

DELAWARE COUNTY TRANSIT BOARD

POLICY / PROCEDURE

Policy/Procedure Name	Resolution	Effective Date	Last Revision Date
Service Animals	15-12-06	12/16/15	02/20/2020

NOTE: The Delaware County Transit Board (AKA: DCTB) is the governing body of Delaware County's Public Transit System established by the Delaware County Commissioners under the authority of Ohio Revised Code section 306.01 and 306.02. The Delaware County Transit (AKA: DCT) is the common name given to the public transit system. This policy is established and set forth under the authority of the Delaware County Transit Board and/or the Executive Director of the Delaware Area Transit Agency. DATA and DCTB may be used interchangeably in this policy.

PURPOSE

This policy establishes the definition, requirements and boarding of service animals on vehicles and in facilities owned, leased and operated by DCTB.

SCOPE

This policy pertains to DCT administrative and operations staff as well as passengers requiring the use of service animals on DCTB owned, leased and operated vehicles and facilities.

DISTRIBUTION

To all DCT administrative staff, operational staff, and passengers.

DEFINITIONS

- Service Animal

Please see the extended definition in the Policy Statement

POLICY STATEMENT

Requirement

DCT Bus shall permit service animals to accompany individuals with disabilities in vehicles and facilities.

What is a service animal?

Any guide dog, signal dog, or other animal individually trained to work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability, including, but not limited to, guiding individuals with impaired vision, alerting individuals with impaired hearing to intruders or sounds, providing minimal protection or rescue work, pulling a wheelchair, or fetching dropped items. DCT Bus will follow the DOT definition when assessing whether to accommodate a particular animal. While most service animals are dogs, DOT's definition recognizes the possibility of other animals.

Service animals are animals that are "individually trained to work or perform tasks". This training can be by an organization or by an individual, including the individual with a disability. Transit agencies are not required to transport animals that have not been individually trained to perform specific work or tasks. If an animal's only function were to provide emotional support or comfort for the rider, for example, that animal would not fall under the regulatory training-based definition of a service animal. Simply providing comfort is something that an animal does passively, by its nature or through the perception of the owner. Service animals are *not* pets, they are working animals.

DCT Bus's policies and practices recognize that some persons with hidden disabilities do use animals that meet the regulatory definition of a service animal. This would include, for example, animals that are trained to alert individuals with seizure disorders to an oncoming seizure or respond to a seizure and animals that are trained to remind persons with depression to take their medication.

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DCT Bus cannot have a policy requiring riders to provide documentation for their service animal before boarding a bus or vehicle or entering a facility, but personnel may ask riders two questions: Is the animal a service animal required because of a disability? And what work or task has the animal been trained to perform?

The following guidance also applies to service animals:

- DCT Bus may refuse to transport service animals that are deemed to pose a direct threat to the health or safety of drivers or other riders, create a seriously disruptive atmosphere, or are otherwise not under the rider's control. For example, a rider with a service dog is responsible for ensuring the dog does not bite the driver or other riders. Conversely, a dog that barks occasionally would likely not be considered out of the owner's control.
- 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 that case, the individual must maintain control of the animal through voice, signal, or other effective controls.
- A passenger's request that the driver take charge of a service animal may be denied. Caring for a service animal is the responsibility of the passenger or a PCA.
- Section 37.167 does not prescribe limits on the number of service animals that accompany riders on a single trip. Different service animals may provide different services to a rider during trips or at the rider's destination.
- Other riders' or agency personnel's allergies to dogs or other animals would not be grounds for denying service to a person accompanied by a service animal. The regulations explicitly state that service animals must be allowed to accompany individuals on vehicles and in facilities. Encountering a service animal in the transit or other environment is an expectant part of being in public.
- On complementary paratransit or other demand responsive services, DCT Bus personnel may ask riders for notification of their intent to ride with a service animal in order to help ensure adequate space is available for the animal.