



Service Animal Policy

Section 1. Overview

ZooTampa at Lowry Park welcomes everyone. It is the policy of ZooTampa to comply in all respects with the Americans with Disabilities Act (“ADA”) and state law and to make every reasonable effort to ensure that the Zoo’s facilities and programs are reasonably accessible to all guests. Although the Zoo generally prohibits any non-collection animals from entering, exceptions are made for trained service animals and police K9s accompanied by an on-duty police handler.

Section 2. Definition of a Service Animal

A service animal is defined by the ADA *as any dog* that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability.

In order to determine if an animal is a service animal, ZooTampa staff may ask any of the following questions:

- Is this a service animal that has been trained to assist someone here today with a disability?
- What work or task has this animal been trained to perform?

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, only trained service animals are permitted on Zoo grounds. Pets, exotic species, therapy or emotional-support animals, and species of animals other than dogs or miniature horses are not permitted. Service animals-in-training are permitted into the Zoo, but only if (1) accompanied by a trainer (2) who is engaged in the training of the service animal during the Zoo visit.

Regarding miniature horses, the Zoo will consider additional factors to determine, on a case by case basis, whether it is a reasonable accommodation to allow a person with a disability to be accompanied by a miniature horse who is a service animal. Those factors are: (1) the type, size, and weight of the miniature horse and whether the facility can accommodate it; (2) whether the handler has sufficient control over the miniature horse; (3) whether the miniature horse is housebroken; and (4) whether the miniature horse's presence in the facility compromises legitimate safety rules that are necessary for safe operation.

Section 3. General Guidelines

Under the ADA, service animals must be harnessed, leashed, or tethered, unless these devices interfere with the service animal's work or the individual's disability prevents using these devices. In those situations, the individual must maintain control of the animal through voice, signal, or other effective controls. The care and supervision of a service animal is solely the responsibility of the owner.

Restricted Areas: ZooTampa is responsible for the health and well-being of a vast collection of prized and, in many cases, rare and endangered species of animals. Because we are subject to stringent regulations pertaining to their protection, service animals are restricted from riding any mechanical rides where safe restraint cannot be reasonably applied (i.e., Tiger coaster, Banana, and Roaring Springs). Certain tours may also have restrictions on the presence of service animals; check with Guest Relations. Other areas that permit service animals but have restrictions in place due to the sensitivity of the collection animals are the Expedition Wild Africa and Carousel (dog must be in "lay down" position and on leash), Train (dog must be in car sitting and on leash), the Petting Zoo (outside view fence) and all aviaries (one dog at a time).

In the event that a service animal's presence within certain areas of the Zoo is demonstrated (through prior or current displays of agitation) to cause the collection animals in that area undue stress or anxiety, or present the potential for injury, we reserve the right to designate such areas as off-limits, or to designate the area as sensitive and request that guests observe extra caution in these areas. Sensitive areas may be designated as a result of new births or hatchings, nesting or breeding behaviors in progress, or new animals in exhibits. Zoo veterinarians, curators, and animal care managers will determine whether special circumstances warrant restrictions on service animals in any exhibits or areas.

Service Animal Relief Areas: To avoid cross-contamination for the animals under our care, the only authorized service animal relief area is to the right of the front gate BEFORE entering the Zoo (to the left of the gate if exiting). Guests with service animals should be advised of this when entering the park and told of the process of re-admittance if they need to access the area during their visit.

Section 4. Guest Responsibilities

Responsibilities of guests with service animals include:

- To supervise the service animal, including using only the designated service animal relief area and appropriately disposing of any service animal waste.
- To maintain control over the service animal at all times and adhere to leash laws as applicable.
- To provide any food, water or other care needed by the service animal.
- To refrain from taking the service animal into restricted areas.
- To remove the service animal when a conflict or potential conflict may occur. This includes free roaming birds (ducks, guinea hens, peacocks, etc.) and collection animals on walks with handlers.

ZooTampa does not require any surcharges or fees for service animals. However, the owner may be held responsible (and charged as applicable) for any damage, injury or death caused by the service animal to the grounds, him/herself, the animal or plant collection, employees or visitors to the same extent as others without service animals are held responsible or charged. Owners should also be aware that the nature of Zoo activities is such that service animals may be exposed to diseases of animals within the Zoo's collection, and this this risk is assumed wholly by the owner when bringing the service animal on site.

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