



Disability Services

Emotional Support Animal Policy and Guidelines

I. Purpose of the Policy and Guidelines

This document explains Ursinus College's policy toward animals utilized for disability purposes. It is the purpose of these guidelines to articulate the conditions under which such animals are permitted access to College grounds and facilities.

II. Definitions

a. Service Animal

A Service Animal is any dog or, in limited circumstances, miniature horse, that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of and to accommodate the functional needs of an individual with a disability¹. The work or task performed by a Service Animal must be directly related to the individual's disability.

b. Assistance Animal/ Emotional Support Animal

An Emotional Support Animal also known as an Assistance Animal is not a pet. It is an animal that works, provides assistance, or performs tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability, or provides emotional support that alleviates one or more identified symptoms or effects of a person's disability².

Guide	Service Animals	Emotional Support Animal/ Assistance Animals
Federal Mandate:	ADA	FHA
Emotional Support Coverage:	Excludes Emotional Support	Includes Emotional Support
Where can you take the animal:	All-Campus	Housing Only
Reason for Animal:	Access	Reasonable Accommodation
Is Approval Necessary:	No approval required/ Prior registration required for students living in College housing.	Approval Needed
Type of Animal:	Dogs or in limited circumstances miniature horse.	All Animals within reason.

c. Pet:

A domesticated animal kept in the home for pleasure and companionship, rather than for the purpose of assisting persons with disabilities. A pet is not considered a Service Animal or

¹ Americans with Disabilities Act (2010). Office of Civil Rights, Department of Justice
http://www.ada.gov/service_animals_2010.htm

²Service Animals and Assistance Animals for People with Disabilities in Housing and HUD-Funding Programs (2013). Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.
http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=servanimals_ntcfheo2013-01.pdf

Assistance Animal, and, therefore is not covered by these requirements and related policies. Residents are not permitted to keep pets, except fish on college property or in college housing.

d. Disability:

The term "disability" means, with respect to an individual, a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities of such individual; a record of such an impairment; or being regarded as having such an impairment. (42 U.S.C.A. § 12102)

e. Handler

A person with a disability that a service animal assists or a personal care attendant who handles the animal for a person with a disability³

f. Student Partner

As is referenced in this policy, refers to the individual who benefits from the Assistance Animals use or Service Animal's training.

III. Policy

A. Emotional Support Animal in Residence Hall

In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Fair Housing Act (FHAct), and state and local law, individuals with disabilities may be permitted to have their Emotional Support Animal in the residence halls of Ursinus College. Emotional Support Animals are not permitted in any other buildings on campus or college property, nor are they allowed in other controlled spaces on campus.

Animal Licensing:

All animals must meet license requirements for the state of Pennsylvania and the Borough of Collegetown and wear the designated licensing tags.

IV. Approval and Registration Process

Ursinus College will consider request for Emotional Support Animals on a case-by-case basis. Students making requests for ESA's should direct their requests to the Director of Disability Services no later than 30 days prior to the start of the semester.

Students must complete all application components listed below in order for the Director of Disability Services to review the student's request:

1. Complete & Submit Emotional Support Animal Disability & Accommodation Verification Form

³ Americans with Disabilities Act (2010). Office of Civil Rights, Department of Justice
http://www.ada.gov/service_animals_2010.htm

2. Meet with the Director of Disability Services to discuss request.
3. Complete and Submit ESA Student Application to Director of Disability Services

Please note, the emotional support animal cannot be brought to campus until the approval process is completed.

In order for a student with a disability to qualify for such an accommodation, professional documentation of a mental health condition that rises to the level of a disability must be submitted.

Documentation must establish the therapeutic need of the animal that is directly connected to the individual's disability, and must establish that the ESA is necessary to afford the individual with a disability an equal opportunity to use a dwelling or to participate in College housing.

The student will also be expected to provide documentation that the animal is in compliance with all Pennsylvania and Borough of Collegeville requirements associated with licensing, vaccinations, and other health regulations.

