Service Animal Policy

POLICY

THE RULE

1. Consider allowing the service animal to accompany the patient in the ambulance, if it can be done safely for all involved
2. Use caution with the animal if the patient cannot reassure it during procedures and transport
3. If transport of the animal is not possible, investigate alternatives to get it to the hospital
4. Alternatives: EMS Operations Supervisor, family members, first responders, law enforcement
5. Impounding the service animal is a last resort only

WHY IT EXISTS

- To avoid long-term separation between patients and their service animals during pre-hospital care
- Definition: any dog individually trained to do work or perform tasks benefiting an individual with a disability
- Americans with Disabilities Act 1990, Title III — 2010 Revised Regulations, 36.104

APPLIES WHEN

- Mercy EMS is requested to provide care to a patient who has a service animal for assistance
- Service animals are generally well trained and docile
- Transport may be impossible due to the complexity of patient care procedures

EXCEPTIONS & EDGE CASES

- Miniature horses individually trained to perform tasks are also covered
- Generally: 24–34 inches to the shoulders, 75–100 pounds, housebroken, under the owner's control
- Accommodate size and type of miniature horse if it will not compromise legitimate safety concerns

DOCUMENT IT

- Not specified on the original page
- Resource named on the original: State of Missouri's Service Animal resource pamphlet

Take Home Message:

Bring the service animal with the patient when it is safe; impounding it is the last resort, never the first.