



<b>POLICY:</b>	<b>200.11 SERVICE DOGS IN AMBULANCE</b>		
<b>APPROVAL:</b>	<b>VICE PRESIDENT OF PROFESSIONAL SERVICES; MANAGER OF EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES (EMS)</b>		
<b>EFFECTIVE DATE: 2/15/2024</b>			<b>ORIGINAL EFFECTIVE DATE: 7/2/2018</b>
<b>DEPARTMENT SPECIFIC</b>		<b>EMS</b>	

**I. Purpose:**

Morris Hospital understands that patients rely on service dogs for various reasons and at times, those animals may need to come with the patient to the hospital. This policy is to provide guidance to our system providers.

**II. Policy:**

- A. If EMS is transporting a patient to the hospital, they may bring the patient’s service dog in the ambulance. According to the Americans with Disability Act (ADA), beginning on March 15, 2001, only dogs are recognized as service animals. Ambulances are only required to accommodate service dogs, and ambulance crews can legally deny transporting all other types of animals. EMS can only ask the following questions in regards to a service dog per ADA law:
  - 1. **Is the dog a service animal that is required because of a disability?**
  - 2. **What work or task has the dog been trained to perform?**
- B. Crews cannot ask about the person’s disability, request medical documentation, or ask that the dog demonstrate its ability to perform the work or task. Crews may not require documentation as proof that the dog has been trained, certified, or licensed before accepting it as legitimate service animal. Service animals are not required to wear a vest or any other identifier indicating it is a service animal.
- C. There is no requirement for specialized training for service dogs.
  - 1. Some patients may have certification from an official training program, while others may not. An individual may train the dog themselves.
  - 2. The patient or the service dog handler must maintain control of the service animal at all times.
  - 3. The dog must be harnessed, leashed or tethered unless these devices interfere with the animal’s work. In this case, the patient must demonstrate his/her ability to control the animal through voice or other commands.

**III. Areas Allowed:**

- A. EMS providers are not responsible for care, comfort or securing of the service dog in the ambulance. Unless a specific location is required for the dog’s work, the service dog must be kept in a location in the ambulance (chosen by the EMS personnel) where they will not interfere with medical care or pose a danger to personnel or the patient.
- B. EMS providers should alert the ED before arrival that a service animal is accompanying the patient. Upon arrival at the hospital, the service dog can

accompany the patient into the ED. Service dogs are allowed in areas of the hospital where the general public travels. Hospital staff is not responsible for care of the animal.

- C. Once patient care has been turned over, the crew is responsible for cleaning/decontaminating their ambulance according to their department policy and procedures. Some form of documentation should be noted in regards to the cleaning of the ambulance.

**Approval:**

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**James Kirchner** **Date**  
**Vice President of Professional Services**

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**Kathleen Geiger, MSN, RN** **Date**  
**Manager of EMS & Emergency Management**