Assistive Animal Policy

# Service Animals

A service animal is any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability. The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the individual’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.

1. 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?
2. 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 student 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.

# Emotional Support Animals (ESA)

ESA isany animal providing emotional support, well-being, or comfort that eases one or more symptoms or effects of a documented disability. 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.

1. ESAs are not pets, but they typically are animals commonly kept in households as pets. An ESA may be a dog (most common), cat, small bird, rabbit, hamster, gerbil, fish, turtle, or other small, domesticated animal that is traditionally kept in the home for pleasure. Under guidelines from HUD, reptiles (other than turtles), barnyard animals, monkeys, and other non-domesticated animals are not considered common household animals. Exceptions to these guidelines regarding animals serving as ESAs will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

## Process and procedures for students requesting an Emotional Support Animal (ESA)

1. Students must receive approval to have an Emotional Support Animal in University housing through the Disability Resource Center (DRC).
2. Disability documentation supporting the use of an ESA as an accommodation in University housing must be submitted to the DRC for review and must meet the criteria outlined in the ESA Documentation Checklist (see page 3).
3. Students must also submit a completed [DRC Intake Form](file:///\\lochshares.clayton.edu\home\Disability_Services\AA-DRC%20POLICIES%20&%20PROCEDURES\Intake\Intake%20Form_current_1.31.19.pdf)**,** [Release of Information Form](file:///\\lochshares.clayton.edu\home\Disability_Services\AA-DRC%20POLICIES%20&%20PROCEDURES\Intake\Front%20Desk%20Files\Intake%20Packet\Right%20Side\(2)%20Release%20of%20Information%20Form.doc) and Statement of Confidentiality Form along with professional documentation before review can begin. These forms can be found in the [Disability Resource Center-Intake Packet.](http://www.clayton.edu/disability/access-services)
4. Review of Intake Forms 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.)
5. A DRC staff member will review submitted documentation, make determinations, and notify the student. Once documentation has been approved an intake will be scheduled.
6. The determination of whether 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.
7. If approved, the DRC will notify the student and the University Housing and Residence Life Office and will assist with coordinating accommodation implementation. 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.
8. Approval is granted for only **one** ESA per student in university housing and for one year at a time.

# ESA Documentation Criteria Checklist

## The following elements must be included in a student’s supporting documentation for an Emotional Support Animal:

* The student’s name
* Information showing that the evaluator of the student’s disability has a professional relationship with the student involving the provision of health care or disability related services
* The specific animal(s) for which the reasonable accommodation is sought
* Information showing that the individual has a physical or mental impairment
* Information showing that the impairment(s) substantially limits at least one major life activity or major bodily function
* Information showing the individual needs the animal(s) because it performs a job or task, provides assistance, or performs at least one task that benefits the student because of his or her disability, or because it provides therapeutic emotional support to alleviate a symptom or effect of the disability of the patient/client, and not merely as a pet

### If the animal being requested is anything other than a dog, cat, bird, rabbit, hamster, gerbil, fish, turtle, or other type of domesticated animal, then the documentation should also show:

* The date of the last consultation with the individual
* Any unique circumstances justifying the individual’s need for the particular animal(s) (if already owned or identified by the individual) or particular type of animal(s), and
* A statement that the evaluator has reliable information about this specific animal and that they specifically recommend this type of animal.

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Student Name (printed) Laker ID

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Student Signature Date

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DRC Representative Signature Date