

SUPPORT ANIMAL HANDLER RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A student who is approved for an ESA will be required to meet with Disability Resources staff to review and agree to the following requirements. Failure to follow these requirements may result in the University removing and/or banning the ESA from University housing.

An ESA must be contained within the privately assigned student living accommodation (room, suite, or apartment), except to the extent the student is taking the animal out for natural relief. When an ESA is outside of the student's private living accommodation, the animal must be either controlled by a leash or harness or contained in an animal carrier. An ESA is not permitted in any other buildings or other non-public areas on campus unless explicitly approved by Disability Resources.

Student's Responsibilities as the Animal Owner:

- The student is responsible for the behavior and care of the animal at all times while on University property, and may not delegate these responsibilities to a roommate or other student living on campus at any time or for any reason. Students should take their current and future schedule and demands on their time into account when considering whether they have adequate time and resources to care for an ESA.
- The student will provide Disability Resources with a photograph of the animal.
- Where the animal is of a type that can wear a collar, such animal shall wear a collar with basic identification information at all times.
- The student must abide by current city, county, and state ordinances, laws, and/or regulations pertaining to licensing, vaccination, and other requirements for animals. The student must know and understand these ordinances, laws, and regulations. The City of Pittsburgh pet owner requirements can be found at <http://pittsburghpa.gov/publicsafety/animal-control/pet-owners.html> The University has the right to require reasonable documentation of compliance with such ordinances, laws, and/or regulations, which may include a vaccination certificate or a veterinarian's statement regarding the animal's health. The University reserves the right to make reasonable requests for documentation showing that the animal meets these requirements.
- The student is required to immediately clean up after and properly dispose of the animal's feces in a safe and sanitary manner using outside trash receptacles. If the animal is a dog, the dog must be housebroken and kennel trained, and cats or rabbits must be litterbox-trained.
- In the case of an emergency, the University is not responsible for evacuating the animal. The student is responsible for providing Disability Resources with an emergency contact for the animal. The emergency contact must be someone who does not reside in

University housing. The student is responsible for updating this information if it changes.

- If the student must leave campus for more than twenty-four (24) hours or is otherwise unable to care for the animal, the animal must be boarded outside of University housing. If the student fails to relocate the animal under such circumstances, the University reserves the right to have the animal removed by contacting the student's designated emergency contact to collect the animal or, if that person is unavailable or unwilling, Animal Control.
- The student's living accommodation must be kept reasonably clean and free of animals odors.
- The student is financially responsible for any and all costs associated with the care, maintenance and removal of the animal. This includes any costs of damage to University property caused by the animal, including but not limited to cleaning and repairs beyond reasonable wear and tear, pest control, and replacement of floor coverings if the animal eliminates waste on the floor. The University shall have the right to bill the student or the student's account for unmet obligations under this provision.
- The student is responsible for maintaining control of the animal at all times. If an animal gets out of control, the student shall immediately take steps to control the animal. In the event the student cannot control the animal's behavior, the student shall remove the animal from the area until such time as the animal is under control and the disturbance is eliminated.
- The student is responsible for ensuring that the animal does not pose a threat to the health or safety of others at any time. If an animal does pose such a threat, the student shall remove the animal from University property and shall not allow the animal to return until it no longer poses a threat to the health or safety of others.
- The student is responsible for providing a safe and healthy living environment for the animal. The University reserves the right to contact Animal Control if concerns are raised as to the proper and safe treatment of the animal.
- The student agrees to abide by all equally-applicable policies that are unrelated to the student's disability such as assuring that the animal does not unduly interfere with the routine activities of the residence or cause unreasonable difficulties for other students residing in University housing. If an animal's behavior creates a significant disturbance (for example, through excessive barking, wandering uncontrolled in shared spaces, or other similar behavior), the student shall immediately take steps to eliminate the disturbance and control the animal. In the event the student cannot do so, the student shall remove the animal from the area.
- Dogs or cats that are unneutered or unsprayed may pose a higher risk of damaging university property (e.g., due to spraying), and may be more likely to demonstrate aggressive behavior. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that cats and dogs be spayed or neutered.

- The ESA is permitted in University housing only as long as it is necessary due to the student's disability. The student must notify the University, in writing, if the animal is no longer needed or is no longer in residence. To replace an animal, the student must submit a new request to demonstrate that the new animal is necessary due to the student's disability.
- A material violation of the responsibilities described above, as determined by Disability Resources, may result in a written warning. If the student receives more than one written warning in an academic calendar year, the student may be required to re-engage in the interactive process with Disability Resources to discuss the violations and whether an alternative accommodation may be effective in meeting the individual's disability-related needs. Repeated material violations or a single severe violation, as determined by Disability Resources, may result in one or more of the following: removal of the animal from campus; banning of the animal from all or part of campus; and disciplinary action against the student in accordance with other applicable University policies.
- Students found to be falsely characterizing their animal as an ESA may be subject to discipline in accordance with University policies.
- University employees with responsibility for maintaining or controlling a specific area of campus may ask a student whether the animal is a pet, an ESA, or Service Animal, unless the need for the Service Animal is readily apparent, and the student must respond to same.

Student's Rights as the Animal Owner:

- The University may not ask for or require a student with a disability to pay a surcharge or comply with other requirements generally not applicable to students without animals.
- A student with a disability may submit a request for an ESA in University housing at any time. The University will consider this request even if the school year is already in session. If the student has already brought the animal into University housing, the University may require that the animal be removed from University housing while the request is being reviewed.
- The student is not required to equip an ESA with a vest or other item identifying it as such.
- While the interactive process is necessarily an open exchange of information, the University may not require the student to disclose details about their diagnosis, the severity of their disability, or medical records as part of the interactive process (except documentation referenced in Section III.3.H of the Guidelines Regarding Animals on University Property) and may not require a medical examination.
- The University may not insist on specific types of evidence if the information provided to the University meets the requirements of the University's policy with

respect to ESAs, as set forth in the Guideline's regarding Animals on University Property.

- In the event the University determines that the information provided to the University is insufficient to confirm a student's disability or disability-related need for an ESA, the University will provide the student with an opportunity to continue the "interactive process," including by discussing the reasons for the denial, by discussing alternative accommodations, and/or by allowing the student to supplement the information provided.
- The University will not deny a reasonable request for an ESA because the request would impose a fundamental alteration to the nature of the University's operations or impose an undue financial and administrative burden on the University, without first engaging in an interactive process with the student to discuss whether an alternative accommodation may be effective in meeting the student's disability-related needs.
- In the event the University determines that a student is not eligible or is no longer eligible for an ESA, or the specific ESA requested, the University will provide the student written notification of the reasons for this denial. The University will provide written notification of the grievance procedures that the student may use to challenge this denial.