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Animals and Pets on Campus

POLICY STATEMENT

This policy outlines the conditions under which animals, including service animals and therapy animals, are permitted in North Island College facilities and properties. Guide Dogs, Service Dogs and Teaching or Research Animals, and Therapy Animals as defined below, are permitted on North Island College grounds and inside buildings. Pets are not permitted inside campus buildings. All owners of animals on NIC property must comply with this policy and procedures as well as all provincial and municipal bylaws pertaining to animal control.

PURPOSE STATEMENT

The purpose of the policy is to provide direction for bringing animals onto NIC property, while ensuring the continuation of essential services and the health and safety of the College community. Some community members' health may be compromised due to allergies, or they may feel discomfort in the presence of animals. Despite owner precautions, there is also a possibility of animal-related injury to community members.

SCOPE AND APPLICATION

The policy applies to animals belonging to employees, students, contractors, consultants and visitors on all NIC properties. NIC will abide by the BC Guide Dog and Service Dog Act, the BC Human Rights Code as well as all applicable municipal animal bylaws.

PRINCIPLES

1. NIC is committed to providing a safe, healthy and inclusive learning and working environment for the College community.
2. For the health and safety of employees, students and visitors, animals and pets are not permitted inside NIC facilities, with the exception of those identified within the body of this document.
3. Approved animals must remain leashed and under handler control at all times.

4. NIC recognizes the need for specially trained animals that assist persons with disabilities – such as Guide Dogs and Service Dogs – as well as animals used for approved research and teaching purposes (Research and Teaching Animals).
5. NIC recognizes the need for specially trained animals that assist persons with disabilities, such as Emotional Support Animals (ESAs). ESAs will be handled on a case-by-case basis and require an approved accommodation for students and employees. Student accommodations for ESAs require approval from the Department of Accessible Learning Services. Employee accommodations for ESAs require approval from Human Resources.
6. Guide Dogs, Service Dogs, approved Emotional Support Animals, authorized Therapy Animals and Research and Teaching Animals are permitted in College buildings.
7. All pets and animals that are not included in Principles 5 and 6 above are not permitted in College buildings.

DEFINITIONS

The definitions below are BC Guide Dog and Service Dog Act definitions.

Blind person means an individual who

- a) is blind or visually impaired; and
- b) requires the assistance of a Guide Dog for daily living.

Dog trainer means an individual who

- a) trains dogs for the purpose of the dogs becoming Guide Dogs or Service Dogs; and
- b) is certified as a dog trainer.

Dog-in-training means a dog that

- a) is being trained by a dog trainer to become a Guide Dog or Service Dog;
- b) is certified as a dog-in-training; and
- c) a minimum of three months of age and have up-to-date vaccinations for which the owner/handler must provide verified paperwork.

Dog-in-training team means a dog trainer and a dog-in-training that are working together to train the dog-in-training to become a Guide Dog or Service Dog;

Guide Dog means a dog that

- a) is trained as a guide for a blind person; and
- b) is certified as a Guide Dog.

Guide Dog team means a blind person and a Guide Dog that are certified as a Guide Dog team.

Retired guide or Service Dog team means an individual and a dog that were previously members of the same Guide Dog team or Service Dog team and that

- a) are living together; and
- b) are certified as a retired guide or Service Dog team.

Person with a disability means an individual who

- a) has a disability, other than blindness or visual impairment; and
- b) requires, as a result of the disability, the assistance of a Service Dog for daily living.

Service Dog means a dog that

- a) is trained to perform specific tasks to assist a person with a disability, and
- b) is certified as a Service Dog.

Service Dog team means a person with a disability and a Service Dog that are certified as a Service Dog team.

Service Animal (SA): Guide and service animals (primarily canine) which help people with disabilities avoid hazards or perform tasks and are licensed according to their respective service.

Therapy Animal (TA): Animals (primarily canine or feline) holding appropriate certification (i.e. St. John's Ambulance) with a purpose of scheduled visitation on campus for therapeutic stress release programs. Therapy Animals will be allowed in NIC buildings when participating in College sanctioned events.

Emotional Support Animal (ESA): ESAs are not considered service animals, according to the British Columbia Guide Dog and Service Dog Act 1 and so they are not afforded the same permissions as Guide Dogs and Service Dogs and are not permitted in NIC buildings unless there is an approved accommodation from the Department of Accessible Learning Services (DALs) for students or Human Resources for employees.

Sanctioned Events that Include Animals: Sanctioned events that include animals, such as Therapy Dogs for students during exams, will require approval from the responsible administrator:

1. Employee sanctioned events need approval from the Associate Vice President, People, Equity & Inclusion;
2. Student sanctioned events need approval from the Vice President, Students & Community Engagement; and
3. In both cases, approval will be required prior to animals being brought on campus.

