

STUDENT SERVICE ANIMAL POLICY

Authorizer: Vice President, Academic/Student Affairs and Human Resources

Version: V1

Effective Date: 01/13/2020

POLICY STATEMENT:

Conestoga College Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning (Conestoga) allows service animals that assist students with disabilities at Conestoga.

SCOPE:

This policy applies to all students of Conestoga College.

DEFINITIONS:

AODA

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act

Disability

As defined by the Ontario Human Rights Code, a disability is:

- any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device,
- a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,
- a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
- a mental disorder, or
- an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997*.

Service Animal

Service animals perform specific tasks for people with disabilities. They are working animals, not pets. The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)* states that there are two methods for identifying animals as service animals. The first is that 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". An example of this is a guide dog wearing a vest or harness and providing services for an individual who is visually impaired. Secondly, an animal qualifies as a service animal if documentation is provided from a regulated health professional from the below list who confirms that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability:

- A member of the College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario
- A member of the College of Chiropractors of Ontario.
- A member of the College of Nurses of Ontario.
- A member of the College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario.
- A member of the College of Optometrists of Ontario.
- A member of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario.
- A member of the College of Physiotherapists of Ontario.
- A member of the College of Psychologists of Ontario.
- A member of the College of Registered Psychotherapists and Registered Mental Health Therapists of Ontario.

Service Animal Partner

The service animal partner is the individual with a disability who uses a service animal to provide assistance with daily tasks.

POLICY ELABORATION:

General Terms:

- Pets are not permitted to enter any Conestoga College facilities or buildings.
- This policy applies to Conestoga-owned properties and does not extend to learning activities that may take place offsite. Service animal use at offsite locations is governed by the offsite location/organization's policies and procedures, as applicable.
- This policy applies to service animals in the Conestoga Residence.
 - Students must inform the Conestoga Residence prior to moving in that they may be accompanied by a service animal. Students may be directed to Student Success Services for approval of the request, dependent on circumstances.
- The AODA provides two methods for identifying an animal as a service animal. The first states that 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". The second is that the individual can provide documentation from a "regulated health professional confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability". When the animal in question is not readily identifiable as a service animal (such as a guide dog wearing a vest or harness providing service to a person with visual impairment), the individual wishing to be accompanied by the service animal must provide documentation.

- All requests for service animals, including requests that relate to the Conestoga Residence, must be made in accordance with the Service Animal Procedure.
 - Decisions regarding student accommodation requests for service animals will be managed by Student Success Services and the Accommodation Advisory Committee.
- Conestoga considers each request for a service animal based on the requestor's disability-related needs as well as other circumstances that may impact the request.
- Service animals may be excluded due to any of the following conditions:
 - Aggressive or disruptive behavior on the part of the service animal that is not being effectively controlled by the service animal partner.
 - The service animal's presence, behavior or actions pose an unreasonable or direct threat to property or the health or safety of others.
 - If a law specifically states that animals must be excluded.
- If the service animal is to be excluded due to any of the above, the service animal partner must be given an opportunity to participate in the activity or receive services without the service animal on the premises. If the animal has been excluded due to disruptive behavior, the service animal partner may participate in the activity with the service animal once the animal's behavior is demonstrably under control.
- Conestoga does not grant credentials or other forms of academic recognition to service animals.

Expectations of the Service Animal Partner:

- When a service animal is not "readily identifiable" as a service animal, the service animal partner must provide documentation from a regulated health professional confirming the need for a service animal in accordance with the Service Animal Procedure.
- The service animal partner is responsible for the care and management of the service animal, including ensuring that the service animal is kept groomed and clean.
- The service animal partner must be fully aware of off-campus location policies as they apply to service animals.

Expectations of Faculty and Staff:

- Faculty and staff will welcome service animals providing assistance to individuals with disabilities.
- Faculty and staff will not request that service animals be left in different locations, such as outside an office or classroom, unless a legal exception or exclusion applies.
- Faculty and staff will contact Student Success Services with any questions or concerns regarding service animals, including questions about the verification of the service animal's status.

REFERENCES:

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005
Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms
Ontario Human Rights Code

Accessibility Policy and Multi-Year Plan
Service Animal Procedure
Student Accommodation Policy and Procedure

REVISION LOG:

Academic Forum	12/11/2019
Academic Coordinating Committee	01/13/2020