

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE NO. 354

SERVICE DOG

Background

For the purpose of this procedure, the term “Service Dog” includes guide dogs, assistance dogs, skills dogs, companion dogs and service dogs. Service dogs must be certified and registered in Canada. The Service Dog will have a distinctive harness, saddlebag or vest and will always be on a leash.

Service Dogs are trained to assist children or adults who have a physical or developmental disability with their daily living activities. The use of Service Dogs is a strategy that is recognized as an aid to inclusion of students with special needs. Use of a Service Dog by a student will be allowed in school and on Division property when it has been decided the student’s needs require such use for the student to have access to an inclusive education.

Procedures

1. The parent must request in writing to the school permission to use a Service Dog. APPENDIX A: REQUEST FOR A CERTIFIED SERVICE DOG must be completed and submitted to the school principal.
 - 1.1 The parent must provide a letter from a member of the College of Physicians and Surgeons confirming the diagnosis of a special need, including a recommendation for the use of a Service Dog.
 - 1.2 A certificate of training for the dog from the service dog organization must be provided.
 - 1.3 Annually, the school must be provided with proof of a municipal dog license and proof of up to date vaccinations provided by a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine confirming that the dog is in good health.
 - 1.4 The parent must provide a plan to the school for the personal care and physical needs of the dog, including a daily bio-break procedure and providing an appropriate kennel and water bowl.
- 2 The principal shall ensure that the use of the Service Dog is consistent with the needs and recommendations of the student’s education plan.
- 3 The principal shall ensure that school staff, students, parents and appropriate people are informed about the arrival of the Service Dog to the school.

- 4 The principal shall arrange for a case conference to:
 - 4.1 Discuss the purpose and function of the Service Dog;
 - 4.2 Set the personal and physical care of the dog:
 - 4.2.1 The safest and most environmentally sound location for the dog to take a bio-break,
 - 4.2.2 Removal and disposal of the animal waste,
 - 4.2.3 Considerations for seasonal changes and inclement weather;
 - 4.3 Arrange for classroom considerations (such as seating plans);
 - 4.4 Allow for a transition plan for the arrival of the dog to the school and classroom to be developed and put in place and,
 - 4.5 Set rules of conduct around the Service Dog for students, staff and the public.
- 5 The principal shall ensure that the school community and the students in the classroom will be informed about the arrival of the working Service Dog, its purpose, rules and regulations regarding the presence of the Service Dog at school.
- 6 A sign should be placed at the entrance of the school alerting visitors to the presence of a dog.
- 7 The Service Dog organization will be asked to provide in-service training to the student's school team.
- 8 An appropriate fire exit and lockdown plan must be put into place and the Fire and Police Departments notified as to the presence of the dog in the school.
- 9 The principal shall inform the Superintendent and the Director of Special Education that a Service Dog will be present at the school.
- 10 The school may impose some restrictions on the Service Dog for safety reasons. The Service Dog may be excluded or have limited access to certain areas of the school facilities or certain programs for safety reasons. Areas or programs which may be considered off limits for Service Dogs include but are not limited to:
 - 10.1 Laboratories, mechanical closets, custodial closets, food preparation areas, areas where protective clothing is required, areas that have exposed sharp metal cuttings or other sharp objects, areas with high levels of dust and areas where there is moving machinery.
- 11 If needed, transportation must be arranged. (See APPENDIX E)

Note: The following is a list of Appendices.

APPENDIX A: Request for a Service Dog

APPENDIX B: Sample Letter to the School Community

APPENDIX C: Sample Letter to Families with Children in the Classroom

APPENDIX D: Principal Checklist

APPENDIX E: Transportation Protocol

Reference: School Act
Human Rights Code
Blind Persons Act

May 2011

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APPENDIX 'A'

REQUEST FOR A CERTIFIED SERVICE DOG

Name of Student: _____ D.O.B. _____

Address: _____

School: _____

Name(s) of Parent(s)/Guardian(s): _____

Telephone Number: _____

a) Reason for a Certified Service Dog:

b) Length of time the student and Certified Service Dog have worked together:

c) I/We understand that it is our responsibility to:

- Provide the principal with all required documentation, reports, and certificates in a timely manner;
- Assume financial responsibility for the Certified Service Dog's training, veterinary care, city license and other related costs;
- participate in a school case conference to inform the principal of all relevant information that may affect our child, other students, staff, and/or visitors to the school;
- Assist the principal to communicate relevant information to the school community;
- Work cooperatively with the school staff to ensure the accommodation of the Service Dog is successful;