Teaching and Research Animals (TRAs): TRAs are animals in areas where academic or research programs require their presence (e.g. Animal Care Aide Program). Teaching and Research Animals are permitted on College grounds and inside campus building only when an activity requires the use of such animal and is sanctioned by the responsible administrator. Individuals responsible for teaching and research animals must:

1. Remain with the animal at all times, while maintaining control of the animal;
2. Clearly identify the animal as a teaching animal;
3. Immediately dispose of animal waste in an appropriate manner; and
4. Comply with all applicable animal control bylaws.

Access to Public Places

A Guide Dog team, Service Dog team or dog-in-training team may, in the same manner as would an individual who is not a member of any of those teams, enter and use any place, accommodation, building or conveyance to which the public is invited or has access, provided that the individual who is a member of the team ensures the dog that is a member of the team:

1. does not occupy a seat in a public conveyance or a place where food is served or dispensed to the public, as the case may be; and
2. is held by a leash or harness.

Pet: an animal that has been trained or adapted to living in a human environment. Such animals include, but are not limited to, dogs, cats, birds, rabbits.

False Representation

A person must not falsely represent a dog as being a member of a Guide Dog team, Service Dog team, retired guide or Service Dog team or dog-in-training team.

The *Human Rights Code* prevails over the BC Guide Dog and Service Dog Act. “For certainty, nothing in this Act (the BC Guide Dog and Service Dog Act), nor anything done under this Act, abrogates or derogates from the *Human Rights Code*.”

GUIDELINES

1. For Students

Students with Guide or Service Dogs will need to provide certification to the Department of Accessible Learning Services (DALSS) staff at their local campus.

Accommodation: NIC may allow Emotional Support Animals (ESA) as a disability-related accommodation for students. Students should contact the Department of Accessible Learning Services for assessment.

2. For Employees

Employees with Guide Dogs or Service Dogs will be required to provide certification to the HR Department.

Accommodation: NIC may allow Emotional Support Animals (ESAs) as a disability-related accommodation for employees. Consult the NIC Employee Guide to Medical Workplace Accommodation and contact the Human Resources Department for assessment.

3. Owner Responsibility

- a) Service animals must be visibly defined as such. The animal must be licensed, in a carrier or on a leash that does not exceed 6 feet and exhibit controlled behavior. The owner of any animal showing uncontrolled or violent behavior will be asked to remove the animal;
- b) Any animal that demonstrates inappropriate behaviour that is disruptive to the learning environment, disrespectful or destructive to NIC property; or unsafe as determined by NIC staff, may be banned from NIC property;
- c) Immediate clean-up and disposal of waste is the responsibility of the animal’s owner/caretaker;
- d) Persons bringing an animal onto campus are required to observe applicable municipal bylaws;
- e) Animals must not be left tied up or unattended at any time. Animals found unattended may be reported to an animal control agency;
- f) Animals must not be left in vehicles unattended and/or out of the control of its handler during hot, cold or other weather conditions that may be dangerous to the animal. If an animal is locked in a vehicle during dangerous weather conditions, NIC reserves the right to contact RCMP to free the animal; and
- g) Animals that cause a disturbance, interrupt the work of others or pose a health or safety risk to students, faculty or staff who are exposed to it, must immediately be removed from campus by its owner and be kept off campus.

4. Owner Liability

Owners of animals brought onto NIC property accept sole financial and legal responsibility for any damage or injury caused by the animal to any person or property. Any fees relating to a bylaw infraction will be borne by the owner.

LIMITATIONS

Certifications obtained and/or legislation supported outside of British Columbia are not recognized and will not apply.

POLICY VIOLATIONS

1. Complaints relating to employee violation of this policy should be brought to their immediate supervisor.
2. Complaints relating to student violation of this policy should be brought to the Vice President, Students & Community Engagement (or designate).
3. Discipline may be applied against owners/handlers under NIC's Student Code of Conduct policy or NIC's Employee Code of Conduct policy for bringing animals into facilities under false pretenses, without permission, and/or without appropriate certification/documentation as requested by the College.
4. A person must not falsely represent a dog or animal as being a Guide Dog, Service Dog, Therapy Animal, Emotional Support Animal or Teaching and Research Animal.

LEGISLATIVE REFERENCES

BC Human Rights Code
BC Guide Dog and Service Dog Act

LINKS TO OTHER RELATED POLICIES, DOCUMENTS AND WEBSITES

NIC Policy #1-20 Code of Ethical Conduct
NIC Policy #3-06 Community Code of Academic, Personal and Professional Conduct (Code of Conduct)
NIC Policy #3-17 Instructional Accommodation and Accessible Learning Services
Website: NIC Department of Accessible Learning (DALs)
NIC Employee Guide to Medical Workplace Accommodations