



SHILDON RAILWAY INSTITUTE

ASSISTANCE / SERVICE DOGS POLICY

Last Review: September 2025

Introduction

Shildon Railway Institute has long maintained a broad 'no pets on the premises' policy in the interest of hygiene and the protection and safety of our customers.

Shildon Railway Institute is, however, aware that under the Equality Act 2010 it would be unlawful for service providers to treat disabled people less favourably for a reason related to their disability, and "reasonable adjustments" for disabled people, such as providing extra help or making changes to the way they provide their services are now required.

This includes adjustments to physical features of premises where practical to overcome physical barriers to access for people with disabilities and facilitating such visitors to use services.

Guide dog / hearing dog / assistance dog access is common and desirable.

The purpose of this policy is to set out a few simple principles for dogs on the premises. It is not intended to cover the use of assistance dogs in relation to employees of the practice, which would encompass a wider range of disability employment law considerations.

The Institute welcomes assistance dogs and assistance dogs in training where a "walker" is in control of their training.

We do, however, have to be mindful of other users, staff, volunteers and visitors on the premises at the time and also ensure the safety and wellbeing of all users of our facility.

Checks on the genuineness of dogs claimed to be assistance dogs

Before an assistance dog is permitted onto the premises, our staff are advised to conduct a check to ensure that the dog meets the recognised criteria to be classed as a bona fide assistance dog.

Whilst we understand training and certification is costly, and training can be undertaken by the owners themselves, there are still certain criteria that needs to be met.

1 - If the dog is a registered assistance dog, the valid certification must be provided. This will prove the dog has undergone the necessary training, will not display reactive behaviours towards humans or other assistance dogs that may also be on the premises, will not show signs of fear and consequently react, is toilet trained and unlikely to foul in a public place.

2 - If the dog is not a registered assistance dog, the following evidence must be provided to allow entry onto the premises:

- A signed and dated statement from the trainer listing training/temperament and behaviour training the dog has been through

General Courtesy

Our staff will be caring, polite and courteous when executing this policy.

Members of our staff should not be made to feel uncomfortable when:

- Asking to view the evidence,
- Advising that dogs do not meet the criteria and are therefore not permitted entry.