

Service Animal Policy for Rockdale County Board of Commissioners
Under the Americans with Disabilities Act

I. Purpose of the Policy

Pets and other animals are restricted in and on Rockdale County Board of Commissioner properties. This Policy addresses animals utilized for disability accommodation services. As established and defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and O.C.G.A. 30-4-2, service animals shall not be excluded from Rockdale County facilities or activities.

II. Definitions

Service Animal: *Service animal* means any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of people with disabilities. Examples of work or tasks include, but are not limited to, guiding people who are blind or have low vision, alerting people who are deaf or hard of hearing, pulling a wheelchair, alerting, or protecting a person during a seizure, reminding a person with mental illness to take prescribed medications, calming a person with post-traumatic stress disorder during an anxiety attack, or performing other duties.

Support or Therapy Animal: *Support or therapy animal* means an animal that individuals utilize for emotional support, well-being, or comfort. Because they are not individually trained to perform work or tasks, support or therapy animals are not considered service animals.

Individual with a Disability: An *individual with a disability* is a person who 1) has a physical or mental impairment that limits one or more major life activities or 2) has a record of such impairment.

Accommodation: An *accommodation* is any modification or adjustment in policies, practices, procedures, or environment to enable a qualified individual with a disability to enjoy equal opportunities and access to Rockdale County privileges, benefits, and services.

III. Policy Statement

It is the policy of Rockdale County to permit service animals anywhere in or on Rockdale County managed property where the public is normally allowed to go. To assist with ease of identification, service animals should be (not required) harnessed, leashed, or tethered unless such devices interfere with the service animal's work, or if the visitor's disability prevents the use of these devices. In that case, the visitor must maintain control of the animal through voice, signal, or other effective controls. Rockdale County policy includes an expectation that service animal owners will take responsibility for meeting legal requirements, ensuring that animals are under their control, and adhering to cleanup rules. Rockdale County employees in need of ongoing accommodations for a service animal must register the animal with the Human Resources department using the designated form.

Support or Therapy animal: Animal service policy does not extend to support or therapy animals. Additional information concerning support animals can be obtained from the Rockdale County Human Resources department.

Inquiries: When it is not obvious what service an animal provides, staff are permitted to ask two questions: (1) Is the dog a service animal required because of a disability? and (2) What work, or task, has the dog been trained to perform?

Allergies and fear of dogs: Allergies and fear of dogs are not valid reasons for denying access or refusing service to people using service animals. When a person who is allergic to dog dander and a person who uses a service animal must spend time in the same room or facility, they both should be accommodated by assigning them, if possible, to different locations within the room or different rooms within the facility.

Removal of service animal: Removal of a service animal from any Rockdale County public facility is prohibited unless: (1) the dog is out of control, and the handler does not take effective action to control the service animal or (2) the dog is not housebroken. When there is a legitimate reason to ask that a service animal be removed, staff is required to offer the service animal's handler the opportunity to obtain goods or services without the animal's presence.

Food service areas: Establishments that sell or prepare food are to allow service animals in public areas even if state or local health codes prohibit animals on the premises.

Integrated service: Isolating individuals who use service animals from other patrons or treating them less favorably than other patrons is strictly forbidden.

Fees and surcharges: Patrons with service animals are prohibited from incurring fees or surcharges that are not charged to other guests without animals. In addition, if a deposit or fee is required to be paid by patrons with pets, the fee must be waived for service animals.

Damages: If guests are normally charged for damage that they cause on any public premises, then fees may be collected from individuals whose service animals are responsible for damages.

Care and supervision: Rockdale County Staff are not required to provide care or food for service animals.

Rockdale County reserves the right to change, modify, or amend this policy at any time.

Board of Commissioners
Rockdale County, Georgia

By: 

Jarice Van Ness, Chair

Attest:

By: 

Jennifer Rutledge, County Clerk

Approved this 13 day of January, 2026

SERVICE ANIMAL REGISTRATION FORM

Service Animal Handler Information

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

Service Animal Information

Animal's Name: _____

Type of Animal and Breed: _____

Physical Description of Animal: _____

State of Licensure and License Number: _____

Veterinarian: _____ Phone #: _____

Recent Documentation of Vaccination and Immunization History: _____

Service Animal Eligibility Information

Is the animal required because of a disability? YES _____ NO _____

What work or task is the animal trained to perform? _____

I verify that I have read and understand the County's Animal Service Policy and will abide by its requirements.

Handler's Name _____ Date _____

Signature _____

Human Resource Department Acceptance

Department Head _____ Date _____

Signature _____

**Board of Commissioners
Agenda Item Transmittal Form
Policy Transmittal Form**



Policy Amendments and Policy Introductions

County Clerk Use Only
Policy #:

Type of Request:

Submission Information:

Contact Name:

Carol Cummings-Fambrough

Human Resource Generalist

Department:

Human Resources

Information:

Rockdale County Policies

Notes and Comments:

Amendments to Policy

- #2018-4-22 : Drug and Alcohol Use Policy
- #2025-4-51 : Outside Employment

New Policies

- Service Animal Policy (Under the Americans with Disabilities Act)