

Service Animal, Emotional Support Animal Policy

I. Purpose and Scope

Greensboro College is committed to providing access and accommodations to students with disabilities. This policy establishes the standards and procedures for students to bring Service Animals and Emotional Support Animals (ESAs) to campus and/or reside with them in campus housing.

II. Definitions

Service Animal

A Service Animal is a dog (or in limited cases, a miniature horse) that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks directly related to an individual's disability. Examples include:

- Guiding individuals with visual impairments.
- Alerting individuals with hearing loss to sounds.
- Retrieving objects or opening doors.
- Providing physical support or mobility assistance.

Service Animals may accompany their student anywhere on campus students are generally allowed to go, including classrooms, administrative buildings, dining halls, libraries, and residence halls. Emotional support, comfort, and companionship are not considered trained tasks.

Falsely representing a pet or other animal as a Service Animal is a violation of the Student Conduct Code and may result in disciplinary action. Such misrepresentation also violates North Carolina law.

Emotional Support Animal (ESA)

An Emotional Support Animal is an animal that provides comfort, companionship, or therapeutic benefits that alleviate one or more symptoms or effects of a disability. Unlike Service Animals, ESAs are not granted general access and are typically only permitted in campus residential settings. ESAs are not limited to dogs and miniature horses.

Falsely representing a pet or other animal as an ESA is a violation of the Student Conduct Code and may result in disciplinary action. Such misrepresentation may also violate North Carolina law.

Pet

A pet is an animal kept for ordinary companionship or recreation that is not considered necessary due to a disability. Pets are not covered under this policy and are not permitted on campus or in other College buildings.

Disability

A disability is a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life

activities, including but not limited to walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, caring for oneself, or working.

III. Campus Access

Service Animals are permitted in all areas of campus where the student is allowed to go. However, access may be restricted in certain settings, including but not limited to: research laboratories, mechanical rooms, custodial closets, areas requiring protective clothing, food preparation areas, or rooms containing medical, biological, or hazardous materials. Access to these areas may be granted on a case-by-case basis in consultation with relevant College offices.

ESAs are only permitted within a student's assigned residence hall room or suite and in designated outdoor areas for toileting or transport off campus. ESAs are **prohibited from all other College buildings, property, and facilities**, including classrooms, libraries, dining halls, common areas, indoor and outdoor athletics facilities, and administrative offices.

IV. Procedures for Approval

Service Animals

Students with Service Animals are encouraged to register their animal with the College for safety purposes and to facilitate the Service Animal's ability to be on campus. However, students planning to reside in College housing with a Service Animal must register the animal with the Office of Academic Accessibility (OAA) **at least 30 days prior** to the start of the academic year or intended move-in date. Registration is requested to assist the College in providing appropriate housing accommodations and support. Students who miss the 30-day deadline may still submit requests, which will be reviewed on a rolling basis and accommodated as space and resources allow.

Service Animals do not need to be approved as an accommodation, but the student must register the animal with the OAA to have the Service Animal in housing. However, if the student's need is not obvious, College staff may ask:

1. Is this animal required due to a disability?
2. What work or task has the animal been trained to perform?

Emotional Support Animals

ESAs are not permitted on campus unless specifically approved by OAA. Students seeking to bring an ESA to campus housing must submit a request for a reasonable accommodation to the Office of Academic Accessibility **no later than July 1** for fall semester move-in, and **December 1** for spring semester move-in. Requests submitted after these deadlines will be reviewed on a rolling basis.

The following must be submitted:

- A completed Verification Form.
- Documentation from a licensed health care provider (e.g., physician, psychologist, psychiatrist, nurse practitioner), disability status information from a government agency or housing program, information from a peer support group or caseworker familiar with the ESA, or other reliable information that includes:
 - The student's name.
 - The information provider's relationship with the student.
 - The description of the animal requested (type, breed, age, etc.)
 - A description of the physical or mental impairment.
 - Whether the impairment substantially limits at least one major life activity or major bodily function.
 - The relationship between the limitation and the need for the ESA. The need for the ESA must go beyond being merely a pet, and must show that the ESA does work, aids, or performs at least one task that benefits the student because of the disability or because the ESA provides therapeutic emotional support to alleviate a symptom or effect of the disability.
 - A signature, date, contact information, and professional licensing information, where applicable.
- Current vaccination and veterinarian records for the ESA, including a certification of health.

