

Service Animal Policy and FAQ's

Tri-State Orthopaedic Surgeons, Inc. (TSOS) complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to accommodate service animals and visitors. Pets, comfort animals, therapy animals, and other emotional support animals (ESAs) are not permitted to enter the facility.

It's important to know that ESAs are not protected by the same laws that govern service animals. Unlike service animals, ESAs do not have public access rights under Title II and Title III of the ADA and may not be granted access with their handler to public places.

Although ESAs are often used as part of a medical treatment plan and may be determined to provide therapeutic benefit, we have implemented this policy to minimize the risks associated with animals in healthcare settings including the safety and protection of our patients, visitors, and staff.

Q. Should I tell someone I have a service animal?

Yes. Let us know that you will be accompanied by a service animal at the time of scheduling and check-in.

Q. What questions can you ask about my service animal?

If it is not apparent that a patient's or visitor's animal is a service animal, our staff may ask the following questions to determine if the animal qualifies as a service animal under the ADA. We may ask follow-up questions only if necessary for clarification.

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

Q. What if I disagree with your assessment of my service animal?

If the patient or visitor disagrees with the determination made by our staff that the animal is not a service animal under the ADA or Indiana law, please request to speak to our Clinical Manager or Compliance Manager for further clarification.

Q. What are the rules for having a service animal at TSOS?

Responsibility for the service animal shall be assumed by the owner/handler, who must:

- **Keep the service animal under control.** Service animals must 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 these cases, the individual must maintain control of the animal through voice, signal, or other effective controls.
- **Ensure good health and hygiene.** Service Animals must be clean and free from illness. The service animal must be immunized against diseases common to that type of animal. Dogs must have had and be current with the general maintenance vaccine series, including vaccinations against rabies, distemper, and parvovirus. Dogs must wear a rabies vaccination tag.
- **Comply with local licensing requirements.**
- **Clean up after the animal.** The handler or accompanying individual shall perform this function as necessary. If the service animal has an elimination accident, gloves should be worn to clean and disinfect the area. Any organic debris should be placed in a plastic bag in a trash container. Hand hygiene should be performed immediately after cleanup.

Q. Can my service animal go everywhere I go?

We allow service animals to accompany individuals with disabilities in all areas of the facility where the public is normally allowed to go. We also reserve the right to exclude service animals from potentially hazardous areas such as MRI and CT and where a sterile environment may be compromised by a service animal's presence, such as operating rooms, special procedure rooms, and other restricted areas.

Q. Can you ask that the service animal be removed from the facility?

Yes. If the service animal is not controlled (barks excessively, growls, behaves in a threatening manner, etc.) or is not housebroken, we may ask that the service animal be removed. Our staff will still make healthcare services available to the patient without the animal present.

**If you have questions about our Service Animal Policy,
please call (812) 477-1558**

or

Visit the Americans with Disabilities Act website at:

www.ADA.gov

ADA Information Line

800-514-0301 (Voice) and 800-514-0383 (TTY)

M-W, F 9:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m., Th 12:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. (Eastern Time)