

Procedures And Protocols For The Use Of Service Dogs In Schools

1.0 Purpose

Service dogs are trained to provide assistance to children and adults with disabilities. Service dogs allow an individual to attain independence in their daily tasks and they assist with safety, mental well-being and learning.

This protocol provides directions for schools to follow when a parent requests the admission and use of a service dog by a student in a Toronto Catholic District School Board. Decisions regarding the admission and use of service dogs are made on a case by case basis. Entry of service dogs into schools is decided after consultation. The request will be reviewed by the Principal in consultation with the Superintendent.

2.0 Background

Section 10(2) of the Ontario Human Rights Code, RSO 1990, c H.19 (the "Code") and section 2 of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, SO 2005 c 11 (the "AODA") provide a broad definition of the term "disability:"

- (a) 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,
- (b) a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,
- (c) a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
- (d) a mental disorder, or
- (e) an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997;

Schools are required to accommodate people with disabilities and their disability related needs to ensure equal access. However, where the accommodation needed by the person would cause the school undue hardship, the school is not required to offer accommodation.

The AODA (Accessibility For Ontarians For Disabilities Act) requires that a school allow people with disabilities to be accompanied by a guide dog or service animal, and requires a school to permit people with guide dogs or service animals to enter its premises (the school, buses etc.) with the animal and to keep the animal with the person, unless the animal is otherwise

excluded by law. Whether a service animal is otherwise excluded from the premises by law will be determined using the procedure outlined below.

As defined by the AODA (Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act), 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.

3.0 **Accreditation For Services Dogs**

Service animals must be certified and registered in Canada. The Special Skills Dog (SSD) or National Service Dog (NSD) will have a distinctive harness and leash and/or saddlebag and vest.

Training schools for any type of service, guide or working dog in Ontario must be members and accredited by either:

a) The International Guide Dog Federation (IGDF): Members' purpose is to serve the visually impaired and blind people from around the world by training and providing Guide Dogs;

b) Assistance Dogs International, Inc. (ADI): ADI is a coalition of not-for-profit organizations that train and place Assistance Dogs.

4.0 **Procedure For Request for Service Dog Involvement At School**

A parent/guardian must notify the school in writing that they are requesting a service dog to accompany the child during the school day. The Principal will then provide parent/guardian with **Request for Service Dog Involvement with a Student Package (Appendix A)**.

Parent/guardian must complete this package and return it to the principal before the implementation process can begin. The following must be included in the package:

- A letter from a member of the College of Physicians and Surgeons or the College of Psychologists confirming the diagnosis of a recognized special need as well as a recommendation for the use of a certified service dog;
- A letter from an accredited registered Service Dogs Training Centre stating that a certified service dog has been placed with the student and the date of formal certification;
- Provide the school with proof of up-to-date vaccinations,
- A municipal Service Dog license
- Confirmation that the dog is in good health; (a letter from the Veterinarian)

➤ Provide liability insurance. **CHECK??? (Should this be included?)**

The Principal will inform and consult with the Superintendent prior to planning the implementation process.

The Principal will schedule a School Based Support Learning Team Meeting with the parents/guardians, a representative of the dog training centre, appropriate school staff who work with the student. The Superintendent may be invited to this meeting.

Discussion may include:

- Safety considerations (e.g., severe allergies, staff or students with asthma, fear of dogs, etc.);
- The potential impact of the involvement of the dog on the school community;
- Dog care requirements, handling routines and responsibilities including who will act as the **handler** at school

- Guidelines for staff and students;
- The role of and communication with the parent/guardian.

