

CHSAA Guidelines Related to Service, Therapy, and Instructional Animals at State Championship Events

Definitions:

- **Service animals are defined as dogs that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities.** Examples of such work or tasks include guiding people who are blind, alerting people who are deaf, pulling a wheelchair, alerting and protecting a person who is having a seizure, reminding a person with mental illness to take prescribed medications, calming a person with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) during an anxiety attack, or performing other duties. Service animals are working animals, not pets. The work or task a dog has been trained to provide must be directly related to the person's disability. Dogs whose sole function is to provide comfort or emotional support do not qualify as service animals under the ADA.¹ (*ada.gov, 2020*)
- A **Therapy Animal** is also known as a companion or emotional support animal (ESA) and is not the same as a service animal. A therapy animal is a type of animal-assisted intervention in which there is a "goal directed intervention in which an animal meeting specific criterion is an integral part of the treatment process. Animal-assisted therapy is provided in a variety of settings and may be group or individual in nature." They are documented by a letter from a human health professional, which legally guarantees that they may live with their handler and accompany them on aircraft.² (*AMVA, 2020*) **Therapy dogs** are dogs who go with their owners to volunteer in settings such as schools, hospitals, and nursing homes. Therapy dogs and their owners work together as a team to improve the lives of other people. Therapy dogs are not service dogs as service dogs are specially trained to perform specific tasks to help a person who has a disability. It is unethical to attempt to pass off a therapy dog as a service dog.³ (*American Kennel Club, 2020*)
- **Instructional Animals** can promote healthy social development, social competence, increased social interaction, improved social communication, and social play in children.⁴ (*Child Health & Development Research, 2020*) Animals can reduce stress reaction of children within the classroom environment which in turn can foster development of autonomous functioning and a better segregation of self/non-self, which is the foundation of sensitivity towards the needs and moods of other people. Studies have found that classroom pets lead to higher social integration, fewer aggressive children.⁵ (*Child Health & Development Research, 2020*) An instructional animal is further defined as any animal used as part of the instructional process and as approved by the school administrator.⁶ (*Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment, 2018*)

Animals Allowed at CHSAA State Championships Events

Only Service Animals (service animals are specifically defined under the ADA). Therapy and Instructional Animals are not allowed entrance at our state championships event, unless the facility is pet-friendly.

¹ (https://www.ada.gov/service_animals_2010.htm, Revised February 2020)

² (<https://www.avma.org/resources-tools/animal-health-welfare/service-emotional-support-and-therapy-animals>)

³ (<https://www.akc.org/sports/title-recognition-program/therapy-dog-program/what-is-a-therapy-dog/>)

⁴ (<https://habricentral.org/resources/62558>)

⁵ (<https://habricentral.org/resources/8573>)

⁶ (<https://drive.google.com/file/d/18hocBQH6abm53tnMIWDWB167X0Myjqwx/view>)

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General Guidelines:

- **A service animal must be under the control of its handler.** Under the ADA, service animals must be harnessed, leashed, or tethered, unless the individual's disability prevents using these devices or these devices interfere with the service animal's safe, effective performance of tasks. In that case, the individual must maintain control of the animal through voice, signal, or other effective controls⁷. (*ada.gov, 2020*)
- Animal must be free of external parasites (fleas, ticks, and mites), and free of skin lesions.
- Animals must be monitored to ensure that they do not demonstrate any aggression towards humans, or other animals, or otherwise create a nuisance situation such as: (1) the dog is out of control and the handler does not take effective action to control it or (2) the dog is not housebroken. Owner/handler is responsible to clean up after animal.
- An animal's aggressive, unprovoked or threatening behavior, and/or creation of a nuisance situation may necessitate its immediate removal from championships site property. *When there is a legitimate reason to ask that a service animal be removed, staff must offer the person with the disability the opportunity to obtain goods or services without the animal's presence*⁸. (*ada.gov, 2020*)
- Any request for animal to be on the competitive surface with the coach/athlete must be formally made with the CHSAA Administrator in charge of that sport/activity at least 48 hours prior to the competition start date. The animal cannot distract/interfere with competition in any way, or they will be relocated onsite to a less intrusive location.

⁷ (https://www.ada.gov/service_animals_2010.htm, Revised February 2020)

⁸ (https://www.ada.gov/service_animals_2010.htm, Revised February 2020) – Specific Rules Paragraph