



SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY Office of Disability Services

ASSISTANCE ANIMAL POLICY STATEMENT

Syracuse University is committed to providing fair and reasonable accommodations to all students residing in University Housing. Our commitment to the living and learning environment is central to our mission.

Under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act, a postsecondary educational institution may not exclude an otherwise qualified student with a disability from any part of its programs or services, or otherwise discriminate against an applicant or student with a disability. Under the Fair Housing Act, persons with disabilities may request a reasonable accommodation of an assistance animal, including an emotional support animal in Housing when its use is necessary to afford a person with a disability an equal opportunity to use and enjoy a dwelling and/or the common areas of a dwelling.

SERVICE ANIMALS

Service Animals provide active support and are permitted to accompany the student/handler in all public areas at the University, with the possible exception of certain labs where protective clothing/gear is required.

If it is readily apparent that an individual has a disability and requires on-campus assistance of an animal that qualifies as a Service Animal, no further information will be requested. If it is not readily apparent that the animal is a Service Animal, an individual may be required to provide the following information:

1. Advance notice to the Office of Disability Services or Housing Office requesting to have the service animal reside in University housing.
2. An individual may also be required to explain the work or task that the animal has been trained to perform, but the animal will not be required to demonstrate this task and no documentation of training will be required.

EMOTIONAL SUPPORT ANIMALS (ESA(s))

Emotional Support Animals provide passive support and are permitted only in a student's room and common areas associated with the student's residence hall.

A request for an Emotional Support Animal will be treated as an accommodation request; to make such a request, a student must go through the Office of Disability Services and follow the procedures for this particular request.

Emotional Support Animals may not reside in housing without express written approval from University Officials.

Requesting an emotional support animal:

A request for an Emotional Support Animal will be treated as an accommodation request; to make such a request, a student must:

1. Register with the Office of Disability Services as a qualified student with a disability and follow the procedures accordingly.
 - a. For incoming students: <http://disabilityservices.syr.edu/prospective-current-students/>
 - b. For current students: <http://disabilityservices.syr.edu/current-students-2/>

2. Along with the standard documentation of the disability, students must include:
 - a. Their own written statement explaining how the animal will provide them with access to university living not otherwise possible, as well as specify the type of animal that they wish to bring to campus. This can also be stated on the Self-Assessment Survey.
 - b. A letter of support from the healthcare professional that supplements the disability documentation that details the current professional/patient relationship and describes how the presence of an ESA over any other strategy or accommodation effectively mitigates the impact of the disability in order to enable the student to equally use and enjoy university housing.
3. The Director of the Office of Disability Services will review the registration/request, assign an ODS counselor, and notify the student via e-mail to set up an initial meeting with his or her counselor to discuss this and other potential classroom and testing accommodations deemed appropriate.
4. After this meeting, the ODS counselor will make his/her recommendations to the Director, who will make the final determination and (if applicable) forward the final approval to the Housing Office. The Office of Disability Services reserves the right to request additional information and/or recommend an alternate accommodation.

Considerations when seeking the approval for an Emotional Support Animal:

1. Does the person have a disability (i.e., a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities)?
2. Does the person making the request have a disability-related need for an Emotional Support Animal (i.e., Does the animal provide emotional support that alleviates one or more of the identified symptoms of the person's existing disability)?

Things to consider when contemplating an Emotional Support Animal as an accommodation in university housing:

- Time obligation related to care of specific species
- Time away from the animal, student schedule, lifestyle, other responsibilities
- Financial cost of food, supplies, veterinarian visits
- Previous ownership of species or anxiety an animal may experience in a new environment
- Caring for the animal during school breaks
- Travel
- Training of animal (housebroken or litter trained)
- Ideal time to bring it to campus

Appeal

For any accommodation request that is denied, or in the case of a student who has been given an alternate accommodation that is perceived to be inadequate, a student may appeal that decision to Aaron Hodukavich at ajhoduka@syr.edu, Director & ADA Coordinator of Syracuse University. We will make every effort to address appeals in a timely manner.