5.0 Principals' Responsibilities:

1. Complete **Principal Checklist for the Implementation of a Service Dog into the School.** (See Appendix B)
2. Place a copy of the parent letter and the medical diagnosis in the OSR. Any further documentation relating to the use of the Service Dog is to be housed in the OSR.
3. Ensure that the reasons for use of the Service Dog, the benefits to the student in the school environment and descriptions of activity are consistent with the needs or recommendations of IPRC and if the student has an IEP the need and role of the Service Dog should be included.
4. Consult with the Superintendent of Special Services upon receipt of a parental request for the use of a service dog in the school.
5. Set up a case conference involving the parents/guardians, principal, classroom teacher(s), special education staff, a representative from Service Dogs of Canada, the student when appropriate and a Superintendent of Education to discuss and develop a plan to determine the following:
 - a. Purpose/function of the service dog, both through discussion, as well as through an observation of the student with the Service Dog.
 - b. Review of the student's strengths and needs and the IEP to determine if the support of a Service Dog may provide accommodations for learning, independence and/or safety not yet provided by the school.
 - c. Personal care of the animal, including:
 - i. Who will be the person (handler) responsible for the animal?
 - ii. What is the backup procedure if the person (handler) is not available?
 - iii. Where is the safest and most environmentally sound place for the dog to relieve itself?
 - iv. If the student is able to maintain the personal care of the dog, who will accompany the student outside, if needed?
 - v. Is there a suitable disposal container that the handler can reach?

- vi. How will the handler “clean up” after the animal?
 - vii. What considerations have been made for winter conditions and inclement weather?
 - viii. What considerations have been made for where the dog’s water bowl is to be kept?
 - ix. Who will fill the water bowl?
6. Ensure classroom teacher(s) and support staff are informed.
7. Consider any necessary change in routine and procedures, as well as any programming changes that may be required.
8. Examine the seating arrangements and traffic flow patterns in the classroom(s).
9. Forward the following letters:
- a. A letter to inform the school community as to arrival of the animal, its purpose and the rules and regulations regarding the existence of the
Sample Letter to Parents In The Community Regarding The Admittance Of A Service Dog Into The School (Appendix C)
 - b. A specific letter to the students in any of the classes where the dog will be present in case of allergies, extreme phobias from the students’ parent/guardian/caregivers. **Sample Letter To The Parents Of The Students In the Class(es) (Appendix D)**
- N.B.** In cases where the accommodation of a Service Dog is required and there are medical or sensitivity issues in the class or school alternate provisions may have to be investigated. Where necessary in the decision making process, rights and needs of one person may have to be balanced against the rights and needs of another. For example, in the case of severe allergies, some of the options to consider may be creating distance between two individuals, eliminating contact, etc.
- c. A letter to the students who will be sharing transportation where the Service Dog will be present including students from another school or school board. **Sample Letter To Those Sharing Transportation With Service Dog (Appendix E).**

N.B. All letters regarding the Assistance Dog must be retained in the student’s OSR for a period of one year, or until superseded.

10. Inform all school staff and health and safety representatives of the presence of the Service Dog.
11. Inform all school volunteers of the presence of the Service Dog.
12. Inform the Catholic School Parent Council of the presence of the Service Dog.
13. Create a **Management Plan for the Care of the Service Dog (Appendix F)** for the student and Service Dog, including:
 - a. Making arrangements for the dog to visit the school after or before students are present in order to become familiar with the school environment;
 - b. A timetable for the introduction of the Service Dog to the school, the class and for the training of the student's school team (Principal, teachers(s), support staff, etc.);
 - c. Rules of conduct around the Service Dog for students, staff and the public and how the information and rules will be disseminated;
 - d. An assembly for the student body, staff, and the community involving representatives from the Service Dogs Association to provide education and awareness of Service Dogs in schools and to explain specifically the role of the assistance in their particular school.
14. Place a sign (generally provided by Service Dogs Association) on the doors of the school alerting visitors to the animal's presence.
15. Revise fire exit plan and evacuation procedures to include the assistance dog.
(Appendix G)
16. Inform the Transportation Services and make transportation arrangements, as needed.
17. Complete the Procedures for the Transportation of Service Dogs on Bus Routes .
Refer to **Transportation Of Service Animals (Appendix H)**.

18. If the bus carrier is transporting students from other Boards on the same bus while the animal is present, then the other Board must be notified so that they can in turn notify the parent(s)/guardian(s)/caregiver(s) of those children (or child) riding on that bus.

