

	<b>POLICY</b>
<b>DEPARTMENT:</b> Human Resources	<b>Page:</b> 1 of 2
<b>SUBJECT :</b> Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act-Service Animal	
Last reviewed: July 31, 2025	<b>ISSUING AUTHORITY:</b> Professional Practice
Next Review: July 31, 2026	

## Identifying Service Animals

Service animals are not pets—they are working animals trained to assist individuals with disabilities. They are generally identifiable by visual indicators such as a harness, vest, or identification tag.

If it is not readily apparent that an animal is a service animal, Braemar staff may only request documentation confirming the need for the service animal. This may be a letter from a regulated health professional, such as a physician, nurse, psychologist, occupational therapist, or another professional authorized under the AODA. The documentation must confirm that the individual requires the animal for disability-related reasons.

Examples of service animals may include, but are not limited to:

- ☐ Guide dogs for individuals who are blind or have low vision
- ☐ Hearing or signal dogs for people who are Deaf, deafened, or hard of hearing
- ☐ Animals trained to alert individuals to medical emergencies (e.g., seizures)
- ☐ Animals providing support for individuals with autism, mental health disabilities, mobility impairments, or other disabilities

## Service Animals Are Not Pets

Service animals are essential partners in providing accessibility and independence. For this reason, Braemar staff and visitors must not:

- ☐ Touch or handle the service animal
- ☐ Make eye contact with the service animal
- ☐ Talk to, feed, or otherwise distract the service animal

The individual accompanied by the service animal is responsible for the animal's care, control, and conduct at all times. This includes cleaning up after the animal and ensuring it behaves appropriately on Braemar property. Staff (e.g., housekeeping) may assist in sanitizing after any messes are cleaned, if needed.

## Allergies and Conflicting Needs

Braemar is committed to providing an inclusive and respectful environment for all individuals. In cases where a person has a health concern such as a severe allergy to a service animal, we will take all reasonable steps to accommodate both parties in a fair and respectful manner.

- If an employee or visitor experiences a conflict due to an allergy or other medical condition, they must notify the Director of Care or their designate as soon as possible.
- The Director of Care will work collaboratively with all involved to explore accommodation options that consider the rights and needs of all parties.
- Possible solutions may include adjusting the location of services or staggering service times.

If a staff member is affected by an allergy, the Director of Care will ensure accommodations are made in accordance with the Ontario Human Rights Code and AODA guidelines.

**Responsibility:**

It is Braemar's responsibility to ensure that individuals who use service animals are treated with dignity and respect, and are able to access our services without discrimination or barriers. Staff are expected to be familiar with this policy and to uphold it in their interactions with the public.

**Source:**

Ontario Regulation 191/11, s. 80.47(4)

Service Animals – Ontario Government

Ontario Human Rights Commission – Policy on ableism and discrimination based on disability

Ontario.ca – Accessibility Rules