

Guidelines for Service and Emotional Support Animals on Campus

The university permits service animals and, in certain circumstances, emotional support animals on campus in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations, university policy and the guidelines below.

These guidelines do not apply to animals involved in authorized research approved by the university's Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee; K-9 animals (police dogs); or animals used for events on campus or involved in an approved university-sponsored activity, including pet therapy and other wellness activities.

I. Service Animals on Campus

A. Service Animals in Campus Spaces Open to the General Public and/or Students

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (“ADA”), service animals are permitted anywhere on campus that is open to the general public or students, including in campus buildings and in University Housing. However, service animals may not be permitted in certain areas where they may pose an unreasonable risk to health or safety, such as animal research laboratories, vivaria, certain clinical settings, food preparation areas, areas in which special precautions are required (e.g., wearing masks, gloves and gowns), or any other area designated by Safety, Health, Environment & Risk Management.

Individuals with a disability are generally not required to register or submit a request for reasonable accommodation in order to bring a service animal on campus or into campus buildings (see Section I.B below for employees). However, individuals with a disability may request other reasonable accommodations pursuant to [HOOP 101, Disability Accommodation](#).

If it is not readily apparent that an individual has a disability and that the animal is a service animal, the individual may only be asked:

- (1) whether the animal is required because of a disability; and
- (2) to explain the work or task that the animal has been trained to perform.

The animal will not be required to demonstrate this task, and no documentation of training will be requested.

B. Service Animals in the Workplace

Employees who require the use of a service animal in the workplace (in areas not open to the general public or students) should make a request for an accommodation pursuant to [HOOP 101, Disability Accommodation](#).

C. Service Animals in University Housing

Individuals who live in University Housing must submit a request [form](#) with appropriate documentation to the Office of the Director, University Housing for a service animal to reside in University Housing. The Office of the Director, University Housing will work with the university's Disability Coordinator to consider the request. If the request is denied, the individual may appeal the decision to the university's Disability Coordinator as provided in [HOOP 101, Disability Accommodation](#).

II. Emotional Support Animals on Campus

In accordance with federal law, including the ADA, Fair Housing Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, an individual with a disability may be permitted to have an emotional support animal in his or her University Housing residence if the animal is necessary to afford the individual with a disability an equal opportunity to use and enjoy the dwelling, and the animal provides emotional support that alleviates one or more of the identified symptoms or effects of an existing disability. However, emotional support animals only approved to live in University Housing are not permitted in other university buildings.

An emotional support animal is prescribed to an individual with an existing disability by a healthcare or mental health professional and is an integral part of that individual's treatment process. An individual requesting an emotional support animal as a reasonable accommodation must provide documentation from his or her physician, psychiatrist, social worker or other mental health professional specifying that: (1) the individual has an existing disability and (2) that the animal provides emotional support that alleviates one or more of the identified symptoms of that disability. While emotional support animals are frequently dogs or cats, other animals may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

A request for an emotional support animal in a University Housing residence will be treated as a request for reasonable accommodation. Individuals with a disability who wish to have an emotional support animal within their University Housing residence must submit a request [form](#) with appropriate documentation to the Office of the Director, University Housing. The Office of the Director, University Housing will work with the university's Disability Coordinator to consider the request. If the request is denied, the individual may appeal the decision to the university's Disability Coordinator as provided in [HOOP 101, Disability Accommodation](#).

Employees who wish to bring an emotional support animal into the workplace should make a request for an accommodation pursuant to [HOOP 101, Disability Accommodation](#). Students who wish to bring an emotional support animal into campus buildings other than University Housing should make a request for an accommodation pursuant to [HOOP 101, Disability Accommodation](#).

Individuals who wish to bring an emotional support animal into a UT Physicians clinic or The University of Texas Harris County Psychiatric Center should refer to their respective policies.

III. Rules Applicable to All Service Animals and Emotional Support Animals

A. Owner Responsibility for Animals

The owner of an animal is responsible for the animal's behavior at all times and will be held financially liable for any damages caused by the animal. A service or emotional support animal must be under the complete control of the owner at all times and present no hazard to people or property. The owner is also responsible for providing for the care or supervision of a service or emotional support animal, including cleaning up after the animal. All animals must be housebroken. Any animal that poses a direct threat to the health and safety of others or of substantial physical damage to university property or the property of others will not be permitted. All service and emotional support animals brought to campus must have a current, valid license and all vaccinations required by local or state law. Owners are responsible for complying with all applicable city ordinances pertaining to animals. Individuals are not permitted to bring their service or emotional support animal into University Housing or the workplace (or other campus buildings in the case of emotional support animals) until their accommodation request is approved.

B. Restraint of Animals

Except when inside an individual's University Housing residence, a service or emotional support animal must be either:

- (1) securely confined in a cage or similar restrictive conveyance; or
- (2) secured to a leash, cord, chain or similar direct physical control of a maximum length of six feet, which is restrained by a person.

If a restraint interferes with a service or emotional support animal's work, or an individual's disability prevents use of these restraints, the individual must maintain control of the animal through voice, signal or other effective controls. Animals are not to be left tethered to a stationary fixture or tree or otherwise be left unattended on campus.

C. Removal of Animals

The university may remove any animal from university property if the safety of others, destruction of property or disturbance warrants such a removal. The removal of the animal, including service and emotional support animals, and any necessary cleaning, repairs and/or pest control will be done at the expense of the owner. The owner will also be responsible for any injuries or damages caused by the animal. In addition, the owner may be subject to disciplinary action and/or eviction from University Housing.

IV. Contacts

For additional information regarding service and emotional support animals on campus, contact the university's [Disability Coordinator](#) at call@uth.tmc.edu or 713-500-CALL(2255). Additional information is available at <https://www.uth.edu/hr/department/equal-opportunity/>. For

information about service and emotional support animals in University Housing, contact Auxiliary Enterprises at 713-500-8400. Additional information is also available via the University Housing webpage at <https://www.uth.edu/housing/>.