

SHC Access for Patients/Visitors with Service Animals

I. Policy

Ensure the rights of Sam Houston State University (SHSU) students and visitors regarding service and emotional support animals with respect to the Student Health Center (SHC) operation as a medical facility and department of SHSU.

II. Definitions

Service Animal- a dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for a person with disability per the Americans with Disabilities Act (Attachment 1).

Emotional Support Animal-any animal that provides emotional or other support that alleviates one or more identified symptoms or effects of a person's disability. A comfort/support animal affords a student with a disability an equal opportunity to use and enjoy University housing, but emotional support animals are not permitted in university facilities other than the residence halls.

University Official- A faculty or staff member responsible for a department, building, program, or service of the university. For the Student Health Center, this is either the Director of Medical Services or the AVP of Health and Wellbeing.

III. Procedure

A. The Student Health Center policy and procedure is to follow the President's Office Policy [PRE-28](#), *Campus Access for Students or Visitors Using Service or Emotional Support Animals* (Attachment 2).

B. Facility Access

1. Service Animals are permitted to enter the SHC and may access all patient care areas within SHC as needed by the individual for whom the service animal is serving.

2. Emotional Support Animals are not permitted to enter the Student Health Center at any time in accordance with university policy, PRE-28.

C. **Responsibilities of the Service Animal Owner/Handler**- see section 3.03 of university policy, [PRE-28](#).

D. **Inquiries Regarding Service Animals** – see section 3.02 of university policy, [PRE-28](#).

SHC staff will not ask about a person's specific disability, require medical documentation, require training documentation, or ask that the dog demonstrate its ability to perform the work or task. If it is not readily apparent that an animal is doing work or performing a task on behalf of a person with a disability, the student may be referred to a university official to make limited inquiries if unable to complete the clinic visit. Generally, the student visit will be completed in its normal course of action with the service dog present without any inquiry needed.

E. **Removal of Service Animal** – see sections 5.01 and 5.02 of university policy, [PRE-28](#)

F. Hand Hygiene

Hand hygiene must be performed in accordance with SHC [Hand Hygiene](#) policy by all who have contact with animals.

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- G. Any mess, including excrement, generated by the animal is the responsibility of the handler to clean up immediately. Housekeeping staff should also be notified to conduct a terminal clean of the affected area.
- H. Bites or Scratches
Any incidents of bites or scratches occurring within SHC should be reported to the clinic director in addition to following usual process for [Workplace Accidents and Injuries](#).

IV. Attachments

- 1. U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, Disability Rights Section, ADA 2010 Revised Requirements, [Service Animals](#)
- 2. President's Office Policy PRE-28, [Campus Access for Students or Visitors with Disabilities Using Service and Emotional Support Animals](#)

V. References

- 1. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
<https://www.ada.gov/>
- 2. Human Resources Code, Title 8. Rights and Responsibilities of Persons with Disabilities, [Chapter 121. Participation in Social and Economic Activities](#)
- 3. SHC [Hand Hygiene](#) policy