

ANIMALS IN SCHOOLS/CLASSROOMS

Seeing-eye and service dogs are permitted on school buses and in classrooms to perform the functions for which they are trained. This policy shall comply with the provisions of Iowa Code §216C. *As such, a person with a disability or a person training an assistive animal has the right to be accompanied by a service dog or an assistive animal, under control.* The person is liable for damage done to any premises or facility by a service dog or assistive animal. A "service dog" means a dog specially trained at a recognized training facility to assist a person with a disability, whether described as a service dog, guide dog, hearing dog, support dog, independence dog, or otherwise. An "assistive animal" means an animal specially trained or in the process of being trained under the auspices of a recognized training facility to assist a person with a disability.

The school must keep record on its premises of the animal's verification of training. These animals must wear a laminated identification card when on school premises.

Animals may be brought into the classroom for educational purposes with permission from the building principal. However, they must be appropriately and humanely cared for, and properly handled. The following guidelines shall apply to animals in the schools:

- *Prior to granting permission, teachers should check with the school nurse regarding any known allergies among students in the classroom. If allergies exist, parents must be contacted for further direction.
- *The person bringing the animal must furnish transportation for the animal brought to school. Animals will not be allowed to travel to and from the student's attendance center on the school bus.
- *Teachers must assume primary responsibility for the humane and proper treatment of any animals in the classroom.
- *Only the teacher or students designated by the teacher are to handle the animals.
- *If animals are to be kept in the classroom on days when classes are not in session, the teacher must make arrangements for their care and safety.
- *Permission from the principal will be required of anyone wishing to bring an animal into school district facilities.

Staff members or students who have been bitten by an animal shall report such incident to the principal and the nurse immediately. The principal should notify the public health authorities if the injury merits medical follow-up.

Legal Reference: Iowa Code § 279.8 (2014).

Cross Reference: 507 Student Health and Well-Being

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