

# **SENIOR SURVIVAL SCHOOL®**

## **SURVIVAL SHEET #20**

### **SERVICES IN SUPPORT OF ANIMALS FOR SENIORS AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

Many seniors and adults with disabilities find great support and companionship from their animals, both pets and service animals.

#### **Animals as Pets**

Many seniors are interested in pets as companions. There are many sources for affordable pets, including animal shelters, the SPCA and various pet rescue programs.

#### **Animals as Service Animals**

A service animal is any guide dog, signal dog, or other animal individually trained to provide assistance to an individual with a disability. Service animals perform some of the functions and tasks that the individual with a disability cannot perform for him or her. Seeing eye dogs are one type of service animal, used by individuals who are blind. There are service animals that assist persons with other types of disabilities in their day-to-day activities. Some examples include:

- Alerting persons with hearing impairments to sounds
- Pulling wheelchairs or carrying and picking up things for people with mobility impairments
- Assisting individuals with balance.
- Providing emotional support for people with mental health disabilities.

A service animal is not a pet. A service animal is protected by the Americans with Disability Act, and must be permitted to accompany the individual with a disability to all areas where that individual would otherwise normally be allowed to go. Documentation verifying the animal as a service animal should not be required.

## Resources in San Francisco

The following are organizations that offer support to animals and their guardians:

San Francisco Department of Animal Care & Control  
1200 15th Street (at Harrison)  
San Francisco, CA 94103  
Tel: (415) 554-6364 x3  
TDD: (415) 554-9704

This Department coordinates City animal shelters and pet adoption programs. To search for a lost pet or an animal to adopt visit during open hours: everyday from Noon to 6:00 PM and 7:00 PM on Wednesdays (closed all City holidays).

Service animals (currently dogs only) can be registered to San Francisco residents. You will need a doctor's note explaining the animal's role as a service animal and the dog will need a valid license.

San Francisco SPCA (Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals)  
2500 16th Street, San Francisco CA 94103  
telephone: (415) 554-3030

- The *Pet-A-Care Program* provides the most comprehensive charitable program in the nation for spayed and neutered pets of low-income seniors.
- The *Pets of Homeless Program* provides free spay-neuter surgery for pets of homeless people.
- The *Emergency Veterinary Care Fund* provides urgent medical treatment for pets hit by cars, suffering seizures or heart attacks, or other medical crises. Interest-free financing is available for qualifying low income San Francisco residents with spayed or neutered animals.

SF/SPCA Hearing Dogs Program  
telephone: (415) 554-3020  
TDD: (415) 554-3022

The *Hearing Dog Program* offering assistance to deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals, while at the same time, giving previously homeless animals a chance for useful lives of love and service.

Pets Are Wonderful Support  
3170 23<sup>rd</sup> Street  
San Francisco, CA 94110  
[www.pawssf.org](http://www.pawssf.org)  
Telephone: (415) 979-9550  
Email: [info@pawssf.org](mailto:info@pawssf.org)

Pets Are Wonderful Support (PAWS) offers assistance to low-income San Francisco residents with disabling illnesses and their animal companions. Services include subsidies for animal food and veterinary care, and counseling and education for pet guardians.

San Francisco Mayor's Office on Disability  
401 Van Ness Avenue, Room 300  
San Francisco, California 94102  
telephone: (415) 554-6789  
TTY: (415) 554-6799

The Mayor's Office on Disability is responsible for overseeing the implementation and enforcement of San Francisco's obligations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other Federal and state disability civil rights and accessibility laws. Complaints of violations of these laws can be filed with the Mayor's Office on Disability.

Meals On Wheels of San Francisco, Inc.  
1375 Fairfax Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94124  
Phone: (415) 920-1111  
Fax: (415) 920-1110  
[www.mowsf.org](http://www.mowsf.org)

Meals on Wheels has a program that will deliver pet food to homebound seniors.

***This fact sheet was prepared by the Senior and Disability Survival School, a project of Senior and Disability Action (SDA)***

*Utilizing presentations, discussions, and popular education activities, Senior and Disability Survival School trains seniors and adults with disabilities to effectively access vital community resources and to exercise their rights when they do. You can reach Sarah Jarmon, Senior and Disability Survival School Director, at (415) 546.1333 x 302 and [sarah@sdaction.org](mailto:sarah@sdaction.org). PECC is located at 1360 Mission Street, Suite 400 in San Francisco. Its website is [www.sdaction.org](http://www.sdaction.org).*