L'ARCHE OTTAWA POLICY

Policy Type: Service Delivery **Policy Number: SD-F8**

Policy Area: Daily Living - F **Title: Service Animals**

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Policy

L'Arche respects the dignity and independence of all persons with disabilities and recognizes that service animals are an integral part of some people's lives. If an individual with an intellectual disability is accompanied by a service animal, L'Arche will ensure that the individual is permitted to enter the property with the animal and to keep the animal with him/her unless the animal is otherwise excluded by law from the premises.

"Service Animal" is defined as such if it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability or if the person provides a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons related to their disability. Services provided by service animals could include guiding someone who is blind, alerting someone who is deaf or hard of hearing to sounds, retrieving dropped articles, detecting oncoming seizures.

Procedures

If the animal is excluded by law from the premises, the Community Leader/designate will meet with the individual with the developmental disability to explain the reason for the exclusion and try to find an alternative solution to the issue.

If the health and safety of another person is compromised, the service animal can be excluded from the premises. If this situation arises, alternative solutions to the problem will be explored and the Community Leader/designate will meet with individual to explain the reason for the exclusion.

For service animals belonging to individuals living in L'Arche, the Community Leader/designate will work with the owner to ensure that:

- The proper documentation, from a regulated health professional confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability, is on file;
- The animal has had the appropriate vaccinations and has the appropriate markers identifying it as a service animal;
- The protocol for dealing with a service animal(i.e. the animal is not a pet) is understood by other individuals living in the community;
- The responsibility for the care of the animal is clearly delineated.