

## Guidelines for Service Animals in Laboratories

UCLA is committed to providing equal access to its classrooms, research facilities, public spaces and housing for all of its community members, including students, employees and visitors. UCLA further recognizes the importance Assistance and Service Animals have for individuals with disabilities as reasonable accommodations to accompany them while in University buildings. Guiding principles are provided in [UCLA Policy 135: Animals on University Property](#).

Research and teaching laboratories can present safety hazards and risks to people and animals depending on the specific laboratory environment. Such hazards can include biological, chemical, radioactive, and equipment. Hence, special consideration and evaluation of those hazards and risks are necessary to determine if animals can be allowed into laboratories. UCLA Policy 135 provides this guidance:

*“UCLA may impose legitimate safety requirements on the use or presence of a Service Animal that are necessary for safe operation of its facilities. There are some facilities that are not safe for use or presence of a Service Animal and from which UCLA may exclude a Service Animal based on actual risks. Laboratories, research facilities and food preparation locations are areas where a Service Animal may pose a substantial and direct threat to health and safety. As a result, requests in these areas will require an individualized assessment that is determined on a case-by case basis.”*

The Chemical and Physical Safety Committee (CPSC) developed these guidelines to provide specific information to both individuals seeking to bring Service or Assistance Animals into campus laboratories and university employees responsible for the operation and supervision of campus laboratories. Note that these guidelines are intended as a supplement to existing UCLA research safety requirements, standards, and practices as described by the Biological Safety Manual, Chemical Hygiene Plan, Laboratory Safety Manual, Laser Safety Manual, Radiation Safety Manual, faculty safety committees, and UCLA Safety Policies. Laboratories which support clinical operations may be subject to additional requirements set by UCLA Health Systems.

The University of California provides assistance and services to support students with disabilities so they can participate fully in campus programs and activities. Nothing in this document changes University policy, which prohibits unlawful discrimination on the basis of disability in programs, services, and activities as required by federal and state law.

## *Definitions*

- **Assistance Animal:** An animal that may work, provide assistance, or perform physical tasks, for an individual with a disability. Assistance Animals are not trained to perform specific tasks directly related to an individual's disability. UCLA Policy 135 has further details on the definitions of Assistance and Service Animals.
- **Service Animal:** A dog or miniature horse that is individually trained to do work or perform a task for an individual with a disability, including physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability. The work or tasks performed by the Service Animal must be directly related to the individual's disability.
- **CAE:** UCLA Center for Accessible Education.
- **EH&S:** UCLA Department of Environment, Health & Safety.
- **Hazardous materials:** Specifically this refers to any chemicals, biological materials, radioactive sources, and/or equipment that pose a risk to personnel health and safety.
  - **Hazardous chemicals:** Chemicals which are considered to be acutely toxic, carcinogenic, corrosive, flammable, potentially explosive, pyrophoric, etc.
  - **Biohazards:** Infectious agents, samples, and specimens known/suspected to be infected with microorganisms, human or primate cells, fluids, tissues and/or recombinant or synthetic nucleic acids.
  - **Radioactive materials:** Any material that contains unstable (radioactive) atoms that give off radiation as they decay.
  - **Equipment:** Equipment or materials with physical attributes such as high temperatures, low temperatures, high pressures, low pressures, sharp points, high decibel sound, high intensity light, laser light, or electric currents.
- **Laboratory:** Research or teaching space where there is the potential presence of hazardous materials including chemicals, biological materials, radioactive sources, and/or equipment that pose a risk to personal health and safety. Some laboratories may have research animals, which may be impacted by the presence of a service animal, thereby jeopardizing the animals and/or the research.
- **PPE:** Personal Protective Equipment that typically includes, but is not limited to, lab coats, safety glasses, splash goggles, and gloves.
- **Requestor:** Graduate Student, Undergraduate Student, Postdoctoral Scholar, Staff Member, or other person seeking to bring a Service Animal into a Laboratory.
- **Responsible Person (RP):** The Principal Investigator(s) (PI) or Departmental Staff who have been granted the ability to set policy for the laboratory at issue by their academic department or an equivalent reporting unit.
- **Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs):** Written procedures which specify how hazardous materials are to be used or processes are to be conducted.

## *Overall Procedure*

A Requestor seeking to bring a Service or Assistance Animal into a Laboratory on campus must contact CAE to request an accommodation. CAE will evaluate the request and the decision of what accommodations are appropriate in a particular case is vested in CAE. In reaching a decision, CAE may consult with EH&S to ensure it understands and accounts for any laboratory-related safety issues. To the extent CAE determines that use of a Service or Assistance Animal is

appropriate, it will communicate with the Responsible Person regarding the accommodation to ensure proper safety procedures are put in place.

## ***Responsibilities***

- **Requestor:**
  - Assume all responsibility for the care and supervision of their Assistance or Service Animal.
  - Ensure the Animal wears appropriate and suitable PPE as determined by EH&S.
  - Keep the Animal under control in the Laboratory via a harness, leash, tether, or voice control, depending on the task/work performed.
  - Ensure the Animal does not engage in behavior in the Laboratory that endangers the health or safety of others, or of any research animals.
  - Ensure the Animal complies with Los Angeles County codes, including requirements for vaccinations and licensing laws.
- **CAE:**
  - Determine appropriate accommodations including the presence of the Animal in the Laboratory.
  - Consult with EH&S to understand the safety hazards and risks presented by the specific laboratory environment.
  - Direct the consultation request to the UCLA Assistant Vice Chancellor for EH&S who may then assign it to an appropriate laboratory safety expert such as the Biosafety Officer, Chemical Hygiene Officer, or Radiation Safety Officer.
  - Communicate accommodations to the Responsible Person to implement the accommodations and ensure safety procedures are put in place.
- **EH&S, when requested by CAE:**
  - Determine if hazardous materials are present in the specific laboratory.
  - Examine the physical layout of the specific laboratory to determine locations of hazardous materials, workflow patterns, and potential locations for an Animal.
  - Evaluate the various and unique safety hazards and risks, to people and the Animal, presented by the specific laboratory environment.
  - Provide recommendations to CAE regarding any safety issues, location advice and any appropriate PPE for the Animal.
  - Evaluate potential issues involving research animals, possibly in consultation with the Animal Research Committee.
  - Prepare an SOP for the Animal's presence in the specific laboratory if appropriate.
- **Responsible Person:**
  - Be familiar with these Guidelines.
  - Follow the accommodations set by CAE.

Questions can be sent to: [cpssc@research.ucla.edu](mailto:cpssc@research.ucla.edu)

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