

I. Background and Purpose:

Patients with disabilities who request permission to bring service animals with them when they visit UCSF hospitals, outpatient areas and ambulatory practices/clinics are to be reasonably accommodated in compliance with state and federal laws (see Medical Center Policy 1.01.10, "Disabled Access Services"). Visitors with service animals have access to nearly every place of public accommodation.

II. Definitions:

A. "Service animal:" The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) defines a service animal as any domestic animal individually trained to provide assistance to an individual with a physical, cognitive, or mental disability. Service animals perform some of the functions and tasks that the individual with a disability cannot perform. Some of these tasks include but are not limited to guiding individuals who are blind or have low vision, alerting individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to the presence of people or sounds providing minimal protection or rescue work, pulling a wheelchair, picking up dropped items, assisting an individual during a seizure, retrieving medicine or the telephone, providing physical support to assist with balance and stability to individuals with mobility disabilities, and assisting individuals, including those with cognitive disabilities, with navigation.

Service animals DO NOT include wild animals (including nonhuman primates born in captivity), reptiles, rabbits, farm animals (including any breed of horse, pony, miniature horse, pig, and goat), ferrets', amphibians, and rodents. Animals whose sole function is to provide emotional support, comfort, therapy, companionship, therapeutic benefits, or promote emotional well-being are not service animals." (4) Illegal animals are not service animals. See Appendix 1.

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- B. “Psychiatric Service Dogs”** are service animals individually trained to perform tasks which mitigate the psychiatric disabilities of their disabled partners.
- C. “Comfort Animals”/“Emotional Support Animals”** are individually trained animals that provide emotional support or comfort to a qualified individual with a disability whose disability results in an inability to self-soothe or de-escalate and control emotions. This is “work” that benefits the individual with the disability and should be recognized as such.
- D. “Therapy Dogs/Animals”** are animals that have been trained, tested, certified and insured to work in hospitals, nursing homes, schools, and other institutional settings. The therapy animal and its partner visit to cheer patients, to educate the community, to counter grief and stress, and generally act as animal ambassadors within the community. A therapy dog is not a service animal. **For information about SPCA therapy animals, contact Child Life Services.**
- E. “Direct Threat”** Any exception to the use of service animals should only be permissible where there is a demonstrable fundamental alteration or direct threat, meaning that the public accommodation or public entity has the burden of establishing that the presence of a service animal will cause a significant risk or substantial harm to health or safety, or will fundamentally alter the nature of the service or program.

III. Policy and Practice:

- A.** Pet visitation is discouraged under most circumstances. However, visitation may be arranged after consulting with the physician, nurse manager, and Infection Prevention.
- B.** Service Animals and Comfort Animals will be allowed to accompany patients, visitors, employees, and other customers in the hospital in accordance with the following guidelines:

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- Staff should not ask about the nature of the disability, or require “proof” or identification of the person’s disability or the animal’s training, as that inquiry violates ADA and other federal nondiscrimination laws. There is no legal requirement that a service animal wear special equipment or tags. Because there is no training standards for service animals, there is no certification requirement to “prove” that an animal is a service animal. Health care facilities are advised to accept the verbal reassurance of the person that he or she has a disability (and is protected by the ADA), and that the animal is a service animal unless the animal does not appear to be in good health, is not in control of the owner, or poses a direct health or safety threat to others.
- C.** Emotional Support Animals that offer comfort, therapy, companionship, therapeutic benefits, or promote emotional wellbeing that are not classified as Service Animals will be allowed to accompany patients, visitors, employees, and other customers in the hospital in accordance with the following guidelines:
- Patients and personnel will implement effective hygienic measures to prevent transmission (such as hand washing before and after visits) of any disease.
 - Patients’ wounds should be covered prior to animal visitation.
 - Animals will go directly to the intended appointment location and leave the facility after the appointment is over.
 - Documentation of full vaccination and a veterinary attestation that the animal is free from disease may be requested if a threat to the health or safety of patients, visitors or healthcare workers is suspected. If requested, review of these documents must be documented in the patient’s medical record.

