Service Animal Policy – JCC Indianapolis

Purpose

The JCC Indianapolis is committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for individuals with disabilities. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and applicable Indiana laws, the JCC permits qualified service animals to accompany individuals with disabilities in areas where members, guests, and visitors are permitted.

Policy Statement

The JCC Indianapolis welcomes individuals with disabilities who require the assistance of a trained service animal. Service animals are working animals, not pets, and are permitted in JCC facilities and programs when they meet the requirements established under the ADA.

The JCC does **not permit pets, comfort animals, therapy animals, or emotional support animals in JCC facilities or programs unless they are otherwise approved through an applicable accommodation process.**

Definition of a Service Animal

Under the ADA, a **service animal is a dog that has been individually trained to perform specific work or tasks directly related to an individual's disability.** The task(s) performed by the dog must assist the individual because of their disability. (ADA.gov)

Examples of tasks performed by service animals may include:

- Guiding individuals who are blind or have low vision
- Alerting individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing
- Assisting with mobility or balance
- Retrieving items
- Alerting an individual to a medical condition, such as a seizure or change in blood sugar
- Interrupting or assisting with disability-related behaviors or symptoms when specifically trained to do so (ADA.gov)

A service animal does **not** need to:

- Wear a vest or special identification
- Be certified or registered
- Complete a professional training program

Verification of a Service Animal

When it is not obvious that a dog is a service animal, JCC staff may ask only the following questions:

1. **Is the dog required because of a disability?**
2. **What work or task has the dog been trained to perform?**

Staff may **not**:

- Ask about the individual's specific disability
- Request medical documentation
- Require certification or registration paperwork
- Ask the animal to demonstrate the task it performs (ADA.gov)

Service Animal Expectations

Individuals using a service animal at the JCC are responsible for:

- Always maintaining control of the animal
- Ensuring the animal is housebroken
- Ensuring the animal is appropriately behaved in shared spaces
- Following applicable health and safety requirements

A service animal may be removed from the JCC if:

- The animal is not under the handler's control
- The animal is not housebroken
- The animal poses a direct threat to health or safety
- The animal's behavior creates significant disruption to programs or services

Children and Program Participants

Individuals and families may not bring personal pets into camp/ECE/program spaces, even if the animal is friendly or provides comfort, because of safety, allergies, sanitation, and supervision considerations.