

POLICY:

1. Forks Community Hospital respects the right of disabled individuals to have their service dog while also ensuring all patients can be in a safe and clean environment.
2. A service animal is any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability. Other species of animals, whether wild or domestic, trained or untrained, are not considered service animals.
3. The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the individual's disability. Examples of work or tasks include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Assisting individuals who are blind or have low vision with navigation and other tasks.
 - b. Alerting individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to the presence of people or sounds.
 - c. Providing non-violent protection or rescue work.
 - d. Pulling a wheelchair.
 - e. Assisting an individual during a seizure.
 - f. Alerting individuals to the presence of allergens.
 - g. Retrieving items such as medicine or the telephone.
 - h. Providing physical support and assistance with balance and stability to individuals with mobility disabilities.
 - i. Helping individuals with psychiatric and neurological disabilities by preventing or interrupting impulsive or destructive behaviors.
4. The crime deterrent effects of an animal's presence and the provision of emotional support, well-being, comfort, or companionship are not considered work or tasks under the definition of a service animal.

PURPOSE:

1. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) allows service animals accompanying persons with disabilities to be on the Hospital campus. A service animal must be permitted to accompany a person with a disability almost everywhere on campus. However, there are some places on campus that service animals are prohibited due to heightened infection control measures; these include:
 - a. The operating room, preoperative and postoperative areas
 - b. Labor and Delivery Rooms
 - c. Nursery

- d. Medication preparation areas/Pharmacy
- e. Kitchen or food preparation areas
- f. Central Supply
- g. Areas that have implemented "Transmission-based Precautions" and/or where health care staff, hospital visitors, or patients are required to use heightened infection control precautions.
- h. Areas that employ greater than general infection-control measures and areas where a patient is immunosuppressed or in reverse isolation.

DEFINITIONS:

1. **Disability** - A person must meet the statutory definition of having a "disability," under federal, state and local fair housing laws. These statutes recognize the following broad categories of disabilities:
 - a. A sensory, mental, or physical impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities (such as walking, seeing, hearing, speaking and breathing, working, learning, caring for ones self, performing manual tasks, etc.).
 - b. A sensory, mental or physical condition that is medically cognizable or diagnosable.
2. **Partner/Handler** - A person with a service or therapy animal. A person with a disability is called a partner whereas a person without a disability is called a handler.
3. **Pet** - A domestic animal kept for pleasure or companionship. Pets are not permitted in the Hospital or Clinic. Permission may be granted by Administration for a pet to be in a campus facility for a specific reason at a specific time.
4. **Team**: A partner, or a handler, and her or his service animal. The pair works as a cohesive team in accomplishing the tasks of everyday living.
5. **Therapy Animal** - An animal with good temperament and disposition, and who has reliable, predictable behavior, selected to visit people with disabilities or people who are experiencing the frailties of aging as a therapy tool. The animal may be incorporated as an integral part of a treatment process. A therapy animal does not assist an individual with a disability in the activities of daily living. The therapy animal does not accompany a person with a disability all the time, unlike a service animal that is always with its partner. Thus, a therapy animal is not covered by laws protecting service animals.
6. A **companion animal** or emotional support animals assist persons with psychological disabilities. Emotional support animals can help alleviate symptoms such as depression, anxiety, stress and difficulties regarding social interactions, allowing tenants to live independently and fully use and enjoy their living environment. A companion animal does not assist an individual with a disability in the activities of daily living. The companion animal does not accompany a person with a disability all the time, unlike a service animal that is always with its partner. Thus, a companion animal is not covered by laws protecting service animals.

EQUIPMENT/SOFTWARE:

None listed.

PROCEDURE:

1. Requirements for staff:

- a. Must not inquire about the nature of a persons disability, but may ask if an animal is required because of a disability and what work or task the animal has been trained to perform.
- b. Allow a service animal to accompany the partner at all times and everywhere on campus, except where service animals are specifically prohibited.
- c. Avoid petting a service dog; petting a service animal when the animal is working distracts the animal from the task at hand. A sign will be placed on the door of an inpatient indicating the animals presence.
- d. Avoid separating or attempt to separate a partner/handler from her or his service animal.