IV. Guidelines for Animal Visits:

A. Inpatient Visits

- The animal must be healthy and well-groomed. Health conditions that would exclude the animal from the hospital include, but are not limited to, gastroenteritis, obvious flea or mite infestation, skin lesions, or poor grooming. Consult with Infection Prevention, Patient Relations, your manager, or the UCSF nurse hospital supervisor if you have any questions.
- The patient must be in a private room (so that the animal will not bother a roommate).
- If the patient is immunocompromised (less than 500 absolute neutrophils), the physician will be consulted before the animal is allowed to visit with the patient. If there are other clinical concerns, the attending physician will be consulted.
- Service Animals and Comfort Animals are allowed in Critical Care, Special Care Nursery, Oncology and Surgical areas (not the Operating Room) **only after** consultation with the physician, unit manager, and Infection Prevention or Patient Relations to plan visits and assure proper control and care of the animal.
- A designated responsible party, other than the patient and healthcare workers, must be available for the stewardship of the animal, including feeding, watering, exercise and elimination.

B. Outpatient Visits

- Service Animals and Comfort Animals are allowed in most outpatient areas. For any areas normally restricted to visitors, service or comfort animals are allowed **only after** consulting with the physician, practice manager, Infection Prevention or Patient Relations.

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- A designated responsible party, other than the patient and healthcare workers, must be available for the stewardship of service and therapy animals, including feeding, providing water, exercise and elimination. The hospital is not required to provide care or food for a service animal or provide a special location for it to relieve itself.
- A person with a disability can be asked to remove his service animal from the premises if:
 1. The animal is out of control and the animal's owner does not take effective action to control it (for example, a dog that barks repeatedly) or
 2. The animal poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others
- For the above cases, you must give the person with the disability the option to obtain the services without having the animal on the premises. Consult with Patient Relations, your manager, or the nurse supervisor after hours if you have any questions.
- A service animal may be held in a separate area while the patient is in a restricted area, or if the handler is temporarily unable to provide for the stewardship of the service animal.
- As a courtesy to our patients, visitors, employees, and other customers, a large, foldable plastic crate (that will accommodate animals up to 75 pounds) is available to check out 24/7 (from our hospital security department 885-7890) at both UCSF Medical Center locations in order to assure the safety of the animal, patients, and staff.
- Consult with Infection Prevention, Patient Relations, your manager, or the nurse supervisor after hours if you have any questions.

Key Stakeholders:

Patient Relations (Susan Alves-Rankin, 2008)
UCSF Risk Management and Insurance Services (Bruce Flynn, 2008)
Ambulatory Services (Kristy Ensunsa, 2008)
Hospital Epidemiology and Infection Control (Amy Nichols, 2008)

References

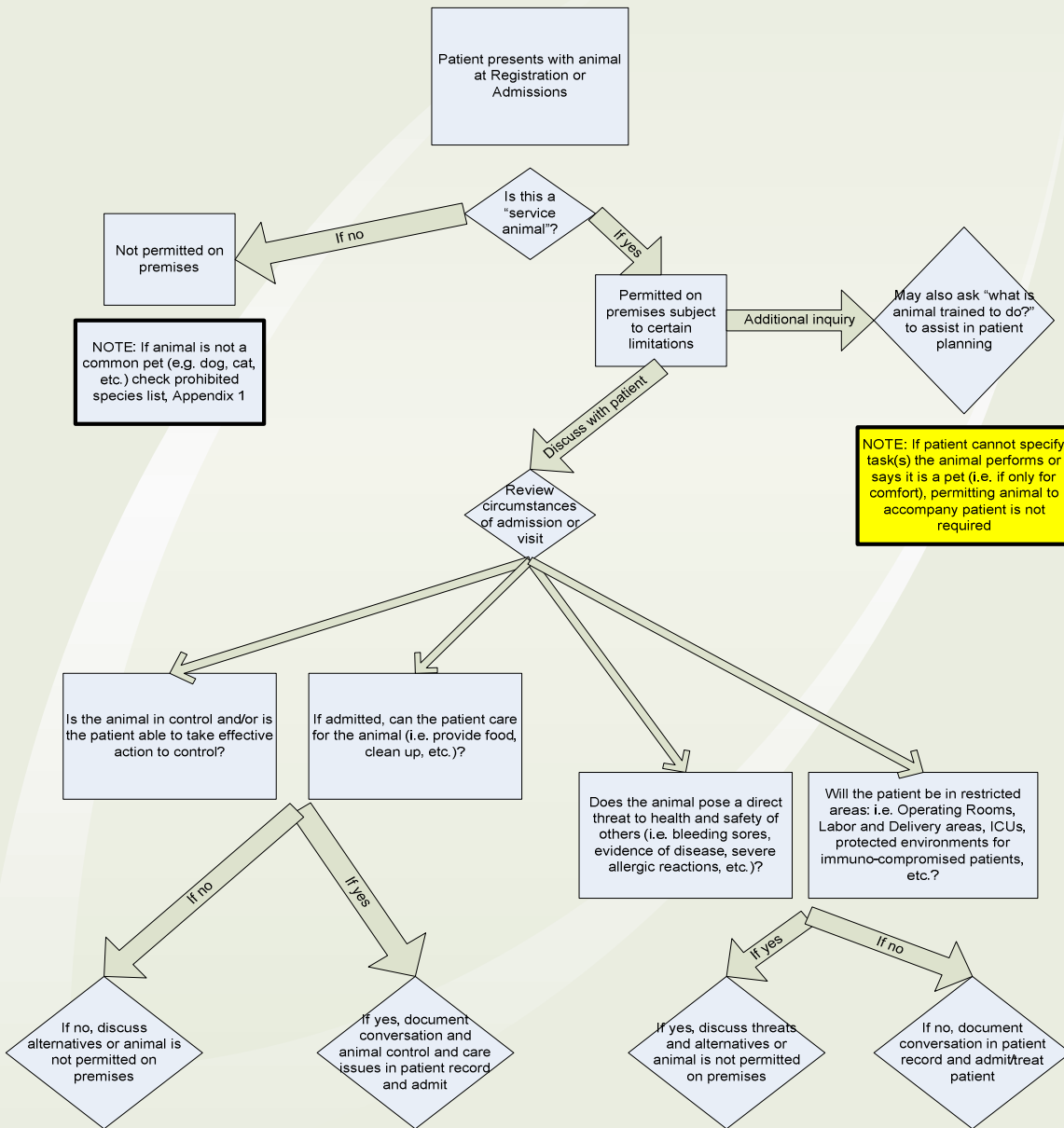
1. Duncan, SL. "APIC State of the Art Report: The implications of service animals in health care settings." *Is J Infection Control* 2000; 28:170-80.
2. Price, S. "Service Animals Under the ADA. "Legal Briefings September 2006.
3. Siehulster, L. "Guideline for Environmental Infection Control in Healthcare Facilities, 2003." <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/cdcanimals.html>
4. Proposed Rules. Federal Register 73;117:34476-9. Tuesday June 17, 2008.

