

Policy for Service Dogs at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church is committed to providing a safe, welcoming and meaningful environment for all people who participate in our worship services and ministry activities. We have enacted this policy to provide the requirements to those attending our services and events with expectations regarding service dogs and their owners while inside the Church building. Prince of Peace Lutheran Church conforms to and supports the use of service dogs as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). NOTE: If possible, we request that service dog owners seek permission from the Church's Pastor or Church Office prior to attending Prince of Peace Lutheran Church. Thank you!

Service Dogs

The ADA defines a service animal as a dog that has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability. The task(s) performed by the service dog must be directly related to the person's disability. We welcome people and their service dogs inside the Church building. Ministry leaders may ask individuals with service dogs a few questions, including:

- Is the service dog required because of a disability?
- What work or task has the service dog been trained to perform?

Emotional Support Animals

An emotional support animal (also known as a comfort animal) provides reassurance just by being with a person. Dogs, cats, birds, hamsters, and many other species can serve as emotional support animals. However, they do not qualify as "service animals" under the ADA.

- Therefore, Prince of Peace Lutheran Church has chosen NOT to allow emotional support animals on its premises. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause to you or your family.

Animal Handler's Responsibilities

Individuals who bring a service dog inside the Church building are expected to:

- Have their service dog attended to and restrained at all times. This means that the service dog must be in the immediate vicinity of its owner (within 6 feet), and either on a leash or voice-controlled. To be considered 'attended', the dog may not be left fastened to a stationary object. The dog must be harnessed, leashed, or tethered, unless these devices interfere with the dog's work or an owner's disability prevents them from using these devices.
- Control the dog through voice, signal, or other effective controls, if the dog cannot be harnessed, leashed, or tethered.
- Owners of permitted service dogs are responsible for any damage to persons or property caused by their dog. They are responsible for disposing of the service dog's waste.

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church's Rights:

Prince of Peace is not required to provide care, food, or a special location for the service dog to relieve itself. We reserve the right to remove a service dog from the property, if it:

- Becomes disruptive or exhibits threatening behavior towards people, and the dog's handler does not correct the problem or escort the dog from the Church building.
- Poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others.
- Relieves itself on the premises or does anything that destroys property.

If a service dog must be removed from the premises, absent other circumstances, the owner may re-enter the premises and attend church or ministry activities without the service dog.