

Service Animals

Hardin County EMS
Standard Operating Guidelines # 901
Page: 1 of 2
Effective Date: 1 April 2018

Statement: Individuals with disabilities shall be permitted to be accompanied by their service animal in all HCEMS ambulances where members of the public, participants in emergency medical services, programs or activities or guests are permitted to be.

Scope: Hardin County EMS will follow this guideline when in contact with a patient who is assisted by a service animal in compliance with Title II of the American with Disabilities Act ("ADA").
Hardin County EMS operations when in contact with a patient who is assisted by service animal.

Purpose: It is the intent of this SOG to provide information to Hardin County EMS personnel about the proper and legal means by which a patient with a service animal shall receive EMS services.

This SOG will assist Hardin County EMS personnel in understanding the rights of patients who utilize service animals and the procedure to use in transportation of a service animal in relation to the patient.

Guideline:

Definition of a Service Animal:

Any dog, of any breed or size, as well as other animals including, but not limited to a bird, primate or pony that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of a patient with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual or other mental disability. The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the patient's disability. A service animal is not required to be visually identified as a service animal by tag, sign, or other designation.

Identifying a Service Dog/Animal:

First look for visual identification or signs that make it readily apparent that the animal is a service animal. If there are none:

1. You may ask:
 - Is this a service animal required because of a disability? AND
 - What task or function has the animal been trained to perform for you?
2. You may **NOT** ask:
 - For any special written identification or certification of the animal as a service animal; or
 - What is the disability of the person (*unless it relates to patient care*).

Service Animals

Hardin County EMS

Standard Operating Guidelines # 901

Page: 2 of 2

Effective Date: 1 April 2018

Transporting the Service Animal:

As a general rule, a service animal should be transported with the patient. When transporting a patient with a service animal, every effort should be made to do so in a safe manner for the patient, the animal and the crew members. If possible, the animal should be secured in some manner in order to prevent injury to either the animal or the crew during transport. Safe transport may include use of:

- Crates, cages, specialty carriers.
- Seatbelts or passenger restraints using a specialized harness or seat belt attachments.
- EMS should notify the receiving facility of the presence of a service animal accompanying the patient.

Exceptions to Transporting the Service Animal

EMS may properly exclude a service under the following circumstance(s):

- The animal is out of control and the patient does not take effective action to control it, to include a harness, leash, tether, voice control, or other signal. [A service animal shall not be considered out of control if it is trained to provide service(s) while the patient is unconscious.]
- The animal is not housebroken
- From an area that employs general infection control measures, such as an operating room or a burn unit, where the animal's presence may compromise a sterile environment. [Fear and allergies are not valid reasons for denying access to a service animal]