2. Requirements of Service Dog and their Partners/Handlers:

- a. **Vaccination:** The animal must be immunized against diseases common to that type of animal. Dogs must have had the general maintenance vaccine series, including vaccinations against rabies, distemper, and parvovirus. All vaccinations must be current. Dogs must wear a rabies vaccination tag.
- b. **Licensing:** The animal must comply with local licensing requirements.
- c. **Leash:** The animal must be on a leash, harness or tether at all times, unless either the handler is unable because of a disability to use a harness, leash or other tether; or the use of a harness, leash or tether would interfere with the service animals safe, effective performance of work, or task. In this case the service animal must be under the handlers control using voice control, signals, or other effective means.
- d. **Under Control of Partner/Handler:** The partner/handler must be in full control of the animal at all times. The care and supervision of a service animal is solely the responsibility of its partner/handler. If a service animal must be separated from the handler to avoid a fundamental alteration or a threat to safety, it is the responsibility of the partner/handler to arrange for the care and supervision of the animal during the period of separation.
- e. **Cleanup Rule:** The partner/handler must always carry supplies sufficient to clean up the animal's excrement whenever the animal and partner are on hospital property and properly dispose of the feces. Staff are not responsible for the care of a service animal and therefore are not available to toilet the animal at any time. The service animal will be taken outdoors for toileting by the partner or designated friend or family member, and all excrement will be picked up by the handler/partner in a plastic bag and disposed of in outdoor trash bins.
- f. **Feeding and Other Care:** The partner/handler provides the service animal with food, water, and other necessary care or makes arrangements through others (excluding staff) to do the same.
- g. When a Service Dog Can Be Asked to Leave
- h. **Disruption:** The handler/partner of an animal that is unruly or disruptive (e.g., barking, running around, bringing attention to itself) may be asked to remove the animal from Hospital facilities.
- i. **Poor Behavior:** A service animal may be excluded from the hospital when that animals behavior poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others. For example, any service animal that displays vicious behavior towards staff, patients, or visitors may be excluded. A service animal may also be excluded from certain areas due to concerns for health and safety.
- j. **Ill Health:** Service animals that are ill should not be taken into public areas. A partner with an ill animal may be asked to leave Hospital facilities.
- k. **Uncleanliness:** Partners with animals that are unclean, noisome and/or bedraggled may be asked to leave

Hospital facilities. The service animal must be house broken.

3. Allergies/phobia:

- a. To control allergies, the service dog may wear a shirt, vest or other protective clothing and/or be wiped down with a baby or pet wipe. In the event an individual has asthma or a severe allergy to a service dog, clinical staff will make a risk assessment. Staff are expected to take reasonable steps to ensure that any potential harm is reduced by moving the person using the service animal, staff, patients, and/or visitors to other areas or rooms or making other reasonable modifications.

4. Considerations:

- a. Visits with service animals: In the event a service animal is not permitted in an inpatient room, hospital staff shall, upon a patient's request, arrange for visits between a service animal and its handler or a visitor who uses a service animal in an area of equivalent privacy and amenities.
- b. Every effort will be made to place inpatients that have a service animal in a private room. If a private room is not available, select a roommate who is not allergic or afraid of animals and consents to the presence of the animal in the room.

5. Infection Precautions:

- a. Each patient, staff member, visitor or volunteer practices hand hygiene immediately following each contact with the service animal.
- b. Avoid animal contact with any intravenous insertion sites, invasive devices, opened or bandaged wounds, surgical incisions, openings of the skin or medical equipment.
- c. If an animal is allowed in a patient's bed, then a barrier such as a disposable cloth, towel, or sheet can be placed between the animal's coat and the patient's linen. The barrier is removed when the animal leaves.
- d. If the service animal urinates, defecates or vomits, clean-up of the area will include:
 - i. Provide the handler or responsible adult the materials to perform the initial clean-up.
 - ii. Use standard precautions with appropriate personal protective equipment, which includes gloves.
 - iii. Discard the clean-up items in a plastic bag and then dispose of in the regular trash container in the acute floor dirty utility.
 - iv. Disinfect the contaminated surface(s) per hospital approved disinfectant and cleaning policy.

REFERENCES:

1. ADA National Network 2017. Accessed via the web 11.27.2018
2. CDC Healthcare Infection Control Practices Advisory Committee (HICPAC), Guidelines for Environmental Infection Control in Health-Care Facilities. Accessed via the web 11.27.2018

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- **Committees:**
- **Signers:**

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Attachments: [Service Animals](#)
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Other Documents:
(WHICH REFERENCE THIS DOCUMENT)

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