

## Father Joe's Villages

<b>TITLE:</b>	Service Dogs and Emotional Support Animals
<b>Policy Statement:</b>	<p>Father Joe's Villages' St. Vincent DePaul Village and offsite shelter locations (hereinafter referred to collectively as "St. Vincent's") welcomes Service Animals (including Service dogs in training) and Emotional Support Animals at its facilities, including all common areas (dining hall, classrooms, etc.) as an accommodation for persons with a disability. In order to prevent hazards to health and safety or any unnecessary interference with the use and enjoyment of other residents, St. Vincent's requires that such animals be under the control of the person with a disability at all times unless confined to a crate or cage for the duration of activities related to maintaining good personal hygiene in a Village restroom facility. St. Vincent's is not responsible for care or feeding of the animal. Residents are expected to clean up after their animals and have their animal use the designated areas to relieve themselves.</p> <p>A Service or Emotional Support animal may be excluded if determined, based on an individual assessment, that the animal poses a direct threat to the health and safety of others or the animal is out of control and the owner does not take effective action to control it. A dog may <u>not</u> be excluded based on stereotypes regarding its breed or size. Certain other species of Emotional Support animals may be excluded if St. Vincent's is not able to accommodate that type of animal without fundamentally altering the program. Such determination must be made in consultation with the Division Director of Client Services and the Chief Program Officer.</p> <p>In situations where the client's disability and the work the animal does is not apparent, it is legally permissible for staff to ask if the animal is a Service Animal or an Emotional Support Animal and ask what the animal does for the person with a disability. However, staff may not request to see any certification, tag, doctor's note or other documentation prior to admitting the person with a disability and his/her animal into the shelter or transitional housing program. If staff reasonably suspect that an animal identified by a client to be an Emotional Support Animal is not an Emotional Support Animal even though the resident in the shelter or transitional housing program claims otherwise, the resident may be required to obtain a letter from a medical provider documenting the need for the animal. The resident will be provided a reasonable time after moving into the program to obtain the requested medical documentation. (Reasonable is typically defined as five business days; however this may be altered, in consultation with the Director of Residential Services and the Division Director, given extenuating circumstance.)</p> <p>Any questions regarding this policy should be directed to the Chief</p>

	Program Officer.
<b>Purpose:</b>	Provide equal and legal access to disabled individuals in possession of Service Animals and Emotional Support Animals
<b>Responsibility</b>	Program Managers, Directors, and Chief Program Officer
<b>Definitions:</b>	<p><b>Disability:</b> A physical or mental impairment that limits one or more major life activities.</p> <p><b>Service animal:</b> A dog (or miniature horse) that has been trained to do work or perform tasks for a person with a disability. A service animal may be professionally trained or trained by the person with a disability. The animal need not have any special certification, tag, or wear a vest identifying it as a service animal. The right of a person with a disability to be accompanied by a service animal at places of public accommodation, including homeless shelters, is protected by the ADA and California law. In addition, under the federal Fair Housing Act and California law, a person with a disability may keep a service animal in housing as a reasonable accommodation or exception to a “no pets” policy.</p> <p><b>Emotional Support Animal:</b> (Previously referred to in past versions of this policy as a Companion Animal.) A dog or other animal that provides emotional support and companionship for a person with a mental, emotional, or psychiatric disability. Under California law, a person with a mental, emotional or psychiatric disability with an Emotional Support Animal has a right of access to places of public accommodation, including homeless shelters. In addition, under the federal Fair Housing Act and California law, a person with a mental disability may keep an Emotional Support Animal in housing as a reasonable accommodation or exception to a “no pets” policy.</p>