



Policy: GA.4010
Title: **Service Animals**
Department: Facilities
Section: Not Applicable

CEO Approval: /s/ Michael Hunn 12/20/2024

Effective Date: 08/01/2019
Revised Date: 12/01/2024

Applicable to: ☐ Medi-Cal
☐ OneCare
☐ PACE
☒ Administrative

I. PURPOSE

This policy describes CalOptima Health's policy for individuals with disabilities, including Members, Participants, visitors, or tenants entering CalOptima Health Property with a Service Animal.

II. POLICY

- A. CalOptima Health shall allow a Service Animal to accompany individuals with disabilities in all areas where the public are generally allowed on CalOptima Health Property.
1. For the CalOptima Health Program for All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) Center, Service Animals may accompany individuals with disabilities in all areas of the facility where the public is normally allowed to go.
 - a. Service Animals are excluded from the kitchen, staff lounge, medication room, lab room, locked storage areas and the administration hallway area.
 2. If individuals with disabilities require entry into an area on CalOptima Health Property where security card access is required, CalOptima Health shall allow the Service Animal to accompany the handler.
 3. Members are not allowed in areas where security card access is necessary to enter.
- B. CalOptima Health shall require a Service Animal have a harness, leash, or tether, unless the handler is unable to use a tether because of a disability or the use of a tether would interfere with the Service Animal's ability to safely perform its work or tasks. In this case the Service Animal must be under control by the handler through hand signals, voice commands, or other effective means.
- C. CalOptima Health shall allow Service Animals in training on CalOptima Health Property while following the same procedures found in this Policy for animals trained to perform tasks or do work related to the handler's disability.
- D. CalOptima Health shall allow Service Animals that have been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for individuals with disabilities. CalOptima Health shall allow Service Animals to accompany individuals with disabilities in all areas where the public are generally allowed on CalOptima Health Property where reasonable.

1. CalOptima Health shall use the following assessment factors to determine whether a Service Animal can be accommodated in the facility:
 - a. Whether the Service Animal is housebroken;
 - b. Whether the Service Animal is under the owner's control;
 - c. Whether CalOptima Health Property can accommodate the size and weight of the Service Animal; and
 - d. Whether the presence of the Service Animal will not compromise legitimate safety requirements necessary for safe operation of CalOptima Health Property.
- E. CalOptima Health Property shall not deny access for individuals with disabilities using a Service Animal due to allergies or fear of dogs.
- F. CalOptima Health shall not discriminate against an individual using a Service Animal.

III. PROCEDURE

- A. When it is not evident what service the animal provides, CalOptima Health shall only be allowed to ask two (2) questions of the handler as follows:
 1. Is the Service Animal required because of a disability?
 2. What work or task has the animal been trained to perform?
- B. If a Service Animal behaves in a way that poses a direct threat to the health or safety of CalOptima Health Members, employees, visitors, or tenants, and/or is not under control of its handler or is not house broken, CalOptima Health may exclude the Service Animal from CalOptima Health Property. CalOptima Health shall consider each situation on a case-by-case basis. If the Service Animal is excluded, CalOptima Health must still offer the individual services without the Service Animal present.
- C. If a Service Animal is excluded for reasons listed in Section III B., CalOptima Health shall provide individuals with disabilities the necessary assistance required in the absence of the Service Animal.
- D. Dogs whose sole function is to provide comfort or emotional support do not qualify as Service Animals under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) as amended.
- E. CalOptima Health shall prohibit an individual from bringing a pet(s) (e.g., a domestic animal kept for pleasure or companionship) within CalOptima Health Property, with the exception of Service Animals providing reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities under the ADA.
- F. CalOptima Health shall not require Service Animals to wear a vest or ID tag identifying them as a Service Animal.
- G. CalOptima Health shall not insist on proof of state certification, license, or any type of certification before permitting the Service Animal into CalOptima Health Property.
- H. CalOptima Health shall not request documentation for the Service Animal or require the Service Animal to perform its task or ask about the individual's disability.

- I. CalOptima Health shall not be responsible for the care or supervision of any Service Animal including feeding or providing a special location for the Service Animal.

IV. ATTACHMENT(S)

Not Applicable

V. REFERENCE(S)

- A. Americans with Disabilities Act
B. Title 28, Code of Federal Regulations (C.F.R.), §§35.104, 35.136, and 36.302(c)

VI. REGULATORY AGENCY APPROVAL(S)

None to Date

VII. BOARD ACTION(S)

Date	Meeting
08/01/2019	Special Meeting of the CalOptima Board of Directors

VIII. REVISION HISTORY

Action	Date	Policy	Policy Title	Program(s)
Effective	08/01/2019	GA.4010	Service Animals	Administrative
Revised	05/01/2021	GA.4010	Service Animals	Administrative
Revised	04/01/2022	GA.4010	Service Animals	Administrative
Revised	08/01/2023	GA.4010	Service Animals	Administrative
Revised	12/01/2024	GA.4010	Service Animals	Administrative

IX. GLOSSARY

Term	Definition
Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)	A civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in all areas of public life, including jobs, schools, transportation, and all public and private places that are open to the general public. The purpose of the law is to make sure that people with disabilities have the same rights and opportunities as everyone else. (adata.org)
CalOptima Health Property	Any property owned, operated or leased by CalOptima Health, including CalOptima Health owned or leased vehicles, the administration building at 505 City Parkway West, in the City of Orange, State of California, 500 City Parkway West, in the City of Orange, State of California, the PACE building at 13300 Garden Grove Boulevard, in the City of Garden Grove, State of California, and the CalOptima Health satellite office located at the County Community Service Center, 15496 Magnolia Street, Suite 111, in the City of Westminster, State of California. CalOptima Health Property shall include surrounding ground and parking lots owned, operated, or leased by CalOptima Health, as well as other leased or rented spaces.
Member	A beneficiary enrolled in a CalOptima Health program.
Participant	An individual enrolled in the CalOptima Health PACE program
Service Animal	<p>Any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability. Other species of animals, whether wild or domestic, trained or untrained, are not Service Animals for the purposes of this definition.</p> <p>While the definition of service animal extends only to dogs, ADA regulations also allow for the use of miniature horses that have been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for individuals with disabilities as service animals. Miniature horses generally range in height from twenty-four (24) inches to thirty-four (34) inches measured to the shoulders and generally weigh between seventy (70) and one-hundred (100) pounds.</p>