



POLICY: Animals On Campus

Service Animals: The following rules shall govern the use of service animals at Thornton Academy.

1. General Conditions

- a. Only qualified individuals with disabilities are eligible to use service animals in school.
- b. Use of a service animal by a person with a disability will be allowed in school when the animal is required to perform work or tasks directly related to the individual's disability.
- c. The Academy will not be responsible for the training, feeding, grooming or care of any service animal permitted to attend school under this policy. It shall be the responsibility of the individual with a disability or designated handler to ensure the proper care and supervision of the service animal.
- d. All service animals must be kept on a harness, leash, or tether unless this prevents the animal from performing his/her specific work or tasks with the individual. The animal must be under the control of the individual with a disability or designated handler at all times.
- e. The individual with a disability (or in the case of a student, the student's parent(s)) is liable for any damage to school or personal property and any injuries to individuals caused by the service animal.
- f. Individuals with service animals may access the same areas that individuals without disabilities are authorized to access.

2. Administrative Review of Service Animals

- a. Whenever a service animal is in school or on school property (and it is not obvious that the dog qualifies as a service animal, e.g., guide dog for a blind person), an administrator or other authorized school official may ask:
 - i. Whether the service animal is required because of a disability;
 - ii. What work or task(s) the animal has been trained to perform.
- b. When it is anticipated that a service animal is going to be on campus with an employee, student, volunteer or other frequent visitor to the school, the individual using the service animal [or in the case of a student, the student's parent(s)] is expected to notify an administrator in advance.
- c. The following must be provided to the school:
 - i. A description of the work or task(s) the animal is trained to perform;
 - ii. Documentation of liability insurance;

- iii. A copy of the animal's license;
 - iv. Current certification from a veterinarian that the animal is in good health;
 - v. Proof of current rabies vaccination; and
 - vi. Evidence that the student or employee can appropriately supervise care for, and control the animal at school, or, depending on the circumstances involved, that there is a plan for a handler to be present to care for and control the animal.
- d. The school shall not provide staff support to care for or control a service animal, but may provide support to the student using the service animal as need in a particular instance (i.e., accompanying a young student who takes a service animal outside to relieve him/herself).
 - e. Any handler (parent or other person) accompanying the service animal must have approval to work in the school from the Maine Department of Education and undergo the State criminal background check.
3. Removal or Exclusion of Service Animals from School: An administrator or other authorized school official may require that a service animal be removed from the school or other school property under any of the following circumstances:
- a. The service animal poses a direct threat to the safety of individuals at the school, causes a significant disruption of school activities or otherwise jeopardizes the safe operation of the school;
 - b. The service animal demonstrates that it is unable to perform reliably the work or tasks that it was represented as being able to perform;
 - c. The service animal is not under the full control of the person with a disability, or the authorized handler.
 - d. The service animal is sick (e.g., vomiting), infested with parasites, has an infection of the skin, mouth, or eyes, or otherwise presents a threat to public health;
 - e. The service animal demonstrates that it is not sufficiently trained to relieve itself outside the school building; and/or
 - f. The service animal's presence significantly impairs the learning of students and/or fundamentally alters the nature of any school program.

Therapy Animals: The following rules shall govern the use of therapy animals at Thornton Academy.

- 1. Visits by trained therapy animals are welcome but must be approved ahead of time.
 - a. This requirement applies for both occasional and repeating visits. The following requirements apply:
 - i. Evidence of up-to-date certification from a recognized therapy dog organization (e.g., AKC Therapy Dog Program) must be on file with the Administrators Office.
 - ii. Vaccination and licensure records must be on file with the Director of Campus Security.

- iii. Animals must be leashed and remain in the proximity of the owner/handler at all times.
2. Individuals wishing to utilize therapy animals at Thornton Academy should see the Associate Head for more information or to make arrangements for therapy animal use.

Pet/Companion Animals: The following rules shall govern the accommodation of pets and companion animals at Thornton Academy.

1. Pet/companion animals are not allowed in classrooms, offices, or other business-oriented spaces on campus.
2. The ownership of pet/companion animals is allowed in Thornton Academy housing at the discretion of the Headmaster.
 - a. Pet/companion animals must be leashed or confined to a crate or kennel when on the Thornton Academy campus, with the exception that pet/companion animals may be loose within a dorm family's personal apartment, not including hallways or common areas.
 - b. Family pets must be licensed and meet all required animal regulations currently in force in the City of Saco.
 - c. Pet owners must provide proof of renters insurance that includes coverage for pet-related incidents. Contact the Finance Director for more information.
 - d. Outdoor clean up of pet waste is the owner's responsibility.