

**Program Name:** True Friends

## **SERVICE ANIMAL/DOG POLICY**

### **I. Policy**

It is the policy of True Friends to ensure equal access to the public areas of our corporate office and camps when our customers, guests, volunteers, and staff utilize a service animal/dog. Service animals are defined as dogs that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities. A service dog-in-training is granted the same rights as a fully trained service dog. Under the ADA, Americans with Disabilities Act, state and local governments, businesses, and non-profit organizations that serve the public must allow service animals/dogs to accompany people with disabilities in all areas of the facility to which the public is regularly granted access. Please note that a dog whose sole function is to provide comfort and/or emotional support do not qualify as service animals under the ADA.

### **II. Process**

- A. True Friends will allow service animals/dogs, defined by the ADA, access to the public locations of our facility.
  - 1) At times, it may be appropriate to exclude a service animal/dog from certain rooms, when health and safety is compromised. Example is that a service animal/dog would not be allowed in True Friends health care facility when the animal's presence could compromise a sterile environment.
- B. True Friends personnel will not refuse a service animal/dog because they can complete the work or task the service animal/dog would complete.
- C. Service animals/dogs do not have to be professionally trained. They do not require any certification and they do not have to wear an identifying patch or vest.
- D. Service animals/dogs have to comply with local dog licensing and registration requirements
- E. Service animals/dogs must be harnessed, leashed or tethered unless these devices interfere with the service animal's/dog's work or the individual's disability prevents using these devices. If the latter is the case, the individual must maintain control of the animal/dog through voice commands, signals, or other controls.
- F. When it is not obvious what service an animal/dog provides, only limited inquiries are allowed. Staff may ask these questions:
  - 1) Is the dog or service animal required because of a disability?
  - 2) What work or task has the dog been trained to perform?

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**NOTE:** True Friends will not ask about the person's disability, require medical documentation, require a special identification card or training documentation for the dog, or ask that the dog demonstrate its ability to perform the work or task.

- G. Allergies or fear of dogs are not valid reasons for denying access or refusing services to people utilizing service animals/dogs. Accommodations need to be made for everyone involved if others are allergic or fearful of the service animal/dog.
- H. A person with a disability cannot be asked to remove his service animal/dog from the premises unless:
  - 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.

**NOTE:** When there is a legitimate reason for a service animal/dog to be removed, staff must offer the person with the disability the opportunity to obtain the goods or services without the animal's/dog's presence.

- I. Establishments that prepare or sell food must allow service animals/dogs in public areas, even if state or local health codes prohibit animals on the premises.
- J. Discrimination against individuals with service animals/dogs is prohibited. This means True Friends will not:
  - 1) isolate patrons from one another,
  - 2) treat individuals with service animals/dogs less favorably,
  - 3) charge fees that are not charged to other patrons, or
  - 4) require a fee or deposit not required of other patrons.
- K. True Friends staff are not required to provide care, food or water to the service animal/dog. This is the responsibility of the handler.

### III. Procedure

- A. True Friends will include acceptance of service animals/dogs in their sales brochures.
- B. This policy will be posted on the True Friends website.
- C. True Friends will add a section on their application inquiring if applicants will be bringing a service animal/dog with them to their camping experience.
- D. If True Friends receives an application indicating a camper is bringing a service animal/dog, they will send this policy to the attendee.
- E. True Friends will also inform the other attendees of the same program that a guest will be bringing their service animal, along with the service animal/dog policy, giving them time to make alternative arrangements, if needed.
- F. True Friends will be providing training to their direct contact staff regarding this policy. This training will be documented on staff's orientation training record.

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- G. True Friends will work with Can-Do Canines in development of training materials, accessing them as needed.

**IV. Resources**

- A. American with Disabilities Act; website is [www.ADA.gov](http://www.ADA.gov)
- B. Can Do Canines; website is [www.can-do-canines.org](http://www.can-do-canines.org)
- C. United States Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division