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**COURTHOUSE FACILITY DOG  
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

**OVERVIEW**

It is the purpose of this document to provide guidelines for the use and management of a courthouse facility dog in the Weber County Attorney's Office Courthouse facility Dog Program. These policies and procedures will serve as a guide for those persons assigned as Certified Dog Handler and key staff members in the appropriate uses and restrictions of the courthouse facility dog.

The Courthouse facility Dog Program shall be under the administrative and operation control of the Weber County Attorney's Office and direct supervision through certified handler, Jessica Willis.

Courthouse facility dog Rubix was acquired through Canine Companions for Independence (CCI), an internationally recognized organization that trains courthouse facility dogs and is accredited through Assistance Dogs International (ADI), which defines a courthouse facility dog as a graduate from an assistance dog program that is placed with a professional to assist various people in need. In the case of the Weber County Attorney's office, courthouse facility dog Rubix will be assisting children and vulnerable adult victims through the criminal justice process. She will be present during trial preparation interviews, in-office crisis intervention meetings and court proceedings. When available, she may be utilized for other purposes under the discretion of the handler, Jessica Willis and the authorization of the Weber County Attorney's Office.

Handler Jessica Willis has received and will maintain certification through CCI, and will provide certification documentation to the Weber County Attorney's Office upon ongoing renewal of said certification. Additionally, the courthouse facility dog's handler will maintain current proof of liability insurance. CCI maintains ownership of the courthouse facility dog throughout their working career. The handler has the opportunity to adopt the dog once CCI has retired them from the facility dog program. It is understood that the courthouse facility dog is placed with the recipient handler, not the courthouse facility. The courthouse facility dog will live with the recipient handler during all off duty time. In the event of separation of employment from the Weber County Attorney's Office either voluntarily or

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- ▼
- Victim Assistance**  
Jamie L. Pitt  
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through termination, it is understood that the courthouse facility dog would remain with the handler. The handler is responsible for overseeing the physical care and well-being of the dog.

Courthouse facility courthouse dog Rubix shall wear the CCI vest at all times while on duty and in training. The blue and yellow vest identifies the dog as a courthouse facility dog performing official duties as opposed to a K-9 or pet therapy dog.

## **RULES**

1. When Rubix has her vest on she is working and should not be distracted. It will be the responsibility of the handler to educate the public when they can or cannot interact with Rubix.
2. No one shall feed anything to Rubix without Jessica's permission.
3. Only the handler or persons designated by the handler can give Rubix cues or commands.

The Weber County Attorney's Office courthouse facility dog shall be permitted within the Weber County Courthouse and all county and public buildings, grounds and offices in accordance with Weber County Resolution signed by Commissioner Matthew G. Bell on June 16, 2016. Each courtroom shall be governed by the presiding judge. Judge W. Brent West has given verbal consent for Rubix to be present in Second District Court proceedings with an agreement to sign an official document when it is provided.

The Weber County Attorney's Office courthouse facility dog shall be permitted within the Roy City Courthouse and all city buildings in accordance with Roy City Resolution signed by Judge Trent Nelson on July 5, 2017. Judge Trent Nelson has given written permission for Rubix to be able to be present in the Roy Justice Court and all proceedings.

## **USE OF THE COURTHOUSE FACILITY DOG DURING COURT PROCEEDINGS**

Rubix's primary purpose will be to aid child and vulnerable adult victims through the criminal justice process through the Weber County Attorney's Office. She will attend all court hearings and meetings that her handler, Jessica Willis, which includes weekly law and motion calendars, trials and hearings. Upon written request, she will be available for hearings in court matters, which Jessica Willis is not involved in but will accompany her. Upon request and subject to availability, Rubix will be available for sister agencies in Weber County who are involved in the prosecution of criminal cases. These agencies include but are not limited to the Second District Juvenile Court, Weber County Justice Court, The Children's Justice Center, and local law enforcement agencies. Online forms are available to fill out for request of Rubix's presence for any of the above listed agencies. Rubix may also be available for defense clients. A request for use form will need to be submitted using the same process as agencies involved in prosecution.

Once the handler confirms Rubix's availability, the following steps shall be taken:

1. Never promise the client that Rubix will be present in the courtroom.
2. File a formal motion to use the courthouse facility dog in court with the client with a reasonable amount of time for response. The motion must list the reason for the use of the dog, the dog handler's certification status, and proof of current insurance.
3. Defense attorneys must meet the same burden of proof as prosecution.

4. Once the appropriate motion is filed with the court and signed by the presiding judge of the hearing, you must provide a copy of the motion to the courthouse facility dog's handler Jessica Willis. The handler will then make the necessary arrangements with whoever is requesting use of the dog.
5. After use of the courthouse facility dog in court, please provide the handler with a court activity report within 14 days.

IN ALL INSTANCES, SERVICES ARE DEPENDENT UPON THE AVAILABILITY OF THE DOG AND HER HANDLER. THE DOG'S HANDLER IS RESPONSIBLE FOR USING THEIR BEST JUDGEMENT IN TERMS OF POSITIONING THE DOG WITH THE DOG'S PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL SAFETY IN MIND AT ALL TIMES. THE DOG'S HANDLER SHALL HAVE THE FINAL SAY REGARDING WHETHER THE DOG CAN PROVIDE REQUESTED SERVICES.