TO:    All OHSAA Tournament Managers – 2018-2019
FROM:  Jerry Snodgrass, Executive Director
RE:    ADA regulations that address service and emotional support animals
DATE:  September 24, 2018

The purpose of this memo is to apprise all OHSAA tournament managers of the law relating to accommodations for persons with disabilities who need to use service animals and to remind you of your obligations under the law.

According to the federal law known as the Americans with Disabilities Act, see complete reference here https://www.ada.gov/service_animals_2010.htm, only dogs are recognized as service animals and are defined as “dogs which are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities.” Under this law, as an organization which serves the public, the OHSAA shall allow these service animals to accompany people with disabilities in all areas of our facilities where the public is normally allowed to go.

The service dog 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 those cases, the individual must maintain control of the animal.

When it is not obvious what service the animal provides, only limited inquiries are allowed. Your staff may ask two questions: 1) **Is the dog a service animal required because of a disability?** and 2) **What work or task has the dog been trained to perform?** Staff shall not ask about the person’s disability, require medical documentation, require a special identification card or training documentation for the dog, or ask the dog to demonstrate its ability to perform the work or task. **Please note that dogs whose sole function is to provide comfort or emotional support do not qualify as service animals under the ADA.**

We thank you in advance for making these accommodations for people who have disabilities so that they may fully enjoy the events that are sponsored by the Ohio High School Athletic Association. If you have questions, as always, please contact a representative of your District Athletic Board for a sectional or district tournament or the sport administrator on our staff.