

### ESA Approval Process

1. Students wishing to request approval to have an ESA in their on-campus residence should first contact the Office of Disability Resources at [access@andrew.cmu.edu](mailto:access@andrew.cmu.edu) or apply online at <https://rainier.accessiblelearning.com/cmu>
2. Disability Resources staff will schedule an initial appointment to discuss the student's disability, the role an ESA may play in supporting their mental health, and the ESA policy and approval process.
3. After the initial meeting with Disability Resources staff, if a student elects to proceed with seeking approval for an ESA, the student must have their licensed mental health professional complete the ESA Request Form. This form will be provided to the student at the initial appointment with Disability Resources. The mental health professional completing the form must be currently providing the student with ongoing mental health treatment and must be licensed in either Pennsylvania or the student's home state.
4. The student must also complete a Care Plan, detailing the animal's veterinarian, required vaccinations, plan for the animal's care in the event of an emergency, and how the student will meet the financial responsibilities associated with the ESA. A Care Plan template will also be provided to the student during the initial meeting with Disability Resources.
5. If the student has roommates, suitemates, or housemates in Greek housing, all roommates, suitemates, or housemates (as applicable) must sign the [ESA Roommate Acknowledgement](#), indicating any medical concerns they may have related to living with an ESA, as well as their understanding of the ESA policy. If one or more roommates, suitemates, or housemates has medical concerns that would limit their ability to live with an ESA, Disability Resources and Housing Services will engage in an interactive process with the student and roommate(s) to try to find a housing solution which will meet everyone's needs. It is highly recommended that the student and their roommates, suitemates, or housemates discuss in detail the student's desire to apply for an ESA and reach an agreement prior to the student beginning the approval process.
6. Once the ESA Request Form, [ESA Roommate Acknowledgement](#), and Care Plan are completed fully and received by Disability Resources, these documents will be reviewed, and the student will be notified within two weeks of the decision. The ESA may be approved, denied, or further documentation may be required. Disability Resources may request that the student sign a FERPA release allowing Disability Resources to obtain further information from the mental health professional.
7. Students must submit the completed ESA Request Form, [ESA Roommate Acknowledgement](#), and Care Plan to the Office of Disability Resources at least thirty days before they plan to bring an ESA to campus. This will allow adequate time for review of documentation or acquisition of additional information if needed. Under no circumstance should a student take possession of an ESA before they have received approval in writing from the Office of Disability Resources. If a student is found to have an animal in on-campus residence, other than those permitted by the [CMU Pet Policy](#) without having received this written approval, they will be required to remove the animal until/unless such approval is granted. If the lack of compliance results in a serious incident, the owner may be required to remove the ESA within forty-eight hours of the first infraction, with no warning provided. If the incident is related to a violation of CMU's

community standards, policies, or regulations, the incident may be referred to the Office of Community Standards and Integrity for review, and disciplinary action may be taken against the owner if appropriate.

8. If the ESA is approved by Disability Resources, Disability Resources will notify the student and Housing Services of the approval. The student's housefellow or another staff member from the Office of Residential Education will meet with the student to review the ESA policy and discuss details of the animal in residence.
9. Within thirty days of the animal residing in on-campus housing, the student must submit proof of a completed wellness examination by a licensed veterinarian. The exam must include proof of all legally required and veterinarian-recommended vaccinations, spaying/neutering (as applicable), and a review of the animal's age, weight, and overall health.