6.0 Responsibilities of Students with Service Animals and their Parents/Guardians

Parents/guardians must adhere to the following:

- Be responsible for any financial implications regarding the use and care of the Service Dog, including the provision of a fully trained dog handler to provide for bio-breaks, in cases where the student is unable to meet the needs of the dog;
- Annually, must provide the school/board with proof of up-to-date vaccinations, licenses and confirmation that the dog is in good health;
- Inform school administration and teachers of the service animal's visiting schedule or approximate schedule;
- Provide a mat (not a cushion) or soft crate for service dogs. This will act as a marker of where the dog is required to stay;
- Keep the animal clean and well groomed;
- Parents/guardians should report any incidents involving their service animal to the principal or vice principal immediately;
- Address any medical issues of the service animal immediately, such as ear infections;
- If requested parents/guardians or the student must provide proof that the service animal is permitted in the city or town where the school is located or in the municipality they are visiting on a school trip etc ;
- The Toronto Catholic District School Board recommends that parents/guardians or (where applicable) students review and reflect on their insurance coverage (home and content insurance as it relates to liability coverage).

7.0 Responsibilities For Handler

Handler refers to the individual who has received training and guides, instructs and looks after the animal. In the situation where the student is unable to look after the dog's needs due to physical and/or cognitive challenges, a second individual is required and that person is deemed to be the handler.

The student or handler of the service animal must adhere to the following:

- Demonstrate that the animal is suitable for educational settings (e.g. it will not interfere with school routines and activities) and will not pose a risk to health and safety;
- Keep the animal in control at all times;
- Ensure the animal does not vocalize unnecessarily, e.g. barking, growling or whining;
- Keep the service animal on a leash or contained as appropriate at all times;
- Responsibility for toileting breaks, cleaning up after the animal, for its feeding and other care;
- Make certain the animal's behaviour is not aggressive or threatening;
- Maintain full responsibility of the service animal at all times. Do not leave the animal unattended;
- Respect the rights and feelings of others. For example, attempt to avoid individuals when aware that they are afraid of, or allergic to animals;
- If the student/handler notice any aggressive behaviour involving their service animal such as, growling or biting they must remove the service animal from the situation immediately;
- Students or their parents/guardians should report any incidents involving their service animal to the principal or vice principal immediately.

8.0 Exclusion of Service Dogs

- a) A service animal can only be excluded from access to the premises where this is required by another law. Examples include the Health Protection and Promotion Act and the Food Safety and Quality Act. The former Act prohibits service animals in places where food is prepared, processed, or handled (e.g., kitchen of school cafeteria or

culinary arts classroom) although service dogs are permitted where food is served and sold (e.g., school cafeteria or lunchroom).

- b) Where there is a risk to the health and safety of another person as a result of the presence of a service animal, consideration must be given to options available prior to exclusion of a service animal. An example would be a situation where an individual has a severe allergy to the service animal. It is the Board's expectation that the situation be fully analyzed and all measures to eliminate the risk be considered (e.g., creating distance between the two individuals concerned, making reasonable alterations to schedules, etc.).
- c) A service animal can be excluded if it is of a breed that is prohibited by law.

9.0 Sources (Check** do we need to include this?)**

- ☐ Ontario Human Rights Code
- ☐ Persons with Disabilities Act
- ☐ Ontarians with Disabilities Act
- ☐ Ontario Dog Owners Liability Act
- ☐ Food Safety and Quality Act

Request for Service Dog Involvement with a Student Package

Information for Parents/Guardians Requesting a Service Dog in the School

Dear Parents/Guardians:

The successful implementation of a service dog into a school setting depends on clear communication, a well-informed school community and careful planning. This package will help you provide the necessary information to assist the Principal to make the best possible decisions for your child and other students as well as for the staff, volunteers, and visitors in the school. The information will be filed in your child's Ontario Student Record (OSR).

The use of a service dog is considered to be an accommodation to help your child learn and to develop the necessary skills to achieve success and independence at school. The use of a companion dog is generally not considered to be an accommodation under the Ontario curriculum. If your child already has an Individual Education Plan, it will be reviewed at a School Based Support Learning Team (SBSLT) Meeting, or one will be developed in consultation with you. The Principal will invite you, your child's teacher, a representative from the training centre, and the School Based Support Learning Team (SBSLT) to discuss your child's needs, the accommodations that are already in place for your child, as well as the additional assistance provided by a service dog.