- work with the Transportation department to ensure successful transportation of your child and the Service Dog to school every day;
- Provide the required equipment and dog care items;
- Provide food, water and bio-breaks to the Service Dog as required and,
- Remove and dispose of animal waste in a safe and environmentally friendly manner.

d) I/We understand that if the Certified Service Dog exhibits any unprovoked behaviours (i.e. growling, scratching, nipping, biting, etc.) at school it will be removed until the plan is re-evaluated to ensure the safety of staff, students, and visitors.

e) I/We give permission for this information to be shared with the school community and agree to the notification our students through letters (Appendices B & C).

f) I/We understand that the principal shall preserve the confidentiality of all information received and shall not disclose the information except as provided for in the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, the School Act or as otherwise required by law. The principal shall use and disclose information with Board personal as may be required for the performance of their duties.

g) I/We acknowledge having received and read **Administrative Procedure NO. 354, Use of Service Dogs.**

Signature of Parent(s)/Guardian(s): _____

Date: _____

For Office Use Only:

Request for Certified Service Dog: Approved: _____ Denied: _____

Signature of Principal: _____

Date: _____

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APPENDIX 'B'

SAMPLE LETTER TO THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Date

Dear Parents/Guardians,

This letter is to inform you that there will be a Service Dog in our school assisting one of our students. This dog is a trained companion for the student and is able to assist him/her in many of the daily routines while learning at school.

This certified Service Dog is highly trained and recognized by an accredited Canadian training facility. The student's right to have certified Service Dog is protected under Human Rights legislation and the School Act and therefore can be with the handler in all aspects of his/her education.

There will be an information assembly at the school to help students identify with the Service Dog and how it will fit into daily school routines. All students will be informed as to proper procedures around the dog because the dog is not a pet but a certified working service animal while at school.

We anticipate the Service Dog to be a benefit to the student's learning and we look forward to this new addition to our school community.

Thank you for your understanding and support. Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact the school office.

Sincerely,

Principal

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APPENDIX 'C'

SAMPLE LETTER TO FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN IN THE CLASSROOM

Date

Dear Parents/Guardians,

This letter is to inform you that there will be a Service Dog in our school assisting one of our students. This dog is a trained companion for a student and will be in your child's classroom effective (date).

This certified Service Dog is highly trained and recognized by an accredited Canadian training facility. The student's right to have certified Service Dog is protected under Human Rights legislation and the School Act and therefore can be with the handler in all aspect of his/her education. An upcoming information session for parents will offer more information on how the dog will be integrated into the school setting.

There will be an information assembly at the school to help students identify with the Service Dog and how it will fit into daily school routines. All students will be informed as to proper procedures around the dog because the dog is not a pet but a certified working service animal while at school.

We anticipate the Service Dog to be a benefit to the student's learning and we look forward to this new addition to our school community.

Thank you for your understanding and support. Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact the school office.

Sincerely,

Principal

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APPENDIX 'D'

PRINCIPAL CHECKLIST

This guideline is to assist school administration in preparing for a Service Dog to accompany a student at school.

- Parents have requested permission in writing.
- Parents have provided a letter from a member of the College of Physicians and Surgeons confirming the diagnosis as well as the recommendation of the Service Dog.
- Copies of the parent request and the medical diagnosis have been placed in the Student Record.
- The parents have been informed that the provision of the Service Dog is the financial responsibility of the parent.
- The parent has been informed that the maintenance of the Service Dog, including bio-breaks, clean-up and other care is the responsibility of the parent.
- The parent has met with the principal to discuss the potential impact of the Service Dog on the school community.
- The principal has consulted with the Superintendent and the Student Services department prior to granting permission.
- The principal has communicated with the school community to ensure that parents know a Service Dog will be present in the school.

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APPENDIX 'E'

TRANSPORTATION PROTOCOL

The following protocol is suggested for a safe ride with the Service Dog

1. A student that is eligible to bring a dog to school is allowed by law to have the Service Dog transported on the school bus.
2. The Transportation Department should be provided with proof that the Service Dog is a licensed, trained dog.
3. Ensure there is documentation about the Service Dog with the route information to ensure all drivers and spare drivers are informed.
4. The Service Dog should not sit in the aisle of the bus. Whenever possible, they should be in the seat compartment and/or on the floor away from the aisle to prevent it from becoming a projectile or a tripping hazard.
5. The handler or school must provide basic training for the driver and other students on the bus to ensure all parties have an understanding of what is allowed and what is not allowed.
6. The Service Dog is a highly trained animal and should not be touched or fed by anyone but the handler. The dog is working while on the bus and therefore should be quiet, still, and attentive to the handler.
7. The Board may determine the need for another person to accommodate the student and Service Dog on the bus.