

Approved By: President

Date Approved: September 27, 2023

Effective Date: December 23, 2016

1. **Summary:** This policy establishes which pets, emotional support animals, and service animals may be allowed on Criswell College's campus as well as guidelines for those animals that are allowed.
2. **Rationale:** The purpose of this policy is to minimize safety, liability, and nuisance issues related to the presence of animals on the College's campus while maintaining reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities.

3. **Entities Affected:** all constituents

4. **Definitions:**

disability: a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of a person's major life activities and which necessitates modifications to the facilities, programs, or services of the College.

handler: either 1) an individual who utilizes a service animal to perform work or tasks pertaining to that individual's disability or 2) an owner of a service animal, emotional support animal, or pet.

service animal: a guide dog, signal dog, or other dog that is individually trained to perform work or tasks for an individual with a disability. Service animals perform some of the functions and tasks of normal daily living that an individual with a disability cannot perform. A service animal is a working animal, not a pet. To be considered a service animal, the work or tasks the animal has been trained to provide must be directly related to the individual's disability. Service animals are covered under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

emotional support animal: any animal that provides emotional support, alleviating one or more symptoms or effects of a person's psychiatric disability. Emotional support animals also provide companionship, relieve loneliness, and sometimes help with depression, anxiety, and certain phobias, but do not have special training to perform tasks that assist people with disabilities. Emotional support animals are not limited to dogs. Emotional Support Animals are covered under the Fair Housing Act (FHA).

pet: a domesticated or tamed animal that would normally be expected to belong to someone whether or not there is any acknowledged ownership. Examples of pets include, but are not limited to, dogs, cats, rodents, reptiles, birds, and fish.

5. **Policy:**

Presence of Animals on Campus

Pets are only permitted in outside areas of the campus. Pets are not permitted inside the College's buildings and

facilities without approval from the Chief Financial Officer or the Chief of Police. An exception is made for fish within an employee's office, subject to the approval of that employee's immediate supervisor, if kept in an aquarium of 10-gallon size or less.

In compliance with the Fair Housing Act (FHA), emotional support animals are permitted on campus as approved by the Chief Finance Officer or the Chief of Police as well as other relevant departments and may only be permitted in certain areas (e.g., a resident's apartment). Only one emotional support animal is permitted per individual (employee, student, resident, etc.) on campus at any time.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Rehabilitation Act, service animals are permitted on campus for persons with disabilities in accordance with the requirements of this policy.

Care, Control, and Behavior

The care and supervision of a pet, emotional support animal, or service animal is solely the responsibility of its handler. The handler of an animal that is not housebroken or that is unruly or disruptive (e.g., barking, running around loose, nipping, or otherwise not under control) may be required to remove the animal from the campus. If improper behavior happens repeatedly, the handler may be required to take significant steps to mitigate the behavior before bringing the animal back to the campus. The handler of the animal is solely responsible for any damage to persons or property caused by the animal. The handler is responsible for designating an alternative caregiver for the pet or service animal in case of an emergency.

The handler must be in full control of the pet, emotional support animal, or service animal at all times. Pets and service animals must be harnessed, leashed, tethered, or otherwise restrained at all times while on the College's campus (unless these devices interfere with the service animal's work or the individual's disability prevents using these devices). The handler of an animal whose behavior poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others or is repeatedly disruptive to the College community may be required to remove the animal from the campus. Disruptive or dangerous behavior should be reported immediately to Campus Police.

The handler is responsible for knowing and complying with relevant identification, licensure, tagging, and other legal requirements or prohibitions for his or her specific animal according to state and local laws. If there is no visible harness, identification tag, or other gear readily identifying an animal as a service animal, Criswell officials may make the following limited inquiries as allowed by the Revised Americans with Disabilities Act: 1) is the service animal required because of a disability, and 2) what work or task has the dog been trained to perform?

Pets, emotional support animals, and service animals must be clean, in good health, and well-groomed. Measures should be taken at all times for flea and odor control. The pet, emotional support animal, or service animal must have current vaccinations and immunizations against diseases common to that type of animal and must wear a current rabies vaccination tag if applicable to that species. The handler is responsible for ensuring the immediate clean-up and proper disposal of all animal waste and for any damage caused by the waste or its removal.

Community Interaction

Members of the College community should respect service animals and individuals with disabilities, and follow these recommended guidelines:

- Allow a handler to be accompanied by a service animal at all times and places on campus except where specifically prohibited as set forth in this policy.
- Ask a handler before petting a service animal. Service animals can be very protective, and petting also may distract them from a task at hand.
- Only feed a service animal with permission from the handler.
- Do not separate or attempt to separate a handler from his or her service animal.
- The nature of an individual’s disability is a private matter. Discussions about an individual’s disability should be undertaken only if the disabled individual initiates that discussion.

Members of the College community who have questions or concerns regarding the behavior or presence of a service animal, emotional support animal, or pet on the College’s campus should not direct their concerns to the handler but direct all questions or concerns to Human Resources, Student Services, or Campus Police.

Persons with medical conditions that are affected by animals (e.g., respiratory diseases, asthma, severe allergies) should contact Human Resources, Student Services, or Campus Police if they have a health or safety-related concern about exposure to a service animal or pet on campus. The individual with the medical condition will be asked to provide sufficient information to identify the condition or disability and the need for accommodation. The College will consider the needs of both the person affected and the handler in seeking an efficient resolution.

6. Procedure:

- a. **Implementation:** not applicable
- b. **Responsibility for Compliance:** Chief Financial Officer
- c. **Notification:** This policy will be posted on the College’s website.
- d. **Policy Review:** This policy will be regularly reviewed according to the College’s policy review procedure.

For the Office of the President only:

Policy version: 2.0	Policy number: 2.043
Related policies: Students with Disabilities	

Policy History

Version 1.0	December 23, 2016
Version 2.0	September 27, 2023