

# CATASTROPHIC ILLNESS IN CHILDREN RELIEF FUND COMMISSION

## POLICY/ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

<b>SUBJECT:</b> Service Animals
<b>EFFECTIVE DATE:</b> 6/8/2022
<b>AUTHORITY:</b> N.J.S.A. 26:2-154; N.J.A.C. 10:155-1.14 Commission Minutes: 6/8/2022

### I. BACKGROUND:

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) defines service animals as “*any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability...* The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be *directly related to the individual’s disability.*

Examples of work or tasks include, but are not limited to:

- assisting individuals who are blind or have low vision with navigation and other tasks,
- alerting individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to the presence of people or sounds,
- providing non-violent protection or rescue work,
- pulling a wheelchair,
- assisting an individual during a seizure,
- alerting individuals to the presence of allergens,
- retrieving items such as medicine or the telephone,
- providing physical support and assistance with balance and stability to individuals with mobility disabilities, and
- helping persons with psychiatric and neurological disabilities by preventing or interrupting impulsive or destructive behaviors.”

Dogs whose sole function is to provide comfort or emotional support do not qualify as service animals. Animals other than dogs and in some rare cases, miniature horses, are not considered to be service animals under the ADA.

The ADA addresses the issue of service animals in places of public accommodation and within state and local government; it is not intended to define medical necessity for those animals. Under ADA, the dog must be trained before it can be taken into public places.

### II. POLICY STATEMENT:

CICRF may assist with expenses related to service animals, including (but not limited to):

- Training for the animal and recipient family and corresponding travel expenses;
- Equipment related to service (ex: vests or other markers to identify the animal as a service/working animal, harness used for guiding or balance); and

- Microchipping expenses.

Normative expenses are not considered eligible for reimbursement. Examples of normative expenses include: food, toys, spaying/neutering, medications or veterinary expenses; grooming, non-specialized leashes/collars, mandatory vaccinations or animal licensure as required by state or local authorities, identification tags unrelated to service animal designation, and waste management (urinary training pads, waste collection items such as scoopers and baggies, etc.).

Expenses related to certification of a service animal through a website are not eligible expenses, as this type of certification is neither recognized nor required by any state.

### III. DEFINITIONS:

“Service animal” means a dog trained to work or perform tasks for a person with a disability or medical condition.

### II. PROCEDURE:

1. Verification from the applicant or applicant’s family that the service animal is required due to the child’s medical condition/disability.
2. Explanation from the applicant or applicant’s family of the work/tasks performed by the dog in service to the child.
3. Itemized invoices for services/items provided for the service animal.
4. Proof of payments

**PREPARED BY:** Amy Taklif  
**DATE:** March 11, 2022