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## Use of Service Animals by Non-Student Individuals Operational Procedure

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### **Purpose:**

The Toronto Catholic District School Board (TCDSB) is committed to fostering an inclusive, safe, and welcoming environment for all members of the school community. In accordance with the Ontario Human Rights Code, the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), and TCDSB policies, this procedure establishes a consistent framework for non-student individuals (such as parents, guardians, and caregivers) to access TCDSB schools when accompanied by a service animal to attend to the needs of a student.

### **Scope:**

This procedure applies to all TCDSB schools, and governs access by non-student individuals (parents, guardians, and caregivers,) accompanied by service animals.

### **Procedure:**

#### **Parents/Guardians/Caregivers Requiring Service Animals**

1. When required to be on school property to attend to the needs of a student, Parent/Guardian/Caregivers accompanied by a service animal shall:
  - i. Advise the principal or vice-principal of the need for a service animal and provide supporting documentation in accordance with section 80.45 (4) of O. Reg. 191/11: INTEGRATED ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS;
  - ii. Assume full responsibility for the personal care and supervision of the service animal while on school property;
  - iii. Ensure that the service animal is readily identifiable through a visible marker such as a vest or harness clearly indicating that it is a service animal;
    - Staff may ask that the service animal be taken off school premises in absence of identifiable markers.
  - iv. Ensure that the service animal is leashed and/or harnessed and remains under the care and control of the parent, guardian or caregiver at all times;
  - v. Cooperate with school and Board staff to support a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment for all members of the school community;
  - vi. Ensure that the service animal is not touched, fed, or handled by other individuals while on Board property and;
  - vii. Remove the service animal immediately if it exhibits disruptive behaviour that poses a health or safety risk.

## **Access Limitations & Exceptions**

2. Access may be restricted in areas prohibited by law (including but not limited to the *Health Protection and Promotion Act* and the *Food and Safety Act*).
3. Where the presence of a service animal presents a potential risk to the health or safety of another individual, the principal shall first review the circumstances in consultation with the Superintendent responsible for the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, and explore with the parent, guardian or caregiver other reasonable accommodation options that are consistent with Human Rights obligations.
4. Every effort must be made to balance the rights, dignity, and safety of all members of the school community in determining an appropriate resolution.

## **Concerns & Resolution**

5. Concerns related to service animal access should first be addressed by the principal or if unresolved, the matter may be referred to the area superintendent, the Superintendent responsible for the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, and the Human Rights and Equity Office for further review.

**Per section 80.45 (4) of O. Reg. 191/11: INTEGRATED ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS**

An animal is a service animal for a person with a disability if:

- (a) The animal can be readily identified as one that is being used by the person for reasons relating to the person's disability, as a result of visual indicators such as the vest or harness worn by the animal; or
- (b) The person provides documentation from one of the following regulated health professionals confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability:
  - i. A member of the College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario.
  - ii. A member of the College of Chiropractors of Ontario.
  - iii. A member of the College of Nurses of Ontario.
  - iv. A member of the College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario.
  - v. A member of the College of Optometrists of Ontario.
  - vi. A member of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario.
  - vii. A member of the College of Physiotherapists of Ontario.
  - viii. A member of the College of Psychologists of Ontario.
  - ix. A member of the College of Registered Psychotherapists and Registered Mental Health Therapists of Ontario.