomes effective for all visitors, employees and tenants in County Facilities upon the effective date.
2. The Department of Executive Services, Facilities Management Division (FMD) is responsible for implementation and enforcement of this rule.
3. Department and Agency Leaders are responsible for communicating this rule to the management structure within their respective departments, agencies, and other appropriate parties.

#### V. **Maintenance**

1. This rule will be maintained by the Department of Executive Services, Facilities Management Division (FMD) or its successor agency.

#### VI. **Consequences for Noncompliance**

1. Failure to follow these rules will result in the Handler being asked to remove the animal from County Facilities.
2. Removal may be temporary (for example: removal for a day, month, year) or permanent depending on the situation.

#### VII. **Related Materials**

1. [Therapeutic Assistance Animal Application Form Animals](#). (Internal link)
2. [Special Event Exemption Request Form](#) (Internal link)