Pursuant to the US Department of Justice Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations at 28 CFR 36.104 a service animal is defined as follows: “Service animal means any guide dog, signal dog, or other animal individually trained to do 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 to intruders or sounds, providing minimum protection or rescue work, pulling a wheelchair, or fetching dropped items.” If a tenant or applicant can verify that their animal meets this definition and is considered a service animal, medical expenses are allowable under the policy set out below.

Pursuant to 760 CMR 6.05, Determination of Gross Household Income and Net Household Income, for the purposes of determining income for all applicants and tenants of state-aided public housing, as a matter of policy, The Norton Housing Authority will consider certain actual, reasonable and verified non-reimbursable, out of pocket household expenses related to maintaining guide and service animals as a medical deduction under 760 CMR 6.05 (4)(e).

When an applicant or tenant can document that a specially trained service animal is medically necessary, and can provide documentation that the animal has (or will be within three months) been certified as a trained service animal, a deduction from gross household income will be permitted. Expenses which may be deducted include: costs of obtaining such animal, pet food, medical expenses including veterinarian services and prescriptions, grooming, training expenses if such expenses are incurred from a third party provider of training services and necessary equipment such as leashes. Expenses such as dog jackets, blankets, books, beds, and toys may not be deducted.

This policy was approved by the Board of Commissioners for the Norton Housing Authority on February 23, 2016.

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Vice Chairman