



Risk Management Considerations for Service Dogs

Service dogs go everywhere with their owners unlike therapy animals. They assist their owners with everyday activities like:

- Retrieving dropped items
- Finding help when incapacitated
- Reminding to take medication
- Bracing for going down stairs
- Waking from sleep

Some people associated with your organization may have service dogs.

Risk management is important especially when dealing with animals. While service dogs are well trained, intelligent, mild mannered and obedient, they can become stressed if they receive too much attention.

It is best to inform other residents/participants of the dog's attendance and give them general rules to follow or a code of conduct.

What are the risks involved?

- Dog could get too much attention and become distracted
- Health and Safety Risks around food/cafeterias/restaurants

- Allergies
- Phobias
- Bites and scratches

Mitigate the Risks

- Ask the owner to see training documentation
- Ensure the owner is able to keep control over the dog at all times
- Ask that other residents/participant not interact with the dog unless the owner specifically invites them to do so
- Post when the owner/dog will be at your organization. This gives those with a fear of dogs advance warning to reschedule their visits.
- Ask the owner for veterinary records (vaccinations), if necessary

Remember, it is required that the rights to services are the same regardless if the person is disabled. Service dogs are necessary to assist disabled people and as such it is the duty of the organization to make necessary modifications to ensure that disabled people can access services.

Allergies are often used as an excuse not to allow guide dogs into public places, however, if there is an actual allergy risk, steps should be taken to reduce the risk. This may mean moving the owner or the person with the allergies into two separate rooms if possible.

While Intact Public Entities Inc. does its best to provide useful general information and guidance on matters of interest to its clients, statutes, regulations and the common law continually change and evolve, vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, and are subject to differing interpretations and opinions. The information provided by Intact Public Entities Inc. is not intended to replace legal or other professional advice or services. The information provided by Intact Public Entities Inc. herein is provided "as is" and without any warranty, either express or implied, as to its fitness, quality, accuracy, applicability or timeliness. Before taking any action, consult an appropriate professional and satisfy yourself about the fitness, accuracy, applicability or timeliness of any information or opinions contained herein. Intact Public Entities Inc. assumes no liability whatsoever for any errors or omissions associated with the information provided herein and furthermore assumes no liability for any decision or action taken in reliance on the information contained in these materials or for any damages, losses, costs or expenses in a way connected to it. Intact Public Entities Inc. is operated by a wholly owned subsidiary of Intact Financial Corporation. Intact Design® and Risk Management Centre of Excellence® are registered trademarks of Intact Financial Corporation or its affiliates. All other trademarks are properties of their respective owners. TM & © 2021 Intact Public Entities Inc. and/or its affiliates. All Rights Reserved.