

National Marine Aquarium Admittance of Assistance Dogs Policy

Assistance dogs are trained to support people with additional needs and people with medical conditions in a variety of ways. Assistance dogs are welcome in the National Marine Aquarium (NMA). The NMA recognises the following as Assistance Dogs:

- a) a dog which has been trained to guide a blind person.
- b) a dog which has been trained to assist a deaf person.
- c) a dog which has been trained by a prescribed charity to assist a person with additional needs who has a disability that consists of epilepsy or otherwise affects the person's mobility, manual dexterity, physical coordination, or ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects.
- d) a dog of a prescribed category which has been trained to assist a person with additional needs who has a disability (other than one falling within point c) of a prescribed kind.

The NMA does **not** permit emotional support animals on site under any circumstances.

In line with the Equality and Human Rights Commission, the NMA expects that assistance dogs:

- are highly trained
- will not wander freely around the premises
- will sit or lie quietly on the floor next to its owner
- are trained to go to the toilet on command and so are unlikely to foul in a public place.
- If possible be recognisable by the harness or identifying dog jacket they wear.

We further ask that the handler of the assistance dog:

- Provide proof of vaccination/inoculation status of the assistance dog on arrival. *The NMA reserves the right to refuse entry to any assistance dog that cannot show proof of its vaccination/inoculation status.*
- Sign the NMA assistance dog visit waiver on arrival to the NMA (see copy below).
- Keep all assistance dogs under the close control of a responsible handler.
- Remove dogs which start barking or growling to an area where no aquarium animals are present until the animal stops vocalising. Note – We are aware some assistance dogs may do a "Woof" (not bark uncontrollably) to alert to their owners that they are about to collapse or even to get help.
- Remove any dog that is obviously causing distress to any aquarium animals. Aquariums have the right to ask assistance dogs to leave if they are causing disruption or distress.
- Immediately clean up and dispose of all faeces appropriately. Please be aware the NMA does not have facilities for cleaning or disposing of any faeces. Our garden area is shared by our visitors and children at play and is therefore not deemed an appropriate place for an assistance dog to relieve itself. It is the responsibility of the assistance dog owner to plan for any accidents/spills discussed in advance of the visit.

Key areas of concern for the NMA are:

Biosecurity:

- the potential risk of infectious diseases carried by assistance dogs.
- the potential risk of exposing the assistance dog to zoonotic diseases. This is most likely in areas with open water tanks; however, dogs are at risk throughout the aquarium exhibits.
- For these reasons we do not permit assistance dogs to accompany persons on a Behind the Scenes experience at the NMA.

Animal behaviour and welfare:

- The potential for dogs to cause stress or distress to aquarium animals, or stress caused to the dog by being in the presence of aquarium animals.

National Marine Aquarium Admittance of Assistance Dog Visitor Waiver:

In consideration for being permitted to attend the National Marine Aquarium with my Assistance dog I hereby certify to the following facts:

- I have read and understood the National Marine Aquarium Admittance of Assistance Dogs Policy
- I am the responsible dog handler for the visiting assistance dog
- I will be in control of the assistance dog at all times during my visit to the NMA
- The visiting assistance dog is currently enrolled on a standard canine vaccination program as advised by their vet and are up to date with all doses. Please provide proof on arrival of an up-to-date vaccine card/proof of inoculations and evidence of flea and worm treatment/parasite treatment.
- The visiting Assistance dog has not shown any signs of disease including vomiting or diarrhoea in the last 24 hours.
- I understand the potential risk of exposing the assistance dog to zoonotic diseases.

I CERTIFY THAT ALL INFORMATION I HAVE PROVIDED IS CURRENT AND CORRECT.

SIGNATURE

DATE

PRINTED NAME

PHONE NUMBER

ASSISTANCE DOG HANDLER INFORMATION

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

EMAIL _____

ASSISTANCE DOG INFORMATION

NAME _____ BREED _____ MALE / FEMALE (circle one)

Assistance dog is up to date on all inoculations/vaccines

Date of last inoculations/vaccinations _____

GDPR: The NMA is committed to ensuring the security and protection of the personal information that we process, and to provide a compliant and consistent approach to data protection. The personal information given on the National Marine Aquarium Admittance of Assistance Dog Visitor Waiver form will only be used in the case of a query of the NMA's Admittance of Assistance Dogs Policy. We will not keep personal information for longer than 6 months or sooner. National Marine Aquarium Admittance of Assistance Dog Visitor Waiver forms will be kept in a secure location that only authorised personnel have access to.