

**POLICY – SERVICE ANIMALS**

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- 18.0 A service animal is an animal that is being used because of a person's disability. Such use is either readily apparent or is supported by a letter from a physician or nurse. It is "readily apparent" that an animal is a service animal when it is obvious by its appearance or by what it is doing, (e.g., wearing a harness or saddle bags) that identifies it as a service animal or that the owner has a certificate or identification card from a service animal training school. It may also be readily apparent if a person is using the animal to assist him or her, e.g. opening doors or retrieving items. Service animals offer independence and security to many people with various disabilities. Some laws generally prohibit animals in certain areas, such as food preparation areas; however service animals are permitted in most public situations. For example, a service animal would not be allowed in a restaurant kitchen, but is allowed in the restaurant itself.

**PROCEDURES**

- 19.0 Unless otherwise excluded by law, the customer service standard requires that a person is permitted to be accompanied by his or her guide dog or other service animal in the areas that are open to the public or third parties. As such, LHIN employees should allow persons with disabilities to be accompanied by their guide dog or service animal unless the animal is excluded by law.
- 20.0 In the event that a service animal is excluded by law, the reason why the animal is excluded should be explained to the individual and other reasonable arrangements to provide goods and services should be explored with the assistance of the person with the disability.

- 21.0 Support persons are non-participants and therefore whenever possible should be granted free admission to the goods and/or services being accessed by the person with a disability they are accompanying. If an amount is payable by a support person for admission to an event or in connection with a person's presence at a LHIN sponsored function, notice should be provided to the individual in advance about the amount payable by the support person.