

CEDARCREEK CHURCH ANIMAL COMPANION POLICY

CedarCreek Church acknowledges the importance of the human-animal bond. The Animal Companion Policy was developed to provide information and guidelines concerning animals that are allowed on CedarCreek Church premises and regional sites. The Animal Companion Policy allows admittance of trained service animals as well as reasonable accommodations for therapy dogs, which have been trained and registered by a therapy organization and/or validated by a medical health professional. Animals that do not meet service animal/therapy dog regulations are not permitted unless otherwise indicated by church management.

SERVICE ANIMAL

What is a service animal?

As defined under the American with Disabilities Act (ADA's Title II & III):

Service animals are defined as dogs that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities. Examples of such work or tasks include guiding people who are blind, alerting people who are deaf, pulling a wheelchair, alerting and protecting a person who is having a seizure, reminding a person with mental illness to take prescribed medications, calming a person with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) during an anxiety attack, or performing other duties. Service animals are working animals, not pets. The work or task a dog has been trained to provide must be directly related to the person's disability. Dogs whose sole function is to provide comfort or emotional support do not qualify as service animals under the ADA.

U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division, Disability Rights Section

Will there be any necessary requirements for my service animal?

Yes, service animals must be harnessed, leashed, or tethered unless the restraint interferes with the service of the animal or a person's disability. In those cases, where physical restraints cannot be used, the person with the disability must maintain control of the animal through voice, signal, or any other effective means of control.

What can I expect to be asked by a CedarCreek Church volunteer or staff member?

When a volunteer or staff member is unable to discern what service an animal is providing, the following two questions should be expected:

- 1) Is the service animal required because of a disability?
- 2) If yes, what work or task has the animal been trained to perform?

If the answer is no, the volunteer or staff member will inform the person of CedarCreek's Animal Companion Policy and request the person to remove the animal from CedarCreek premises or regional site.

What will constitute removal of my service animal from CedarCreek premises or regional sites?

You will be asked to remove your service animal if:

- 1) It is out of control and the handler does not take effective action to control the animal.
- 2) It is not housebroken.
- 3) It is not a required service animal due to a disability.

The handler is responsible for the care of his/her service animal, which includes retaining full control at all times as well as carrying equipment to clean and dispose of waste.

THERAPY DOG

What is a therapy dog?

A therapy dog is a canine trained to provide affection and comfort to people. Therapy dogs are not legally protected at the federal level by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

Will there be any necessary requirements for my therapy dog?

Yes. CedarCreek requires:

- 1) Proof of certification from a dog training organization.
- 2) Proof of Liability Insurance.
- 3) A letter from a medical health professional requesting a reasonable accommodation on behalf of the dog handler.
- 4) A canine health exam along with current vaccination by a certified veterinarian.

Once CedarCreek is in receipt of the following, the person and his/her therapy dog will be granted reasonable accommodations. CedarCreek will inform the individual of the designated area(s) where the therapy dog is allowed to be present. Dog handlers without the above proof will be requested to remove the therapy dog from the CedarCreek premises or regional site.

- 5) Therapy dogs must be harnessed, leashed, or tethered at all times.
- 6) Therapy dogs must be housebroken.

What can I expect from a CedarCreek volunteer or staff member?

1) He/she will inform you of the designated area(s) and assist you to said areas.

Designated areas include: auditorium, atriums, classrooms, and chapel.

2) He/she will assist in the removal of a disruptive animal.

What will constitute removal of my therapy dog from CedarCreek premises or regional sites?

The four primary reasons a therapy dog will be removed are:

1) The dog is out of control and the handler does not take effective action to control the animal.

2) The dog behavior poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others.

3) The dog is not housebroken.

4) Inability to produce the required paperwork and certifications for the animal.

The handler is responsible for the care of his/her therapy dog, which includes retaining full control at all times as well as carrying equipment to clean and dispose of waste.

Who is responsible for damages caused by the therapy dog?

The handler is responsible for any damages that the therapy dog may cause, up to and including court costs.