The well-being of the dog is also very important. Its care, handling and training needs will be addressed and your input as a trained handler is valuable. The Principal needs to know what resources are available to facilitate the transition of the service dog to school and the implementation of the plan. Strategies for becoming familiar with the building and school grounds, introduction to assemblies/concerts, recess, and informing the staff about interacting with the dog will need to be included in the planning to be as consistent and fair to the dog as possible. Since the Catholic School Parent Council advises the Principal on matters pertaining to the school community, it is customary to provide an information session for the council and other interested parents. Important information shared in this way facilitates understanding and acceptance of new practices at the school. You will be asked to participate in the information session.

Your responsibilities include:

- ☐ Transporting or walking the dog to and from school, or facilitating the use of bus transportation;
- ☐ Providing the required information and equipment for the care of the dog;
 - Assuming financial responsibility for the dog's training, veterinary care, and other related costs;
- ☐ Working co-operatively with the school staff to make this accommodation a success; and
- ☐ Providing the Principal with all the required documentation in a timely fashion.

Once the necessary information has been discussed, the Principal will consult with the Superintendent of Schools and the Superintendent of Student Services prior to the admission of the service dog into the school. If approved, the school will then implement the steps within the plan to ensure a smooth transition for the entry of the service dog.

Request for Service Dog Involvement with a Student

Name of Student: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Address: _____

School: _____ Grade: _____

Name of Parent(s)/Guardian(s): _____

Home Telephone: _____ Work Telephone: _____

1. I/We request that permission be granted for _____ to use a service dog in school and at school related activities.

2. Length of time the student and dog have worked together: _____

3. Additional information that will assist the Principal: _____

4. I/We understand that it is our responsibility to:

- Transport or walk the dog to and from school, or work with the school to arrange busing, if the student qualifies for transportation.
- Provide a certificate of training from a guide dog training facility.
- Documentation from member(s) of the College of Physicians and Surgeons or from a member of the College of Psychologists confirming a diagnosis as well as a recommendation for the use of a service dog.
- Provide the required equipment and dog care items.
- Assume financial responsibility for the dog's training, veterinary care, and, other related costs.
- Work co-operatively with the school staff to make this accommodation a success. Assist the Principal to communicate relevant information to the school community.
- Provide the Principal with required documentation in a timely fashion.
- Inform the Principal of all relevant information that may affect the child, the other students and/or staff.
- Provide proof of vaccination for the service animal.

We acknowledge that the Toronto Catholic District School Board is considering this request under the terms of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), and that schools are required to accommodate people with disabilities and their disability related needs to ensure equal access.

Schools are responsible for protecting the safety, health and emotional needs of the whole school community, and this procedure has been developed in order to facilitate the entrance of a service animal into a school.

Where necessary, in the implementation and accommodation process, the rights and needs of one person may have to be balanced against the rights and needs of another. The TCDSB reserves the right to request additional information and/or documentation to ensure the animal's presence in school does not present an increased risk of harm to the animal, the person, the student, and/or other members of the school community.

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date

For Toronto Catholic District School Board Use Only

Request Approved ☐

Request Not Approved ☐

Reason request not approved:

