

Using HPT with a Service Animal

HPT is committed to assisting customers with disabilities who travel with trained service animals or service animals in training.

Your individually trained service animal may accompany you on HPT free of charge.

Service animals are animals that are individually trained to perform tasks for people with disabilities, such as guiding people who are blind, alerting people who are deaf, pulling wheelchairs, alerting and protecting a person who is having a seizure, or performing other special tasks.

If an animal's only function is to provide emotional support or comfort for the rider, that animal would not fall under the regulatory training-based definition of a service animal.

Rules of the road: When you and your service animal are using HPT vehicles and facilities, you are expected to comply with these policies:

When using HPT service or within HPT facilities or vehicles (including paratransit), service animals must be leashed or harnessed.

Service animals must be under the control of the customer they serve. Snarling, picking fights, jumping up, barking/vocalizing, or threatening behaviors represent a safety concern for other HPT riders and will not be tolerated. (Exception: when seizure alert animal is trained to alert by jumping up and pushing owner down.)

You, not HPT personnel or other passengers, are responsible for controlling and directing your service animal. Do not ask drivers or other riders to hold your animal's leash.

Service animals must not block the vehicle aisle or path of travel.

Service animals must not occupy passenger seating on vehicles or in HPT facilities.

Customers accompanied by service animals are expected to promptly clean up after their animals whenever necessary and without being requested. If the animal wears a diaper, the diaper must be changed regularly so the animal does not smell. Animals must be insect-free. Please respect the health and safety of other riders and animals.

Service animals that appear abused or mistreated will be reported to the appropriate organizations for follow-up.

HPT personnel are prohibited from taking service animals' leashes or harnesses, assuming responsibility for an animal, or interfering with the duties of service animals in any way.

Boarding and exiting vehicles or cars:

You are responsible to inform your vehicle operator as to your preferred procedure for boarding/exiting yourself, your service animal, and any mobility aid used.

It is your responsibility to protect your animal's paws, nose, ears, tail, leash, harness, protective gear or equipment from getting caught in bus or van including lifts, ramps, doors, securements, etc. Please be vigilant about this.

For safety reasons, HPT does not recommend that passengers using mobility devices and their service animals ride on wheelchair lifts at the same time. Note also that if the combined total weight of the mobility device plus customer and service animal exceeds 600 pounds, HPT vehicle lifts will not be able to accommodate the two of you at once.

Service animals in training are welcome in HPT facilities and on HPT vehicles when leashed or harnessed, and subject to the above terms covering travel with any service animal. We recommend service animals in training wear identifying gear. You may be asked for identification verifying you are a trainer or affiliated with a training organization. For group trips, advance notice is required. Call 570-459-5414. If you are traveling with an experienced animal accompanied by one in training, it's a good idea to ride offpeak and give us a call ahead of time so we can alert operators.

Practice Sessions: Often, service animals and their owners or trainers can benefit from training in using public transportation. By prior arrangement, HPT can make buses or vans available to service animal users and trainers for practice during offpeak hours. In this way, animals can learn to board, exit and move through vehicles, and become accustomed to station environments. We can also help with daily riding. Call 570-459-5414.

IMPORTANT: Consistent with US Dept. of Transportation ADA regulations, companion animals, pets, therapy, comfort, mental health, or emotional support animals are not classed as service animals for purposes of public transit, and cannot ride on HPT vehicles. For this reason, HPT personnel may ask you about your animal and the services it provides to you.

Law Enforcement/Emergency Responders: In uniform and with identification, law enforcement or emergency response personnel may bring their working animals on any HPT mode/route at any time, subject to the above terms covering travel with any service animal.