



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS, WARRIOR TRANSITION BRIGADE- NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION  
9045 BEALE ROAD  
BETHESDA, MD 20889-5634

MCAT-WTB-CDR

24 January 2014

MEMORANDUM FOR Warrior Transition Brigade-National Capital Region (WTB-NCR)

SUBJECT: Warrior Transition Brigade-National Capital Region (WTB-NCR) Policy Letter # 21  
– for Service Dogs and Service Dogs in Training Living in On-Post Lodging or WTB-NCR Off-  
Post Contracted Lodging

1. REFERENCES:

- a. Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 42 USCS SS 12101 et seq. (1990).
- b. Warrior Transition Brigade Full Spectrum Discharge Process SOP, 15 Mar 10.
- c. TB MED 4.DoD Human-Animal Bond Principles and Guidelines, June 03.
- d. OTSG/MEDCOM Policy Memo 10-077 Use of Canines and other Service Animals in Army Medicine, 09 Nov 10.
- e. NAVSUPACT BETHESDA INSTRUCTION 1110.1 Bachelor Quarters Assignment Policy and Regulations, 17 Aug 11.
- f. ARMY DIRECTIVE 2013-01 (Guidance on the acquisition and use of Service Dogs by Soldiers), 28 Jan 13.

2. DEFINITIONS:

a. Service Dog. The Warrior Transition Brigade-National Capital Region (WTB-NCR) adopts the definition for service dog provided in reference 1(a) and (g) which states a service dog is “any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability.” Service dogs include, but are not limited to, guide dogs that assist individuals who are blind or have low vision with navigation and other tasks. It is specifically noted that the provision of emotional support, well-being, comfort, or companionship does not constitute work or tasks for the purposes of this definition. The Department of the Army as well as the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) does not recognize service dogs for behavioral health conditions. Therefore, psychological service dogs are not considered service dogs for the purposes of this policy. A service dog must be certified by an organization approved by:

- (1) The International Guide Dog Federation, in the case of guide dogs for the blind.
- (2) Assistance Dogs International, in the case of other service, assistance, or alert service dogs.

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3. **APPLICABILITY:** This policy provides guidance regarding ownership and accompaniment of service dogs while attached or assigned to the WTB-NCR.

4. **POLICY:** While Soldiers in Transition (ST) are residing at Naval Support Activity-Bethesda, Fort Belvoir, or Fort George G. Meade (FGGM), or WTB-NCR off-post contracted housing, STs are in the critical phase of their rehabilitation program where significant progress and occasional setbacks occur. A service dog will not be approved until the ST reaches his/her highest level of independence and has a plan to live off-post in non WTB-NCR contracted housing. There are several considerations that factor into this policy, including the availability of alternative arrangements and means to provide needed functional assistance to STs until such time when acquisition of a service dog may be more appropriate. Other considerations include, but are not limited to:

a. The availability of non-medical attendants (NMAs) and other supports to assist the ST with activities of daily living (ADLs).

b. The likelihood the ST's functional needs may change throughout the rehabilitation process so as to avoid a prematurely approved service dog.

c. The ability of the ST to provide the service dog with adequate daily care.

5. In circumstances in which a Soldier in Transition or staff member perceives that there may be permanent physical clinical/functional reason(s) that may support consideration of acquiring a service dog, a formal request for a service dog may be submitted via the Soldier's WTB-NCR PCM to his/her Interdisciplinary team (IDT). The Army Directive 2013-01 (Guidance on the Acquisition and Use of Service Dogs by Soldiers), reference g, outlines the procedures for the application for a service dog, the Primary Care Manager's and IDT's roles and responsibilities, approval process and authority, and courses of action for approval or disapproval of an application.

6. Service dogs or service dogs in training are not authorized to live with STs in on-post lodging or in WTB-NCR off-post contracted lodging unless an exception is endorsed/recommended by the WTB-NCR Brigade Commander and approved by the Installation/Post/Camp/Station commander. For STs residing on base at NSA-B Bethesda, a letter requesting an exception to policy to house a service dog on the NSA-B installation must be submitted by the ST through the WTB-NCR chain of command to the NSA-B Installation Commander. Any exception to policy at Fort Belvoir and Fort Meade (FGGM) will be endorsed on a case-by-case basis by the WTB-NCR Brigade Commander consistent with Army Directive 2013-01.

7. Authorization may be granted to allow a service dog, or service dog in training to visit a ST in their on-post or off post WTB contracted lodging for a pre-designated period of time (no longer than 72 hours). The pre-approval of this visitation must go through the Soldier in Transition's chain of command to the WTB-NCR Brigade Commander. Such service dog visits must be

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approved by medical/clinical staff managing the ST prior to routing through the ST's chain of command and the requisite NSA-B/Garrison Commander waiver has been submitted (if applicable).

8. Cadre cannot be held responsible for care of a service dog or other animals residing with a ST should the ST return to an inpatient status or decline in medical status.

9. Although the Army is not bound by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), it is the policy of WTB-NCR to comply with ADA standards, requirements and guidelines to the greatest extent possible.

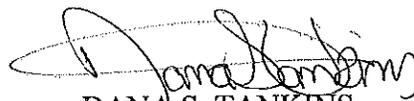
10. The WTB-NCR recognizes the benefits of human-animal bonds throughout the healing process and supports the therapeutic use of dogs through approved WRNMMC Rehabilitation Department programs and certified service dogs and therapy dogs.

11. Individuals attached or assigned to the WTB-NCR, owning a service dog as defined by the ADA but living off post are allowed to have their service dog accompany them to WRNMMC, Fort Belvoir Community Hospital and FGGM MTF for care and treatment.

12. Violation of the provisions set forth in paragraph 6 of this Policy provides a basis for disciplinary action under Article 92, Uniform Code of Military Justice.

13. The point of contact for this policy is the WTB-NCR Rehabilitation Manager, Mr. Stuart Gibbs at (301) 400-2316 or [stuart.p.gibbs.civ@health.mil](mailto:stuart.p.gibbs.civ@health.mil).

Caring for Our Soldiers...Heal, Educate, Transition!



DANA S. TANKINS

COL, SC

Commanding