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## **Sacramento Zoo Service Animal Policy Updated December 2017**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) defines a “service animal” as dogs that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities. If they meet this definition, dogs are considered service animals under the ADA regardless of whether they have been licensed or certified by a state or local government. ADA requires service animals to be harnessed, leashed or tethered unless these devices interfere with the service animal’s work or the individual’s disability prevents using these devices. In that case, the individual must maintain control of the animal through voice, signal, or other effective controls.

Service animals are working animals, not pets. The work or task a dog has been trained to provide must be directly related to the person’s disability. Dogs whose sole function is to provide comfort or emotional support or therapy dogs that provide a service to others do not qualify as “service animals” under the ADA.

The care and supervision of a service animal is solely the responsibility of his or her owner.

Service animals may only be excluded from the zoo when that animal’s behavior poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others. Examples are vicious behavior towards other guests, a dog that is out of control and the handler cannot or does not regain control, or if the dog is not housebroken. If a service animal is excluded, the individual with the disability who uses the service animal must have the option of continuing to enjoy the zoo.

The Sacramento Zoo is responsible for the health and well being of collections of prized, and in many cases, rare and endangered species of animals. The zoo is the guardian of these animals and is subject to stringent regulations pertaining to their protection. In the event that a service animal’s presence within certain areas of the zoo is demonstrated (through prior or current displays of agitation) to cause the animals in that area undue stress or anxiety, or present the potential for injury, we reserve the right to designate such areas as off-limits to the service animal, or to designate the area as sensitive and request that guests observe extra caution in such areas. Sensitive areas may be designated as a result of new births or hatchings, nesting or breeding behavior in progress, or new animals in exhibits. Animal Care management staff will determine whether special circumstances warrant restrictions on service animals in any exhibits or areas.