

1 SCOPE

These guidelines have been developed to support employees, students and others attending the university with assistance animals. It also provides guidance on emotional support animals and pets.

The scope excludes all management of other animal such as wildlife, farm animals, research animals or veterinary patient animals.

2 INTRODUCTION

There are many reasons for animals to be present at the University's workplaces, learning environments and residential accommodation facilities. This guidance addresses Guide Dogs and Assistance Animals only.

Equal Opportunity and Disability Discrimination legislation applicable in Victoria establishes obligations for the University and other duty holders in relation to Guide Dogs and Assistance Animals.

Occupational Health and Safety legalisation applicable in Victoria establishes obligations for the University and other duty holders in relation to the management of health and safety risk in workplace.

Other risk-based legislation applicable in Victoria establishes obligations for the University and other duty holders in relation to the management of other risks such as food safety, public health, biosafety and biosecurity.

3 DEFINITIONS

Guide Dog: includes a dog used by a visually impaired person, hearing impaired person or person training a guide dog.¹

Assistance Dog: means a dog that is trained to perform tasks or functions that assist a person with a disability to alleviate the effects of their disability.²

Assistance Animal: is a dog or other animal:

- a) under State or Territory law, trained and accredited to assist a person with a disability; or
- b) under Commonwealth regulations, trained and accredited by a prescribed animal training organisation; or
- c) trained:
 - a. to assist a person with a disability to alleviate the effect of the disability; and
 - b. to meet standards of hygiene and behaviour that are appropriate for an animal in a public place.³

Emotional Support Animals: Emotional support animals, commonly referred to as companion animals or therapy animals, that provide comfort but are not trained to alleviate the effect of a disability to be assistance animals.

¹ *Domestic Animals Act 1994* (Vic)

² *Equal Opportunity Act 2010* (Vic)

³ *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cwt)

4 UNIVERSITY GUIDANCE

4.1 Guide Dogs

A person with a visual or hearing impairment or person training a guide dog may be accompanied at all times and in all places by a guide dog or a guide dog in training.⁴

4.2 Assistance Animals (other than Guide Dogs)

A person with a disability must not be unlawfully discriminated against⁵ when seeking to be accompanied by an Assistance Animal.

Reasonable adjustments for a person with a disability requesting to be accompanied by an Assistance Animal may include:

1. Seeking information about the Assistance Animal to confirm the accreditation and/or training.
2. Undertaking a risk assessment to identify hazards and assess level of risk an Assistance Animals' presence may introduce.
3. Consulting with employees⁶ and others in the environment prior to the introduction of an Assistance Animal to identify any person who may be at increased risk of injury or ill health due to the presence of the Assistance Animal.
4. Facilitating a risk assessment to identify hazards the Assistance Animal may be exposed to and communicating this to the person requiring the Assistance Animal.
5. Providing sufficient space for an Assistance Animal to be present in the environment.
6. Monitoring the effectiveness of the risk controls implemented to eliminate or reduce risks associated with the presence of an Assistance Animal.

5 RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 Supervisor/Subject coordinator

1. Provide reasonable adjustment for any person with a disability.
2. Seek reasonable information from a person requiring an Assistance Animal including:
 - a. evidence about the Assistance Animal's accreditation and/or training.
 - b. information that may assist in the assessment of risk.
3. Seek assistance and guidance from:
 - a. Student Equity and Disability Services for student with a disability requiring an Assistance Animal;
 - b. Human Resources Business Partner for employees with a disability requiring an Assistance Animal;
 - c. Health and Safety Business Partner and BioSafety Officers for risk assessment specialist advice.
4. Facilitate consultation with employees⁷ and others in the environment.
5. Facilitate risk assessment.

⁴ *Domestic Animal Act 1994* (Vic)

⁵ Discrimination may be lawful if:

- there is a reasonable suspicion that the Assistance Animal has an infectious disease.
- discrimination is reasonably necessary to protect public health or the health of other animals.
- when asked, the person with a disability does not produce evidence that the animal is:
 - an Assistance Animal; or
 - trained to meet standards of hygiene and behaviour that are appropriate for an animal in a public place.

⁶ Including any applicable elected employee Health and Safety Representative

⁷ Including any applicable elected employee Health and Safety Representative

5.2 Person requiring an Assistance Animal

1. Ensure the Assistance Animal meets the requirements as an assistance animal.
2. Ensure the Assistance Animal is trained to meet standards of hygiene and behaviour that are appropriate for an animal in a public place.
3. Ensure the Assistance Animal remains under control⁸.
4. Take reasonable care for their own safety and the safety of others.
5. Co-operate with the University with respect to actions taken by the University to comply with safety obligations.
6. Maintains any liability for damage to property caused by an Assistance Animal that would ordinarily apply to the owner/controller of an animal.

6 OTHER DOMESTIC ANIMALS

Establishing and maintaining an animal-friendly workplace requires a delicate balancing of the benefits, risks, rights and obligations.

Attendance of emotional support animals and pets inside University buildings is subject to local management approval.

Approval process should consider:

1. risks to other occupants, other animals, property and the operations of University; and
2. consultation with effected employees⁹; and
3. responsibilities of the person bringing the emotional support animal or pet to the University.

7 FURTHER INFORMATION

Disability and Inclusion:

<https://staff.unimelb.edu.au/human-resources/diversity-inclusion>

Student Equity and Disability Support:

<https://staff.unimelb.edu.au/students-teaching/support-for-students/equity-disability>

For further information, refer to <http://safety.unimelb.edu.au>, or contact [Health and Safety Services](#) or your local Health and Safety Business Partner (<https://safety.unimelb.edu.au/health-and-safety-contacts>).

⁸ Control may not require the person's direct physical control. Control can be performed directly by the person with a disability or by another person on behalf of the person with a disability.

⁹ Any applicable elected employee Health and Safety Representative.