Signature of Principal

Date

cc: Parent
OSR
Superintendent of Schools
Superintendent of Special Services

Principal Checklist for the Implementation of a Service Dog into the School

Task	Date Completed
Provide parent(s)/guardian(s) with the Toronto Catholic District School Board Appendix A – Request for Service Dog Involvement with a Student Package	
Inform Superintendent of Education and the Superintendent of Student Services of the request	
Receive copies of the required documentation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copy of Appendix A – Request for Service Dog Involvement with a Student • Copy of dog's registration with a recognized training center • Copy of current, official vaccination certificate for the dog • Documentation from member(s) of the College of Physicians and Surgeons or from a member of the College of Psychologists confirming a diagnosis as well as a recommendation for the use of a service dog • Copy of training certification of parent(s)/guardian(s) 	
Convene a Case Conference with the following in attendance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent(s)/Guardian(s) and/or student over the age of 18 • Classroom teacher(s) • School Based Support Learning Team (SBSLT) • Representative from the dog training centre 	
Ensure that the reasons for the use of the Service Dog, the benefits to the student in the school environment and descriptions of activity are consistent with the needs or recommendations of IPRC and if the student has an IEP the need and role of the Service Dog should be included.	
Inform school staff	
Inform Catholic School Parent Council	
Inform Transportation Services and make transportation arrangements, as needed. (Refer to Appendix H)	
Send letter to inform school community. (Refer to Appendix C)	
A letter to parent(s)/guardian(s) of students in any of the classes where the dog will be present. (Refer to Appendix D)	
A letter to parent(s)/guardian(s) of students who will be sharing transportation. (Refer to Appendix E)	

Create Management Plan for the Care of the Service Dog. (see Appendix F)	
Revise fire exit plan and evacuation procedures to include Service Dog. (see Appendix G)	
Post signs on the entrance doors to advise visitors of the dog's presence.	
The use of the service dog shall be reviewed annually (within the first 30 days of the school year) or as deemed necessary by the school administration or the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) and/or student 18 years or older.	

SAMPLE LETTER TO PARENTS IN THE COMMUNITY REGARDING THE ADMITTANCE OF A SERVICE DOG INTO THE SCHOOL

(Insert School Letterhead)

Date

Dear Parent/Guardian:

This letter is to inform you that there will be a Certified Service Dog in our school helping one of our students to access the Ontario Curriculum and assist with their learning.

This Certified Service Dog is highly trained and recognized by an accredited Canadian training facility, and is able to assist with many of the routine activities which pose challenges for the student. The student's right to have a Service Dog is protected under the Ontario Human Rights legislation and other laws.

There will be an upcoming information session for parents at the school **(insert date)** to assist with your understanding of how the Certified Service Dog will be integrated into the school. As well, a school-wide assembly will be held for all students to help them identify with the Service Dog and how it will fit into the daily routines of all students. They will be instructed as to the proper procedure regarding the dog and that the dog is a 'working' Service Dog and not a pet while at school.

We anticipate the Certified Service Dog being of benefit to the student's learning and we look forward to this new addition to our school and school community.

Thank you for your understanding and support. Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact the office.

Sincerely,

Principal

cc: Superintendent of Schools
Superintendent of Special Education
Classroom Teacher
OSR

SAMPLE LETTER TO THE FAMILIES OF STUDENTS IN THE CLASS(ES)

(Insert School Letterhead)

Date

Dear Parent/Guardian:

This letter is to inform you that there will be a Certified Service Dog in our school helping one of our students to access the Ontario Curriculum and assist with their learning. The Certified Service Dog will be in your child's classroom effective **(date)**.

This Certified Service Dog is highly trained and recognized by an accredited Canadian training facility, and is able to assist with many of the routine activities which pose challenges for the student. The student's right to have a Certified Service Dog is protected under the Ontario Human Rights legislation and other laws. An upcoming information session for parents will offer more information on how the dog will be integrated into the school setting.

Students will participate in a school-wide assembly to assist with the integration of the Certified Service Dog and how the dog will fit into the daily routines of all students. The students in this classroom will also receive more direct instruction and training as to the proper procedure and conduct when around the Certified Service Dog. They will be informed that the Certified Service Dog is a working dog and not a pet while at school.

We anticipate the Certified Service Dog being of benefit to the student's learning and we look forward to this new addition to our school and school community.

Sincerely,

Principal

cc: Superintendent of Schools
Superintendent of Special Education
Classroom Teacher
OSR

SAMPLE LETTER TO THOSE SHARING TRANSPORTATION WITH SERVICE DOG

(Insert School Letterhead)

Date

Dear Parent/Guardian:

This letter is to inform you that there will be a Certified Service Dog in our school and on your bus helping one of our students to access the Ontario Curriculum and assist with their learning. The Certified Service Dog will be traveling on your child's bus effective **(date)**.

