

SANILAC COUNTY COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH AUTHORITY

ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY

NUMBER: BA139

NAME: ANIMALS IN AGENCY FACILITIES

INITIAL APPROVAL DATE:	03/10/2014	BY: Program Committee
STAKEHOLDER REVIEW:	09/06/2023	BY: Consumer Advisory Board
(LAST) REVISION DATE:	12/12/2024	BY: Policy Committee
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DISCONTINUED DATE:	N/A	REPLACED BY: N/A

I. **PURPOSE**

To keep Agency facilities safe, healthy, and free from unnecessary distraction that can interfere with treatment for all who enter for services and work there.

II. **APPLICATION**

Populations: **All**
Programs: **Direct - ALL**

III. **POLICY**

It shall be the policy of the Sanilac County Community Mental Health Authority (Sanilac CMH) to prohibit the entry of animals into the Agency facilities for any reason except to assist a person with a disability and in that case the animal shall be harnessed or leashed and clearly marked as a "service animal".

IV. **DEFINITIONS**

- A. Animal: Animal in this policy shall mean the pet of any staff, visitor or individual receiving services from Sanilac CMH.
- B. Agency Facilities: Any direct run building occupied by the programs and departments of Sanilac CMH.
- C. Service Animal: "Service animals" are animals that have been professionally trained by a recognized service animal organization. Service animals may also be referred to as "assistance animals", "assist animals", "support animals", or "helper animals" depending on the country and the animal's function.

The Department of Justice published revised final regulations implementing the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) for title II (state and local government services) and title III (public accommodations and commercial facilities) on September 15, 2010, in the Federal Register.

- Beginning on March 15, 2011, only dogs are recognized as service animals under title II and III of the ADA.
- A service animal is a dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for a person with a disability.
- Generally, title II and title III entities must permit service animals to accompany people with disabilities in all areas where members of the public are allowed to go.

- Additional information can be found at www.ADA.gov.

When it is not obvious what service an animal provides, only limited inquiries are allowed. Staff may ask two questions: (1) is the dog a service animal required because of a disability, and (2) what work or task the dog has been trained to perform. Staff cannot ask about the person's disability, require medical documentation, require a special identification card or training documentation for the dog, or ask that the dog demonstrate its ability to perform the work or task.

V. EXCEPTIONS

Exceptions to this policy can be requested by written request to the Chief Executive Officer.