Appendix 1: Illegal and Restricted Animals in California

Illegal and restricted animals, as defined by California Department of Fish and Game, and the California Code of Regulations, will not be permitted on site at UCSF Medical Center and Children's Hospital in the capacity of service, therapy or pet animals. Lists of illegal and restricted animals in California can be viewed at http://www.dfg.ca.gov/wildlife/species/nuis_exo/ferret/ferret_issues_tabl6.html

Appendix 2: Animal Visitation Decision Tree

UCSF MEDICAL CENTER SERVICE ANIMAL DECISION TREE



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Appendix 3:

Zoonoses (diseases caused or transmitted by animals) are associated with animal contact. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention's Healthcare Infection Control Practices Advisory Committee has published the following examples of zoonoses. Patients with animal contact may be at higher risk for developing zoonoses.

Table 26. Examples of diseases associated with zoonotic transmission*+

Infectious disease	Cats	Dogs	Fish	Birds	Rabbits	Reptiles§	Primates	Rodents§
<i>Virus</i>								
Lymphocytic choriomeningitis								+¶
Rabies	+	+						
<i>Bacteria</i>								
Campylobacteriosis	+	+				+	+	+
<i>Capnocytophaga canimorsus</i> infection	+	+						
Cat scratch disease (<i>Bartonella henselae</i>)	+							
Leptospirosis	+						+	+
Mycobacteriosis			+	+				
Pasteurellosis	+	+			+			
Plague	+			+			+	+
Psittacosis				+				
Q fever (<i>Coxiella burnetii</i>)	+							
Rat bite fever (<i>Spirillum minus</i> , <i>Streptobacillus moniliformis</i>)								+
Salmonellosis	+	+		+	+	+	+	+
Tularemia	+				+			+
Yersiniosis					+	+	+	+
<i>Parasites</i>								
Ancylostomiasis	+	+					+	
Cryptosporidiosis	+							
Giardiasis	+	+					+	
Toxocariasis	+	+					+	
Toxoplasmosis	+	+					+	
<i>Fungi</i>								
Blastomycosis		+						
Dermatophytosis		+			+		+	+

* Material in this table is adapted from reference 1331 and used with permission of the publisher (Lippincott Williams and Wilkins).

+ This table does not include vectorborne diseases.

§ Reptiles include lizards, snakes, and turtles. Rodents include hamsters, mice, and rats.

¶ The + symbol indicates that the pathogen associated with the infection has been isolated from animals and is considered to pose potential risk to humans.

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