Accommodating Students with Service Animals in Teaching Laboratories

Guidance for Safety Staff and Instructors

Scope: This guidance applies to University staff who need to accommodate students with conditions or disabilities (permanent or temporary) that need a service animal. This is not intended to substitute for guidance from the Office of Disability Services for Students (DSS) at https://studentaffairs.indiana.edu/disability-services-students/, 812-855-7578 (All students with disabilities are encouraged to access the services available through the DSS). Nor does this override the University policy for Animals in Buildings (FIN-INS-11). This guideline is intended for teaching laboratory staff but may be used for research laboratory applications, as well.

Definition: A service animal is defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) as a dog that has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability and includes dogs trained to take a specific action, such as dogs trained to alert for low blood sugar in diabetics, those that detect the onset of seizures, and even those that alert the time for medication in depressed individuals. Dogs used for emotional support, therapy, comfort, companions, and dogs-in-training are not considered qualified service dogs.

Goal: The University intends all students be safe and successful in the teaching laboratories. This goal applies to service animals, as well. To accomplish this goal, the needs of the student and accommodations requested by the student must be understood. If a service animal is used, the staff need to understand how the animal has been trained to help and what to do if the animal alerts.

Administrative Hazard Controls: Alternatives to positioning the service animal in the lab next to the individual must be considered first. This would include the potential for placing the animal behind a removable gate or in a pen in an adjacent room or area away from hazards. If a location next to the person is required, consider a location at the end of the bench or in a corner away from other students, personnel, and activities.

Safety Equipment: If personal protective equipment (PPE) is required of personnel in teaching and research laboratories, then service animals entering laboratories must be similarly protected depending on the PPE requirements of the area.

Service animals entering laboratories must be similarly protected to prevent exposure to hazardous chemicals, broken glass or other hazards that might be present in the laboratory environment. This PPE would be provided by the owner and include disposable or reusable boots to cover the feet such as commercially available products (pawzdogboots.com/boots/); disposable lab coats such as Maytex lab coats (www.maytexcorp.com/products_apparel.htm); and disposable plastic-backed absorbent lab paper or pet pads such as those manufactured by R Sabee (www.rsabeecompany.com) for the animal to lie on during lab to protect them from whatever might be on the floor. Animal beds or fabric pads are not appropriate for use in the lab. If appropriate PPE is not brought to the lab, then the service animal will not be permitted into the laboratory. Appropriate PPE is required to help protect the service animal and must be utilized.
Needs Assessment (for use by Safety Staff, Instructors, or PIs)

Student Name:______________________________ Date:__________________

Staff Person:______________________________________________________

If the student needs to use a service animal the following questions should be asked:

The “Information for Service Animal Users” sheet must be provided, discussed and signed.

a) Do you require the animal to be with you at all times or only under certain circumstances?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ circumstance?

What are those circumstances?

b) Do you need a place for the animal to stay while you’re in lab and not needing the animal at that time?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA

c) If you need the animal to be brought to you while you’re in lab, what are those circumstances?


d) What work does the animal do for you?


e) How does the animal alert?


f) What should the Instructor do if the animal alerts?
INFORMATION FOR SERVICE ANIMAL USERS

Indiana University is committed to your safety and success in laboratory and if that success includes the use of a service animal, to make sure your animal is also safe and secure. Laboratories are not hazard free areas. Hazardous chemicals, open flames, glassware, and electrical equipment are all used.

If you require the use of a service animal in the laboratory, staff have been trained to ask you a series of questions to determine how best we can safely facilitate the presence of your animal. These questions are not intended to prevent you from having your animal in lab, but rather so we understand how best to accommodate your needs and the needs of your animal. The following equipment and behavior expectations are required for your animal’s safety and for the safety of the other laboratory occupants.

Alternative locations in adjacent areas, rooms, corners, at the end of benches, or using gates, pens, or kennels (for kennel-trained service animals) might be appropriate. Please consider alternate locations with staff for these options.

**Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):** Service animals entering laboratories must be similarly protected to prevent exposure to hazardous chemicals, broken glass or other hazards that might be present in the laboratory environment. This PPE would be provided by the owner and include disposable or reusable boots to cover the feet such as commercially available products (pawzdogboots.com/boots/); disposable lab coats such as Maytex lab coats (www.maytexcorp.com/products_apparel.htm); and disposable plastic-backed absorbent lab paper or pet pads such as those manufactured by R Sabee (www.rsabeecompany.com) for the animal to lie on during lab to protect them from whatever might be on the floor. Animal beds or fabric pads are not appropriate for use in the lab. If appropriate PPE is not brought to the lab, then the service animal will not be permitted into the laboratory. Appropriate PPE is required to help protect the service animal and must be utilized.

**Behavior Expectations:** If the service animal is present in lab, the animal must be trained to “stay” and “leave it” (or equivalent behavior). The animal must not vocalize, bark, or growl inappropriately. If the animal is trained to alert by vocalizing, the instructor or staff must be aware of the circumstances under which the animal would vocalize. Disruptive, extended vocalizing or barking will not be permitted, unless in proper context. The animal must not behave aggressively towards other people – snapping, snarling, growling, charging, swiping, etc. The animal must not jump up on other people. The people in the laboratory will be informed that the animal is a service animal and always working. Interaction with the animal is by permission of the owner and only permitted outside of the laboratory.

If the service animal displays any of these behaviors, the animal will not be permitted in the laboratory until documented and demonstrated re-training has occurred.

I have read and agree to these stipulations and requirements.

Name (Print):__________________________________________________________
Signature:____________________________________________________________
Classroom or Research Laboratory:_______________________________________
Staff Member Signature:______________________________________________ Date _________________