An Emotional Support Animal may reside in a Residence Hall or College housing with its student partner only after the student partner has submitted required forms and has received written approval from the Director of Disability Services, provided that its behavior and care does not create unreasonable disruptions for residents, employees, and other College community members. Disruptions, including noise levels, will be addressed by Residence Life staff in the same manner as with all students. An ESA is not permitted in other areas of the College (e.g. dining facilities, libraries, academic buildings, athletic buildings and facilities, classroom, labs, individual center, etc.).

A new Assistance Animal request must be completed for each new academic year.

Should the request for an Assistance Animal be approved, the Student-Partner will be provided an accommodation letter that confirms their right to maintain the animal in the owner's housing assignment. This information will also be shared prior to moving the animal into the housing assignment. If necessary, Residence Life will notify other residents within the housing assignment (as well as Facility Services and Campus Safety staff, as needed) that the animal will be residing in a shared assigned living space.

Ursinus College may consider the following factors, among others, to assist in housing assignments, and as evidence to determine whether the presence of the Assistance Animal is necessary to accommodate the disability of the student partner.

1. The size of the animal is too large for available assigned housing space;
2. The animal's presence fundamentally alters another individuals living environment;
4. The animal is not housebroken or is unable to live with others in a reasonable manner;

5. The animal's vaccinations are not up-to-date;
6. The animal poses or has posed a direct threat to the student partner or other individuals, including but not limited to, aggressive behavior, which may or may not include personal injuries, toward the student partner or others.
7. The animal causes or has caused damage to college housing property beyond what is normally considered reasonable wear and tear.

V. Allergies, Asthma, and Other Medical Conditions

Allergic reactions to animals are common. Persons who have asthma, allergies, or other medical conditions effected by the presence of animals must provide verifiable medical documentation to support their claim. The needs of both individuals will be considered in resolving the issues. If an allergy/animal conflict within the residence hall cannot be resolved agreeably, then Residence Life and the Director of Disability Services will collaborate to determine a solution.

VI. Responsibilities of the Owner/Handler of Emotional Support Animal

Ursinus College and employees of the college are not responsible for the care or supervision of Emotional Support Animal. This includes, but is not limited to, providing food for the animal as well as cleaning up the animal's feces.

Animal Behavior:

1. The Emotional Support Animal must be contained within the privately assigned individual living accommodations (e.g. room, suite, or apartment if living alone) except to the extent the student partner or handler is taking the animal out for natural relief. When an ESA is outside the private living accommodations, it must be in an animal carrier or controlled by a leash or harness. Assistance Animals are not allowed in any College facilities other than the residence hall or apartment (e.g. rooms, suites, apartments, etc.) to which the student partner is assigned.

Animal Health and Well-Being:

1. All animals must have all veterinarian-recommended vaccinations necessary to maintain the animal's health and prevent contagious diseases. Student partners are expected to submit documentation of vaccinations before August 1 for the fall semester and December 1 for the spring semester. All animals should be spade and neutered. The College reserves the right to request updated verification at any time during the animal's residency. Documentation shall be maintained by the Director of Disability Services.

2. If taken outside the residence, animal must wear identification tags with the student's name, a campus address, and a current rabies tag.

3. Emotional Support Animals are only allowed in a student's residence hall after a request has been submitted and approvals granted. ESA's are not allowed to be outside of the residence hall or apartment environment except for exercise or relief. Unlike a Service Animal, Assistance Animals are not allowed in other campus facilities.

4. Animals that are ill should not be taken into public areas. A student partner with an ill animal may be asked to leave College facilities or remove the animal from campus. Upon reasonable suspicion that the animal is ill, Residence Life may require temporary and exclusive examination by a veterinarian.

