There are three categories of animals permitted at the AVMA Convention:

1) Service animals
2) Animals required for exhibition, teaching or training (non-interactive lab use)
3) Animals participating in AVMA Convention scheduled interactive labs

*Note:* If there is a conflict between these guidelines and federal, state, or local law, then these guidelines shall be interpreted and applied so as to comply with applicable law.

Attendees are not permitted to bring pets or animal companions into AVMA-sponsored events. Every live animal within the convention facilities should be registered and display an AVMA issued registration badge that is clipped onto their collars. Badge information includes: pet name, responsible person, their phone number, and active email. Nonservice animals without a registration badge will be denied access to convention facilities. Security will be advised that if someone brings an animal into any part of the convention, including the exhibit hall, the responsible person will be asked to show the animal’s registration badge. If there is no badge, all authorized nonservice animals must register on-site. Service animals are exempt from registration but it is recommended that an AVMA issued registration badge is worn while within convention facilities.

I. BACKGROUND

The AVMA wishes to assure the health, safety, and welfare of all participants and attendees to AVMA-sponsored events and activities at the AVMA Convention - this includes human presenters and exhibitors, animal participants, and all attendees. The AVMA IACUC follows the AVMA Companion Animal Care Guidelines and applicable regulations or standards relevant to the categorization of animal use defined above.

1) **Service Animals.** According to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):

   - In general, businesses that serve the public must permit service animals to accompany people with disabilities in all areas where members of the public are allowed to go.
   - Service animals are defined by the ADA as dogs that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities.
   - There is no requirement for the service animal or handler to be licensed or certified by a state or local government.
   - There is no requirement that service animals wear specific identification (e.g. collar, harness, or vest) that recognizes them as a service animal.
   - See Attachment for additional items.
2) Animals Required for Exhibition, Teaching, or Training (Non-Interactive Lab Use). Animals may be used for exhibition, teaching or training as long as such use does not cause pain or distress to the animal or pose a health or safety concern to humans. No anesthesia or sedation of animals is permitted in the exhibit hall. The exhibitor is responsible for collecting, containing and disposing of waste in receptacles off of the Exhibit Hall floor and in accordance with convention center and local authority policies and regulations. The exhibit must also comply with all laws, rules, local regulations, and facility rules governing the use of animals in public areas.

3) Animals Participating in AVMA Convention Scheduled Interactive Labs. Live animals may be utilized as part of an AVMA Interactive Laboratory in accordance with an IACUC approved protocol. All interactive laboratories involving the use of live animals or cadavers must be approved in advance by the AVMA IACUC whether the laboratory is conducted at the host city Convention Center or at an off-site location. The AVMA Animal Care Guidelines and applicable regulations or standards apply to these activities.

II. PROCEDURES

Animals required for exhibition, teaching, or training, and animals participating in AVMA Convention interactive laboratories must be registered and approved prior to admittance. Requests for approval can be made during the online convention registration process. Approvals may be authorized by the IACUC Chair, IACUC Attending Veterinarian (AV), or/and the AVMA Animal Welfare Division member on the IACUC. Each approved animal is issued a complimentary registration badge and is required to wear a badge, collar, vest or some other visible accoutrement identifying them as approved. The IACUC Chair, IACUC AV, or/and the AVMA Animal Welfare Division member on the IACUC will monitor animal attendance for the duration of the AVMA Convention to ensure animals in attendance have been properly registered and approved.

Security will be advised that if someone brings an animal into any part of the convention, including the exhibit hall, the responsible person will be asked to show the animal’s registration badge. If there is no badge nonservice animals must register on-site.

Additional Notes on Service Animals:

- AVMA representatives may only ask if the animal is required for a disability; and if so, what task(s) is the animal trained to perform. This inquiry is allowed only if it is not obvious what service the animal provides.
- Service animals must be harnessed, leashed, or tethered, unless these devices interfere with the service animal’s work or the individual’s disability prevents using these devices. In that case, the individual must maintain control of the animal through voice, signal, or other effective controls.
- A service animal may be denied access, or continued access, if it is out of control and the handler does not take effective action to control it, or the animal is not housebroken. When there is a legitimate reason to ask that a service animal be removed, the AVMA will offer the individual with the disability the opportunity to participate in the event without the animal’s presence.
According to the US Department of Justice website, the ADA defines a service animal as “Any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability. Other species of animals, whether wild or domestic, trained or untrained, are not service animals for the purposes of this definition. The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the individual’s disability. Examples of work or tasks include, but are not limited to, assisting individuals who are blind or have low vision with navigation and other tasks, alerting individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to the presence of people or sounds, providing non-violent protection or rescue work, pulling a wheelchair, assisting an individual during a seizure, alerting individuals to the presence of allergens, retrieving items such as medicine or the telephone, providing physical support and assistance with balance and stability to individuals with mobility disabilities, and helping persons with psychiatric and neurological disabilities by preventing or interrupting impulsive or destructive behaviors. The crime deterrent effects of an animal's presence and the provision of emotional support, well-being, comfort, or companionship do not constitute work or tasks for the purposes of this definition.”

In addition to the provisions about service dogs, the revised ADA regulations add miniature horses that have been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities. Miniature horses generally range in height from 24 to 34 inches and generally weigh between 70 and 100 pounds. Facilities covered by the ADA must modify their policies to permit miniature horses where reasonable. There are four assessment factors to consider whether a facility can accommodate a miniature horse: (1) the miniature horse must be housebroken; (2) under the handler’s control; (3) the facility can accommodate the miniature horse’s type, size, and weight; and (4) the miniature horse’s presence will not compromise legitimate safety requirements necessary for safe operation of the facility.