



Advocates for Homeless
& Those in Need

AHTN Service Animal Policy and Procedures

AHTN and the 4 houses of worship that host Code Blue have agreed that animals will not be permitted in the Code Blue Shelters this season 2016-2017. We have asked an organization for homeless pets to assist and they have said they will outreach for volunteers to help if an animal needs shelter. With the season about to begin, we are sending out this email to inform our volunteers about this policy change. It is important to understand our legal obligations to all homeless friends.

Under the ADA, AHTN is not required to provide access to the premises to the service animal. AHTN is not a religious organization itself, and does not fall under the umbrella of the religious exemption provided by the ADA. However, the services it provides are exempt from ADA requirements for two reasons: (1) the space where people are served is a church and places of worship are exempt; and (2) it does not provide any consideration for the use of the church space.

Places of worship are entirely excluded from the requirements of the ADA. Because AHTN is providing services at a place of worship, it does not need to provide accommodations otherwise required by the ADA.

If any volunteer would like to be placed on an on-call list to provide emergency overnight shelter **at your own risk** for an animal that cannot stay in our Shelter, please email us at office@ahtn.org. Some of the risks include, but are not limited to: aggression, no vaccinations, fleas, ticks, or any other condition that may be contagious to other pets. The homeless pet organization has agreed to provide crates and strongly recommend they be used.

For Wheels to Meals, AHTN has a responsibility to transport animals identified as service animals by their owners.

IMPORTANT - All Bus Attendants, please read and adhere exactly to the following guidelines.

- The owner can be asked only two questions:
 - (1) is the animal a service animal, and
 - (2) what work or task has the animal been trained to perform
- REGARDLESS of the answers to those 2 questions, **the owner cannot be asked to provide any documentation regarding the service animal.**
- Service animal must be harnessed, leashed or tethered, or be under voice, signal or other control.
- Service animals must behave properly and sit at the feet of the guest. No animals should take a seat.
- **In The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the law requires all dogs AND cats over 3 months of age (12 weeks) to be vaccinated for rabies.**
- Please explain to any guest with an animal that although we will transport them, our meal destinations are most commonly a house of worship that may or may not grant them admission. We will be happy to bring a meal back to the bus stop if they would prefer not to ride and take the chance. It is not our place to decide for the guest and their animal.

If you have any questions or concerns about this policy, please email office@ahtn.org. Thank you.