



Service Animal Policy

Marie Selby Botanical Gardens (MSBG) does not allow pets on MSBG grounds. However, in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), service animals are permitted.

As defined by the ADA, a **service animal means any dog or miniature horse 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.** Tasks performed can include, among other things, pulling a wheelchair, retrieving dropped items, alerting a person to a sound, reminding a person to take medication, or pressing an elevator button.

While we appreciate the benefit provided by emotional support animals, comfort animals, and therapy dogs, they are not service animals under Title II and Title III of the ADA. Other species of animals, whether wild or domestic, trained or untrained, are not considered service animals either. The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the individual's disability. It does not matter if a person has a note from a doctor that states that the person has a disability and needs to have the animal for emotional support. A doctor's letter does not turn an animal into a service animal.

Service animals are permitted at MSBG provided the following conditions are met:

- The animal must be under the control of the handler through the use of a harness, leash, or other tether. If the handler is unable to hold a tether because of a disability, the service animal must be under the handler's control by some other means, such as voice control.
- The animal must stay on paths only.
- The animal must be housebroken and limit relief to paved outdoor areas. The handler is responsible for prompt removal and disposal of waste in designated trash receptacles.
- The animal may not disrupt the business or guests of MSBG with aggressive or disruptive behaviors (growling, whining, barking, jumping, and scratching). The handler will be asked to remove any service animal that poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others at MSBG.
- The animal may not sit on any benches or chairs.
- The animal must not injure, disrupt, or damage any animal, tree, planting, flower, or other vegetation.

MSBG staff will request that the handler correct the animal's behavior if a service animal is not compliant with these guidelines. If the handler is unsuccessful in controlling the animal, MSBG staff will request that the animal will be removed from the grounds and will not be permitted reentry.