Inadequate, vague, or boilerplate documentation (such as that purchased from online registries) will not be accepted.

An interactive dialogue will take place between OAA and the student to evaluate whether permitting the student to maintain an ESA in housing is a reasonable accommodation in addition to other potential accommodations that can be made to address the student's disability. The OAA or Residence Life may place other reasonable conditions or restrictions on the OAA depending on the particular facts and circumstances.

Greensboro College will deny requests for ESAs when:

- The animal poses a direct threat to others' health or safety.
- The animal has a history of uncontrolled or aggressive behavior.
- The animal would cause significant property damage or disruption.
- The documentation is unreliable or incomplete.

If approved, the ESA must be contained within the student's living areas at all times, except as required for transportation off-campus or for toileting. While outside the student's housing, the animal must be controlled by leash, harness, or in a carrier. When transporting the animal outside housing, the student must carry an approved accommodation letter from OAA documenting that the animal is approved.

V. Owner Responsibilities

Owners of ESAs and Service Animals:

- Ensure the animal is housebroken, clean, and under control (no excessive barking, wandering, displaying aggression) at all times.
- Keep the animal on a leash, harness, or in a carrier unless it would interfere with tasks.
- Provide regular veterinary care.
- Maintain up-to-date vaccination records.
- Clean up animal waste immediately and dispose of it properly.
- Ensure the animal is groomed and free from fleas, ticks, and other pests.
- Be financially responsible for any damages or pest treatment caused by the animal beyond normal wear and tear.
- Comply with all local licensing and vaccination requirements.
- If applicable, notify OAA if the animal is no longer residing in campus housing.
- The student is solely responsible for the animal's day-to-day care. This responsibility may not be delegated to another student or to any Greensboro College employee. If another student is found to be routinely providing care for someone else's animal, both students may be subject to disciplinary action.
- In the event of an absence longer than 24 hours, the student must make arrangements for the care of the animal. These arrangements must not involve other on-campus students or Greensboro College employees.

VI. Emergency Planning

The student must provide a local emergency contact who agrees to retrieve and care for the animal within **24 hours** in the event the student is unable to do so (e.g., hospitalization or isolation). If the emergency contact is unavailable, the College may arrange for temporary boarding or removal of the animal at the owner's expense. The College is not responsible for the well-being of the animal; all care for the animal is the responsibility of the student. In the event of a campus emergency, the College is not responsible for retrieving or caring for the animal.

VII. Conflicting Health Conditions

Students with documented medical conditions impacted by animals (e.g., severe allergies, asthma) should submit appropriate documentation to the Office of Academic Accessibility. The College will make every effort to resolve such conflicts through reassignment or other accommodations for all parties involved.

VIII. Removal of an Animal

A Service Animal or ESA may be removed from campus or housing if:

- The animal poses a direct threat to health or safety.
- The animal causes substantial property damage.
- The student fails to meet cleanliness, supervision, or care standards.
- The animal is not housebroken.
- The animal is disruptive, aggressive, or out of control.
- The student receives at least two noise complaints.
- The presence fundamentally alters the educational environment or housing operations.

- The student violates this Policy.

Removal decisions will be made by OAA in consultation with Residence Life, Public Safety, and, where appropriate, other College officials. If the animal is removed, the student will nonetheless be required to fulfill housing, academic, and other obligations as applicable.

IX. Complaints, Appeals, and Grievances

Students whose requests are denied may submit an appeal to the OAA. Appeals will be reviewed promptly through an interactive process. Third-party complaints (e.g., roommates, neighbors, faculty) about Service Animals or ESAs should also be directed to OAA.

X. Notice to Others

The presence of the animal may be noticed by others living, visiting, and/or residing on campus, and Greensboro College staff may acknowledge the presence of the animal and may inform third parties that, under certain circumstances, animals are permitted to assist persons with disabilities.