

Assistance Animal Policy

Clayton State University (CSU) is committed to maintaining a welcoming and respectful environment for living, work, and study for all individuals, including individuals with disabilities. To that end and in compliance with federal and state laws, the following information provides general guidance and permitted uses of animals assisting individuals with disabilities while on CSU property.

This policy applies to assistance animals that may be used to assist individuals with disabilities. The term “assistance animal” is a general term that refers to both Service Animals and Emotional Support Animals, both of which are defined below.

I. DEFINITIONS:

- A. **Service Animal:** any *dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability. The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the handler’s disability. Examples of such work or tasks include, but are not limited to, assisting individuals who are blind or have low vision with navigation and other tasks, alerting individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to the presence of people or sounds, providing non-violent protection or rescue work, pulling a wheelchair, assisting an individual during a seizure, alerting individuals to the presence of allergens, retrieving items such as medicine or the telephone, providing physical support and assistance with balance and stability to individuals with mobility disabilities, and helping persons with psychiatric and neurological disabilities by preventing or interrupting impulsive or destructive behaviors. The crime deterrent effects of an animal’s presence and the provision of emotional support, well-being, comfort, or companionship do not constitute work or tasks for the purposes of this definition.
- B. **Handler:** the individual with a disability, as defined under federal and state law, who uses a service animal to perform a work or task directly related to the individual’s disability. A Handler may also be a personal care attendant who handles the animal for a person with a disability.
- C. **Trainer:** a person engaged in the training of a service animal for the purpose of accompanying a Handler.
- D. **Service Animals in Training:** dogs that are being trained by a trainer identified as an agent or employee of an entity specialized in training dogs to become service animals.
- E. **Emotional Support Animal (ESA):** any animal providing emotional support, well-being, or comfort that eases one or more identified symptoms or effects of a documented disability. Emotional support animals may also be referred to as comfort or therapy animals. Typically, an emotional support animal is prescribed for an individual with a disability by a licensed physician or licensed mental health professional with training in the area of the person’s disability and is also an integral part of that person's treatment process.

*Please Note: When this policy refers to “dogs” in the context of Service Animals or Service Animals in Training, the references also include miniature horses.

II. SERVICE ANIMALS

- A. Service Animals will be permitted to accompany people with disabilities in all areas of Clayton State University's campus and facilities, including housing, where students, members of the public, and other participants in services, programs or activities are allowed to go. Clayton State University does not require documentation, such as proof that the animal has been certified, trained, or licensed as a Service Animal. Additionally, Clayton State University cannot ask about the nature or extent of a person's disability to determine whether a person's animal qualifies as a Service Animal. However, when it is not readily apparent that a dog is a Service Animal, Clayton State University staff may make two inquiries to determine whether the dog qualifies as a Service Animal, which are:
 - 1. Is the dog required because of a disability?
 - 2. What work or task has the dog been trained to perform?
- B. A Service Animal which resides in the Clayton State University residence hall must be housebroken (i.e., trained so that it controls its waste elimination, absent of illness or accident) and must be kept under control by a harness, leash, or other tether, unless the person is unable to hold those, or such use would interfere with the Service Animal's performance of work or tasks, in such instances, the Service Animal must be kept under control by voice, signals, or other effective means.
- C. Service Animals in Training
 - 1. Specific laws in the State of Georgia state that individuals that are identified as a trainer of guide dogs or support dogs have the right to be accompanied by a dog that is being trained for the purpose of assisting individuals with disabilities. The full text of these laws can be found in the link below:
[2016 Georgia Code Regarding Service Animals](#)
 - 2. A student requesting to be recognized as a trainer of a service animal is required to identify with the Disability Resource Center, provide the required documentation and complete the registration process prior to the animal being allowed on-campus.

III. EMOTIONAL SUPPORT ANIMALS (ESA)

- A. Per the Fair Housing Act, Clayton State University provides reasonable accommodations for the use of an emotional support animal in campus housing.
- B. Animals that qualify as emotional support animals are only allowed within a student's assigned living unit in campus housing. Emotional support animals must not be taken into the common areas of the residence halls, apartment offices, administrative offices, public student living areas, lecture halls, etc.
- C. The Office of Housing and Residence Life will make a reasonable effort to notify other housing residents of the existence of a service or emotional support animal in the assignment (or apartment or suite).

IV. PROCESS AND PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS REQUESTING AN ESA

- A. Students must receive approval to have an Emotional Support Animal in University housing through the Disability Resource Center (DRC). ([Disability Resource Center Website](#)).
- B. Disability documentation supporting the use of an ESA as an accommodation in university housing must be submitted to the DRC using the [DRC Request for Information for Emotional](#)

- [Support Animal](#) form, or comparable information from a licensed medical or mental health professional trained to make such a determination.
- C. Students must also submit a completed [DRC Intake Form](#) and [Release of Information Form](#) along with professional documentation before review can begin. These forms can be found at [Disability Resource Center-Intake Packet](#).
 - D. Review of Intake Form, Release of Information Form, and disability documentation will begin once **both** the completed forms **and** disability documentation have been received by the DRC. (Review is typically completed within approximately five to seven business days.)
 - E. A DRC professional staff member will review submitted documentation, make determinations, and notify the student.
 - F. As with all disability accommodations, the determination of whether or not an ESA is a reasonable accommodation in campus housing is made on a case-by-case basis, through an interactive process between the student and the Disability Resource Center.
 - G. If approved, the DRC will notify the student and the University Housing and Residence Life Office, and will assist with coordinating accommodation implementation. A Housing and Residence Life staff member will contact the student to discuss the residential life options based on the documented needs related to the emotional support animal, and any other housing accommodations approved through the process.
 - H. ESAs are allowed in a student's assigned university housing unit only after all housing-related documentation and paperwork described in this policy has been completed, submitted, and approved by the DRC.
 - I. Students should be aware that implementation options for an ESA in housing may need to be negotiated as the University balances appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities with the needs of other students, such as those who have life-threatening allergies and/or fears of animals. As a result, it may take at least one week after approval for the animal to be allowed on campus.
 - J. Advance notice of the need for an animal is essential to the University providing a smooth transition for the student. Consequently, students must submit all documentation, Intake Form, and Release of Information at least 30 days prior to the intended date for bringing an ESA into University housing. Vaccination verification and other records, if required by law, must be submitted to the DRC along with a request for approval review.
 - K. Typically, approval is granted for only one ESA per student in University housing and for one year at a time.

