

Thornhill United Church Policy Presence of Animals on Church Property

Adopted by TUC Council: June 2026

Replaces previous version: January 2026

Introduction

Thornhill United Church wishes to provide a safe and welcoming environment for all including those who use service animals and those with support animals and other pets, while respecting the safety and comfort of all who attend our worship services including those with allergies or fears of animals.

Policy

Individuals bringing their service animals, support animals, and other pets to Thornhill United Church (TUC) must respect our people and our property by adhering to the rules outlined in this policy. Service animals are as described in the TUC Accessibility Policy.

1. Owners are responsible for ensuring their animals are kept under control. Dogs must be kept on a leash, both inside the building and on exterior church grounds.
2. Owners are responsible for ensuring that their animals do not disturb people.
3. Owners will be held responsible for the costs of cleaning or any damage caused as a result of an animal's actions.
4. Animals other than service animals are not permitted in staff offices or any area reserved for use by tenants. Under extenuating circumstances, and subject to approval by our Ministry & Personnel committee, a staff member may bring their support animal or pet to work, provided it remains in their office.
5. No animals are permitted in any area where food is being prepared. Animals other than service animals are not permitted in any area where food is being consumed.
6. Animals other than service animals are not permitted in the building during non-TUC events, unless permission has been granted from TUC.
7. Owners must ensure that any animals brought into the building have received all vaccinations required in the province of Ontario, and must provide proof of vaccination upon request by members of church staff or Council.
8. Owners bringing their service animals, support animals, and other pets onto the property must bag and properly dispose of all animal refuse.

Failure to adhere to the above rules may result in the support animal or pet being banned from Thornhill United Church property.

If complaints are received about the presence of a support animal or pet from people attending services at TUC, members of the congregation, or from TUC staff or ministers, based on issues including allergens, the animal's behaviour, or any other issue, the owner may be informed that their animal may no longer be brought into the building.

Please note that changes to the above policy may occur at any time.