Animals in Restaurants & Outdoor Dining in Fairfax County

Inside the Restaurant (Service Animals Only)	⭘ Service animals (dogs trained to perform tasks) allowed. X Emotional support animals are not service animals. X No pets indoors. X Do not ask for papers, IDs, about the customer's disability. X Do not ask for the dog to demonstrate its task. X No vest or indicator of working is required for service animals.
	Staff may only ask 2 questions if not obvious: ⭘ Is the dog a service animal required because of a disability? ⭘ What work or task has the dog been trained to perform?**
Outdoor Dining with Dogs (Pets Allowed) Fairfax County 2021 Food Code, 6-501.115 Prohibiting Animals. (Subdivision 6 excerpt included on reverse side of handout)	⭘ Allowed only in designated outdoor dining areas. ⭘ Must have separate outdoor entrance. ⭘ Signs visible at outdoor entrances stating dogs are allowed. ⭘ Signage required in dining area to comply with Food Code 6-501.115, requirements in subdivision (6)(e)-(g) ⭘ Only single-use or dedicated dog containers for food/water. X Dogs may not be on chairs, benches, or tables. ⭘ Dogs must be leashed or in carriers. ⭘ Cleanup supplies present at restaurant.

Training & Decision Guide for Restaurant Operators

Dog Indoors	- Allow service animals, not pets. - No touching, feeding, or supervising animals. - Removal if out-of-control or not housebroken. - If task obvious, ask nothing. - If not obvious, ask the 2 ADA questions.**
Dog on Patio	- Confirm signage & separate entrance. - Dog must stay leashed or in carrier. - No dogs on seats, tables, or benches. - Use only single-use or dedicated dog dishes. - Keep cleanup supplies available.
Manager Tips	- Train FOH staff on ADA questions - Establish procedures for removing unruly animals. - Maintain written cleaning plan for dog waste on patios. - Replace posted signs when worn.

** Staff are not allowed to request any documentation for the dog, require that the dog demonstrate its task, or inquire about the nature of the person's disability.
Work or tasks performed by the service animal must be specific actions directly related to the disability, such as: assisting with navigation, alerting to the presence of environmental stimuli, pulling a wheelchair, retrieving medicines or telephones, providing balance/stability support and assisting with seizures or disruptive behaviors.

Contacts

- ADA Information Line (DOJ): 1-(800)-514-0301
- Fairfax County Health Dept. – Environmental Health: (703)-246-2201

References

- Fairfax County 2021 Food Code, 6-501.115 Prohibiting Animals.
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

More information:

https://www.ada.gov/resources/service-animals-2010-requirements/
https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/health/sites/health/files/assets/documents/pdf/ffx-foodcode-2021.pdf

Excerpts of Fairfax County 2021 Food Code, Section 6-501.115 Prohibiting Animals. Subdivisions (3) and (6) below:

(3) In areas that are not used for FOOD preparation and that are usually open for customers, such as dining and sales areas, SERVICE ANIMALS that are controlled by the disabled EMPLOYEE or PERSON, if a health or safety HAZARD will not result from the presence or activities of the SERVICE ANIMAL;

(6) Dogs are allowed in outdoor dining areas if:

(a) The outdoor dining area is not fully enclosed with floor to ceiling walls and is not considered a part of the interior physical facility.

(b) The outdoor dining area is equipped with an entrance that is separate from the main entrance to the FOOD ESTABLISHMENT and the separate entrance serves as the sole means of entry for patrons accompanied by dogs.

(c) A sign stating that dogs are allowed in the outdoor dining area is posted at each entrance to the outdoor dining area in such a manner as to be clearly observable by the public.

(d) A sign within the outdoor dining area stating the requirements as specified in subdivisions (6)(e) – (g) of this subparagraph is provided in such a manner as to be clearly observable by the public.

(e) FOOD and water provided to dogs is served using EQUIPMENT that is not used for service of FOOD to persons or is served in SINGLE-USE ARTICLES.

(f) Dogs are not allowed on chairs, seats, benches, or tables.

(g) Dogs are kept on a leash or within a pet carrier and under the control of an adult at all times.

(h) The FOOD ESTABLISHMENT provides effective means for cleaning up dog vomitus and fecal matter