Guide Dogs & Service Animals

IMPLEMENTING PPM163

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Please find the PPT template attached.
1. PPM 163 Overview
2. Policy & Procedure Overview
3. Reviewing Requests for Guide Dogs & Service Animals
4. Responding to a Request
PPM 163 Service Animals

• pursuant to the Ontario *Human Rights Code* required to provide individualized accommodation to students with disabilities to enable them to have meaningful access to education services.

• Guide Dog, Service Dog or Service Animal request reviewed individually

• process of accommodation shall consider:
  • competing human rights of others;
  • impact on the learning environment;
  • health and safety of all

• policy shall be available in accessible formats on the DSB’s website

• retain data regarding the requests for Guide Dogs, Service Dogs and Service Animals.

• policy shall be reviewed regularly
Policy & Procedure

• pursuant to the *Education Act* and regulations, a school building is not a place to which the public is customarily admitted
  • The AODA does not provide a right to use service animals in schools
• differentiation between guide dogs, service dogs and service animals
• regulated health professional cannot unilaterally prescribe a specific accommodation for school
• both the Guide Dog / Service Dog *and* the Student Handler must be certified as having been successfully trained by an accredited training facility
• exceptional circumstances the School Board consider an application for a student who will not be acting as the primary trained Handler of the Guide Dog / Service Dog
• service animals considered only if other reasonable methods of accommodation in the school setting have been unsuccessful
Reviewing the Request

- the individual learning strengths and needs of the student, the student’s IEP goals, safety plan, behaviour plan and/or student’s medical plan of care (if any);
  - supporting documents such as psychological assessments, occupational or physical therapy assessments, functional behaviour assessments etc.
- evidence of how the Guide Dog / Service Dog or Service Animal’s attendance at school might provide accommodation for a demonstrated disability-related learning need and/or act of daily living necessary while at school;
- assessment information provided by a regulated health professional with expertise regarding the student’s disability-related needs supporting the request for a Guide Dog / Service Dog or Service Animal;
- the impact of the accommodation on the student’s dignity, integration and independence;
Reviewing the Request

• the training and certification of the Guide Dog / Service Dog and student as Handler;

• whether one or more alternative accommodations can meet the needs of the student;

• whether the student’s attendance with a Guide Dog / Service Dog or Service Animal might require an increase in the level of staff support provided to the student;

• whether training will be required for staff and/or the student;

• the impact of the accommodation on the learning environment for the student, other students, including, health, safety, disruption and distraction;

• any competing human rights of students, staff, and community members using the school pursuant to a permit;
  • recommendations for accommodation plans to reconcile competing rights.
IEP Goals & Assessment

• accommodation is to support goals identified in the IEP
• goals should foster integration, independence and dignity
• assessing the student’s learning goals shall be undertaken as part of each review of the student’s IEP
Responding to the Request

- template letters may not include all of the information that identify
- when denied, have a meeting to discuss accommodations being implemented
- service animal denial should contain specific details regarding the other accommodations that will support the student’s needs
- parents / students may re-apply with a change of circumstances