

Temple Sinai Service Animal Policy

Purpose

Temple Sinai is committed to creating an inclusive and welcoming environment for all individuals, including those with disabilities. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and applicable state/local laws, this policy outlines the rights and responsibilities regarding service animals in our synagogue spaces.

Definition of a Service Animal

Under the ADA, a service animal is defined as a **dog** (and in some cases, a **miniature horse**) that has been individually trained to perform tasks directly related to a person's disability. Examples include:

- Guiding individuals who are blind
- Alerting individuals who are deaf
- Pulling a wheelchair
- Assisting during a seizure
- Reminding someone to take medication
- Providing physical support for balance/stability

Emotional support animals, therapy animals, or companion animals **are not considered service animals** under the ADA and are not covered under this policy.

Policy Guidelines

1. Access

- Individuals with service animals are welcome in all public areas of the synagogue, including the sanctuary, classrooms, offices, and social halls.
- No special documentation is required, but staff may ask:
 1. Is the animal a service animal required because of a disability?
 2. What task(s) is the animal trained to perform?

2. Expectations for Service Animals

Service animals must be:

- **Under control** at all times (harnessed, leashed, or tethered unless such devices interfere with the animal's work).
- **Housebroken.**
- **Well-behaved**, not posing a direct threat to others.
- **Not disruptive** to services, classes, or events.

If a service animal is out of control or not housebroken, synagogue staff may ask the handler to remove the animal from the premises.

3. Handler Responsibilities

- The handler is responsible for **cleaning up after the animal**.
- The handler must ensure the animal does not disturb or intimidate other attendees.
- Any damage caused by the service animal is the responsibility of the handler.

Accommodations

We are committed to working with individuals to provide reasonable accommodations. If you have a concern about access, please contact Jack Feldman, Executive Director at (404) 252-3073, ext. 318.

Religious Considerations

While Jewish law (halacha) has specific considerations around animals in sacred spaces, inclusion and accessibility are core Jewish values. Temple Sinai embraces a spirit of *chesed* (kindness) and *b'tzelem Elohim* (honoring all people as made in the image of God).

Questions and Concerns

For questions about this policy, please contact:

Jack Feldman – Executive Director

Phone: (404) 252-3073, ext. 318

Email: jfeldman@templesinaiatlanta.org