This Certified Service Dog is highly trained and recognized by an accredited Canadian training facility, and is able to assist with many of the routine activities which pose challenges for the student. The student's right to have a Certified Service Dog is protected under the Ontario Human Rights legislation and other laws, as listed in board policy. An upcoming information session for parents will offer more information on how the dog will be integrated into the bus.

Students will participate in a school-wide assembly to assist with the integration of the Certified Service Dog on the bus. The students on this bus will also receive more direct instruction and training as to the proper procedure and conduct when around the Certified Service Dog. They will be informed that the Certified Service Dog is a working dog and not a pet.

We anticipate the Certified Service Dog being of benefit to the student's learning and we look forward to this new addition to our school and school community.

Thank you for your understanding and support. Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact the office.

Sincerely,

Principal

cc.

Superintendent of Special Education

Superintendent of Schools

Classroom teacher

OSR

MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR THE CARE OF THE SERVICE DOG

Name of student: _____ D.O.B.: _____

School: _____ School year: _____

Name of dog: _____

Dog handler: _____

* Where possible and feasible, these responsibilities should be handled by the student in the same manner as at home. Care of the animal is also a skill to be taught.

Note:

- ✓ Making Arrangements for the dog to visit the school after or before students are present in order to become familiar with the school environment;
- ✓ A timetable for the introduction of the Service Dog to the school, the class and for the training of the student's school team (Principal, teachers(s), support staff, etc.);
- ✓ Rules of conduct around the Service Dog for students, staff and the public and how the information and rules will be disseminated;
- ✓ An assembly for the student body, staff, and the community involving representatives from the Service Dogs Association to provide education and awareness of Service Dogs in schools and to explain specifically the role of the assistance in their particular school.

Water needs: (e.g. provision of water bowl, procedures for use, cleaning etc.)

Bladder/Bowel Needs of Dog (e.g. – frequency, location, disposal etc.)

Other considerations (e.g. rest periods away from work, hot and winter weather, etc.)

Signature of Parent/Guardian _____ Date _____

Signature of Principal _____ Date _____



STUDENT SCHOOL EMERGENCY EVACUATION RESPONSE PLAN

1. STUDENT INFORMATION

Name:**EA Name(s)** *(if applicable)* :**Grade:****CYW Name(s)** *(if applicable)* :**Daily Schedule and Classroom Locations** *(attachment if necessary):*

2. EMERGENCY EVACUATION ASSESSMENT

Does the student experience any of the following that could impede the ability to quickly evacuate the workplace?

a. Mobility limitations; interference with walking, using stairs, joint pain, use of mobility device (i.e. wheelchair, scooter, cane, crutches, walker, etc.)

☐ yes ☐ no

b. Vision impairment/loss

☐ yes ☐ no

c. Hearing impairment/loss

☐ yes ☐ no

d. Other (please specify):

☐ yes ☐ no

3. COMMUNICATION NEEDS & ACCOMMODATIONS

Indicate the student's preferred method of communication in an emergency situation. List any assistive communication devices and/or accommodations required. *Example: student with hearing impairment may require assistive device to receive emergency evacuation information.*

Protocol Name: Transportation of Service Animals
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In the event a service animal is required to be transported with a student the following protocol is to be enacted.

Service Animals: other than dogs:

1. All service animals will have documentation from a governing body that is responsible for the training and development of the animal.
2. Specific directions in regards to the care and transport of these animals must be communicated to the Transportation consortium as part of the students 'Independent Transportation Plan'
3. When transporting animals all families and drivers must be notified ahead of service starting indicating what type of animal is being transported.
4. Documentation must be provided to all families and drivers outlining the service animal's responsibilities to the student and a fact sheet detailing information about dealing with service animals.
5. The bus company will post this information in their dispatch office and identify routes with service animals and only assign drivers that are aware of and trained to deal with service animals.
6. In the event an animal is required (and is not a registered service animal) as approved by the Special Education Department as a means to placate or calm a student as part of their transportation routine then the School Board will be responsible for providing the documentation and fact sheet in a similar fashion to those for service animals.