V. [OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION RELATED TO EMOTIONAL SUPPORT ANIMALS](#)

- A. The care and supervision of the ESA is solely the responsibility of the student owner. The student must be in full control of the ESA at all times. ESAs cannot be left unattended overnight at any time. If the student must be away, they must either take the animal with them, or arrange for the animal to be cared for off-campus.
- B. The student is responsible for ensuring that the ESA is contained appropriately when not present in the residence unit for class, work, or any other activity.
- C. The student must provide the name and contact number of an alternate emergency caregiver who will take charge of the animal and its care in the event of an emergency. This information will need to be shared by the DRC staff with Public Safety and Housing and Residence Life staff.

VI. EMOTIONAL SUPPORT ANIMAL HEALTH AND BEHAVIOR

- D. ESAs will be permitted provided that their behavior, noise, odor, and waste does not exceed reasonable standards for a well-behaved animal and that these factors do not create unreasonable disruptions to the residential community.
- E. ESAs may not pose a direct threat to the health and safety of individuals on the university campus, cause physical damage to property, or fundamentally alter the nature of the university operations.
- F. ESAs must be in compliance with state and local laws regarding health, vaccination, and care of the particular type of animal.
- G. All ESAs must be treated humanely, including being housed in acceptable conditions (e.g., appropriately sized crate or carrier, ability to move freely in the assigned space).
- H. A student shall not bring an emotional support animal that is ill to any Clayton State University housing facility and must remove the animal immediately if it becomes ill. A student with an emotional support animal that appears to be ill may be asked to remove the animal from housing by staff or by Clayton State Public Safety officers.
- I. Emotional support animals must be clean, well groomed, and kept in a healthy environment. Any student with an ESA that is not clean (flea-infested, foul smelling, or inadequately groomed, etc.) may be asked to leave the student's assigned residence in which the ESA has been approved to reside until such condition is corrected.
- J. The student is restricted to keeping the approved ESA within his or her assigned room/apartment only, unless the student is leaving the building with the animal for care or other purposes.
- K. Any ESA may be removed from campus temporarily or excluded from campus permanently if the animal is unruly and disruptive, in ill health, or habitually unclean.
- L. The decision to exclude an ESA from campus will be made by Clayton State Public Safety officers if the animal is deemed an immediate threat to the health and safety of others or, if the situation is not an emergency, by the Disability Resource Center or an appointed DRC Advisory Committee after hearing information from all parties involved.

VII. RESPONSIBILITIES FOR STUDENTS WITH AN ESA

- A. Students with an ESA shall be liable for any and all costs resulting when the animal causes damage to any Clayton State University facility or injury to any person.
- B. Alternate emergency caregivers are prohibited from transferring such control to another person (except a designated alternate) even momentarily, or from requesting the assistance of other persons in supervising or controlling their emotional support animal within Clayton State University Housing. Any alternate emergency caregiver seeking an exception from the requirements must request an appropriate exception as provided in this policy.
- C. The ESA must be under the direct control of the student on leash/harness or other means facilitating control upon leaving a student's room or apartment
- D. The student agrees that sensitivity to individuals with allergies and to those who fear animals is important to ensure the integrity of the academic and residential community.
- E. Students must ensure their emotional support animal is housebroken. Any emotional support animal that is not housebroken will be excluded from Clayton State University residences.
- F. The student is responsible for ensuring the cleanup of all liquid and solid animal waste. The student should have appropriate cleanup materials and disposal bags available at all times.

Used cleanup materials should be disposed of by tying it securely in a plastic bag and depositing it in an outdoor waste container. When necessary, the student must immediately contact Facilities Management, by placing a work order request in the maintenance request portal using CSU credentials, so that further cleanup, disinfecting, and deodorizing can be performed. Any student who is physically unable to perform the necessary cleanup is responsible for making satisfactory arrangements for a third party to perform all cleaning actions required in this section. All costs for additional cleanup or repairs will be the responsibility of the student.

- G. **Incident Reporting**: In the case of any incident involving injury to a person by an ESA, the student shall make an immediate report to the Clayton State Public Safety Department, identifying any other persons involved in the incident or witnessing the incident, so that the incident can be properly investigated and documented.
- H. **Documentation**: The student must provide documentation of the following to the DRC at the time of initial approval, and subsequently when updated vaccinations have been administered, prior to bringing the animal into campus housing:
 - 1. **Vaccination**: The emotional support animal must have current immunization against diseases, including rabies.
 - 2. **Health**: The emotional support animal must be in good health. Students with ESAs in university housing must provide at least an annual clean bill of health from a licensed veterinarian, as stated above.

Signature Page

I have read, understand, and agree to comply with the process, rules, and regulations governing Emotional Support Animals in Clayton State University Housing.

Printed Name _____

Student Signature _____ Date _____

DRC Signature _____ Date _____

Housing Representative Signature _____ Date _____

Alternate Emergency Caregiver Information

Name _____

Address _____

Phone Number _____

Email Address _____

Attach Photo Here