

Beaver Island Transportation Authority **Travel Policy for Service Animals**

The Beaver Island Transportation Authority (BITA) (owner of the M/V Emerald Isle) in conjunction with the Beaver Island Boat Co (BIBCO) (operator) will operate its vessel and will make reasonable accommodations so that it is readily accessible and usable for individuals with disabilities while assuring the safe operation of the vessel for all passengers. The BIBCO will be responsible for enforcing the BITA service animal policy. It is the policy of the BITA that no qualified individual with a disability shall be excluded from or denied the benefits of, by reason of such disability, travel on BITA's passenger/vehicle vessel. This includes the use of service animals by BITA passengers. Individuals requiring the use of a service animal will not be charged extra fees, be isolated from the rest of the passengers or be treated less favorably in any way.

Service Animal Definition and Description

Any guide or signal dog individually trained to work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including but not limited to: guiding individuals with impaired vision; alerting individuals with impaired hearing; pulling a wheelchair or fetching dropped items.

Service animals are NOT pets. They are trained and used to assist individuals with disabilities.

A service animal whose behavior poses a direct threat to the health and/or safety of others or is disruptive may be excluded from this policy regardless of training or certification.

The following will be accepted as evidence that the dog is a service animal: Identification cards, other written documentation, presence of harness, tags, and/or credible verbal assurances of a passenger with a disability using the animal.

Special Requirements

- The service animal must be on a leash at all times.
- Care and supervision of the service animal is the sole responsibility of its partner/handler.
- The partner/handler is responsible for ensuring the animal does not soil furniture, floor, carpeting, etc., to the extent that the BIBCO would charge others for similar damage they caused.

It is the responsibility of the captain of the vessel to determine if an animal qualifies as a service animal and to make all necessary arrangements for the safe and comfortable passage for the partner/handler and their service animal while they are traveling on the vessel.