Protocol Name:
Date Enacted:
Date Amended:

Service Animals: Dogs

1. The same protocols as above will be enacted for service dogs. Specific directions are highlighted below:

- The service animal should NEVER ride on the wheelchair lift to prevent injuries.
- Driver should always wait for or ask for instruction from the service dog owner.
- Drivers should avoid petting and talking to the service dog.
- If the student needs assistance loading into a vehicle, he/she may tell the dog to board the vehicle and wait inside, the driver should make sure all other doors are closed behind the dog, except for the one that the student will be using to board the vehicle. Same thing for unloading.
- The student may ask the driver to hold on to the dog's leash and lead the dog into the vehicle and wait there (for example, on a TTC bus), and then the student board the bus by wheeling up the ramp on their own. The driver should do so and should NOT let go of the dog's leash for the dog's safety.
- When securing the wheelchair in the vehicle and the service dog is in the way, the driver should ask the student to reposition his dog.
- Drivers should not give commands to the service dog, ALWAYS ask the service dog owners to deal with the dog.
- If the student is to exit the vehicle by wheeling down the ramp on their own, again the driver may be asked to hold on to the service dog and hand the leash over ONLY when the student has safely arrived on the sidewalk.
- If Driver is asked to hold on to the service dog's leash, they should make sure their shoulders are square and back is straight to establish leadership. Also avoid direct eye contact with the dog, so the dog's focus is still on his owner.

In case of a student is incapacitated:

If a student is incapacitated and he has a service dog with him at that time, and you think that the dog will be bothered by you touching their partner then try to pet the dog with confident hands. Crouch down with your shoulders back and turn the side of your body toward the dog. Try to lead him to a separate room and shut the door. Drivers should carry dog treats with them to make friends and use to help lure the dog to a desired position.

Paramedics need to deal with the injured and will not be able to take the service dog in an ambulance. C.O.P.E. dogs carry emergency cards in their back packs or capes. If they are not found there, or the dog is not wearing his pack then the emergency card should be on the person. The card states emergency phone numbers for people who could take care of the dog. Please remember to call COPE (705-734-COPE (2673)) if you cannot find any emergency contacts.

Protocol Name:

Date Enacted:

Date Amended:

If the service dog belongs to a different organization, then please contact the respective organization.

If someone is willing to care for the dog until the emergency contact arrives but they need to transport the dog to a different location, then the dog can be transported on the floor of a vehicle.

All C.O.P.E. Service Dogs are trained not to act aggressively in any situation. However, in times of extreme stress it is possible that a dog may rely on his instincts rather than his training. IF this does happen, it is important for drivers to not act aggressively toward the dog (i.e. raising their arms over their head and yelling) and try to talk to the dog in a confident, friendly and calm voice. Something like "Hi puppy. You're a good dog. We are taking your friend to the hospital now." If you keep your shoulders back and explain things so that your voice appears confident and "as a matter of fact" to the dog then this will decrease stress and therefore the instinct to be aggressive.

The most important point is to appear confident and friendly.

In the case of an emergency evacuation of the vehicle:

- If the student and their service dog are both conscious and not injured, then ask for instruction from the student as to whether they need assistance with the dog.
- If the student is incapacitated but the dog is conscious, not injured but appears fearful, then you should approach dog in a confident manner. That is, shoulders back, turn the side of your body toward the dog and talk to the dog in a confident, friendly and calm voice, then lead the dog to safety. Call OSPCA or Humane Society for help if the dog appears fearful aggressive.
- If the dog is conscious and INJURED, you should approach in a confident and calm manner. Muzzle the dog with a muzzle or using a shoe lace or dog leash (make sure it is tied at the back of the dog's neck as well as around the snout). Transport the dog to safety with care and call a vet immediately.
- If the dog is unconscious and injured, muzzle the dog with a muzzle or using a shoe lace or dog leash (make sure it is tied at the back of the dog's neck as well as around the snout). Transport the dog to safety with care and call a vet immediately.

Protocol Name:

Date Enacted:

Date Amended: