**Procedures Regarding Service Animals and Emotional Support Animals**

**at Westside Unitarian Universalist Church**

**Approved by the Board of Trustees on December 20, 2015**

Westside Unitarian Universalist Church welcomes members, friends, and visitors with service animals or emotional support animals to participate fully in congregational life consistent with the following provisions.

1. The person bringing the animal into the church building has submitted a signed statement (Attachment 1) that (a) certifies they have a letter or other written prescription signed by a licensed health care provider or mental health professional attesting to their need to be accompanied by the animal, (b) certifies that the animal is current on its rabies vaccination and all other required vaccinations, and (c) acknowledges their responsibilities and liabilities under the provisions of this policy.

2. The person bringing the animal onto the WUUC property is responsible for caring for and supervising the animal, which includes toileting, feeding, grooming, and veterinary care. Westside UUC is not obligated to supervise or otherwise care for the animal.

3. The animal must be harnessed, leashed, or tethered while on church property unless those devices interfere with the animal’s support duties or the person’s disability prevents use of these devices. In that case, the person in charge of the animal must use other effective means to maintain control of the animal. The animal must not repeatedly bark or make other distracting noises and must not harm or threaten to harm other church goers.

4. The person bringing the animal onto the church property is responsible for the cost of repairing any damage or personal harm caused by the animal. Westside UUC assumes no liability for such damage or harm.

5. If the person bringing the animal onto the church property fails to provide effective control, appropriate WUUC staff (minister, president of the board of trustees, responsible board member, or safety volunteer) may request that the animal be removed from the premises.

6. Other church attendees should practice appropriate etiquette toward the service animal/emotional support animal including

• not petting, making noises toward, feeding or otherwise distracting the animal from its duties, and

• not being offended if the person bringing the animal into the church chooses not to discuss his/her disability or the assistance the animal provides.

7. With the exception of service animals and emotional support animals as stipulated in this policy, WUUC members, friends, and visitors are discouraged from bringing animals into the church building, unless they have been invited to do so as part of a specific church service or function (e.g., Blessing of the Animals service).

**ATTACHMENT 1**

**Statement to be Signed and Submitted by any Person Bringing**

**a Service Animal or Emotional Support Animal onto WUUC Property**

*WUUC welcomes members, friends, and visitors with service animals or emotional support animals to participate fully in congregational life. However, since bringing an animal to the church entails certain responsibilities, we request that this form be completed and signed by the person responsible for the animal.*

 I, \_     \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, state that (a) I have a letter or other written prescription signed by a licensed health care provider or mental health professional attesting to my need to be accompanied by this animal, and (b) that the animal is current on its rabies vaccination and all other required vaccinations.

 In addition, I acknowledge and agree to abide by WUUC’s policy concerning service animals and emotional support animals on the church’s property. Specifically, I agree to the following responsibilities:

• I am responsible for caring for and supervising the animal, which includes toileting, feeding, grooming, and veterinary care. WUUC is not obligated to supervise or otherwise care for the animal;

• I agree that the animal will be harnessed, leashed, or tethered while on church property unless those devices interfere with the animal’s support duties or my disability prevents use of these devices. In that case, I agree to use other effective means to maintain control of the animal. I will not allow the animal to repeatedly bark or make other distracting noises or to harm or threaten to harm other church goers;

• I am responsible for the cost of repairing any damage or personal harm caused by the animal. Westside UUC assumes no liability for such damage or harm;

• I understand that if I fail to provide effective control of the animal, appropriate WUUC staff (minister, president of the board of trustees, responsible board member, or safety volunteer) may request that I remove the animal from the premises. I agree to comply with any such request.

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(Signature) (Date)

Electronic Signature option: Please type your first and last name:       Date:

[ ] I understand that checking this box constitutes a legal signature confirming that I acknowledge and agree to the above Terms of Acceptance.