Animal Cleanliness

1. Student partners are responsible for properly containing and disposing of the animal's solid waste (e.g. feces).

a. Indoor animal waste, and/or used litter, must be disposed of in an outside trash dumpster. The litter must be changed weekly with pet waste separated from the litter twice each week or more frequently to avoid odors. Litter boxes must be placed on mats to minimize contamination of carpeted surfaces.

b. Outdoor animal solid waste must be immediately retrieved by the Handler, placed in a plastic bag and securely tied before being disposed of in an outside trash dumpster.

c. In the event that the student partner is not physically able to clean up after the animal, it is then the responsibility of the student partner to make arrangements for someone capable of cleaning up after the animal. The person cleaning up after the animal should abide by the following guidelines:

I. Always carry equipment sufficient to clean up the animal's feces when the animal is on campus.

II. Properly dispose of waste and/or litter in appropriate containers, (e.g., an outside trash dumpster).

2. Student partners are responsible for providing appropriate cleaning supplies, all basic necessities for the Animal, including food, water, medicines, and all other supplies necessary to ensure its health and safety within the confines of their bedroom/apartment if living alone. Student partners should contact Ursinus College Facilities to approve all cleaning and sanitation supplies.

3. An animal's food should be kept in a closed container within the student partner's bedroom, or apartment if living alone.

4. If the animal vomits, urinates, leaves solid waste, and/or becomes incontinent, it is the responsibility of the student partner to clean and sanitize the contaminated area immediately. If the contamination occurs indoors, clean-up must include disinfectant of the area and carpet or floor treatment to minimize damage to the facility. All matter must be disposed of in an outside trash dumpster.

5. Regular cleaning to avoid significant odors and/or to manage shedding is expected. Handlers may use showers/tubs within the college residential community if they live in a space with a private bath to bathe or clean their Assistance/Service Animal, otherwise an off-campus service must be used.

6. Student partners are responsible for taking effective precautions to avoid flea and tick infestations. If the animal is found to have fleas or ticks, the student partner will be responsible for eliminating the fur coat infestation and laundering all pet bedding. Residence Life may monitor and inspect for possible infestations. If fleas, ticks or other pests are detected on the animal and/or within the residence it will be treated using approved methods by a college-approved pest control service. The student partner will be billed, as are all students, for the expense of any required pest management due to the animal's presence.

a. Unattended Animals

Emotional Support Animals should not be left unattended in the residence halls for more than four (4) hours. If students will be leaving campus for the weekend or for breaks, they are required to take their animal with them. (Boarding animals in an off-campus facility is also an option.) Other students should not serve as proxies to attend/care for the animal.

b. Removal of Emotional Support Animals

A person with a disability will be asked to remove their Emotional Support animal from the college for the following reasons:

- the animal is out of control and the handler does not take effective action to control it
- the animal exhibits unruly, disruptive, or aggressive behavior
- the animal is not housebroken or the handler is not able to maintain a hygienic living environment
- the animal possesses a direct threat to the health or safety of others
- the animal would cause a fundamental alteration of campus facilities, programs, or activity
- if a handler/partner is unable to care for the animal, including in instances of temporary illness or hospitalization

Residence Life retains the right to relocate the owner and approved animal as necessary. Should the animal be removed from the premises for any reason, the owner is expected to fulfill his/her housing obligations for the remainder of the housing contract.

Any violation of the above rules or incidence of other violations may result in immediate removal of the animal from the College and, if appropriate Student Affairs for disciplinary action. If an Emotional Support Animal is banned from campus, the individual with a disability will have the right to engage in a deliberative process to determine if effective participation can occur with other appropriate accommodations.

Owners of animals that are impounded are responsible for the payment of any impound and/or any fees required to secure the release of their animals.

V. Emergency Response

Should an emergency situation occur which requires evacuation or other action from the student partner, and an emergency response team be called, the team will attempt to keep the animal and the Student Partner together. However, the team's primary efforts will be toward ensuring the safety of the Student Partner and all other student, which may necessitate leaving the animal behind in certain emergency evacuations situations.

In the event that the student partner needs to be transported by emergency personal (i.e. emergency medical services or police) every effort will be made to keep the animal with the student partner. When is it not possible to keep the animal with the student partner, the college may contact the emergency contact on file and/or Montgomery County SCPA for temporary boarding until the student partner is able to return to campus or retrieve the animal. The student partner will be responsible for any related boarding costs.

For questions or more information please contact:

Director of Disability Services

Institute for Student Success

Ursinus College

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