



University of Cincinnati
Accessibility Resources Policy
on Service Animals and
Assistance Animals

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Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for the presence of Service Animals and Assistance Animals at the University of Cincinnati (“University”). The University is committed to providing services and accommodations to students with disabilities. The University recognizes that, at times, a student may need an Assistance Animal as an accommodation or may have a Service Animal. The University’s Office of Accessibility Resources (“Accessibility Resources”) is the primary office responsible for managing the presence of Service Animals and Assistance Animals of students in non-public areas of campus and University housing. Accessibility Resources will engage in an interactive dialogue for individualized consideration of each student request. This policy is subject to change, as circumstances require.

Part I: Definitions

Service Animal: A dog individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability, and meets the definition of "service animal" under the Americans with Disabilities Act (“ADA”) and the Ohio Revised Code. The work or tasks performed must be directly related to the individual's disability. Under particular circumstances set forth in the ADA regulations, a miniature horse may qualify as a Service Animal. The crime deterrent effects of an animal's presence and the provision of emotional support, well-being, comfort, or companionship (e.g. Assistance Animals) do not constitute work or tasks for purposes of this definition.

Assistance Dog in Training: As set forth by the Ohio Revised Code, a dog under the care of a trainer who is being trained to provide work or tasks for an individual who is blind, deaf or hearing impaired, or mobility impaired. A dog undergoing puppy rearing focused on socialization and/or basic obedience training is not considered an Assistance Dog in Training.

Assistance Animal: A companion animal that provides physical assistance, emotional support, and other kinds of assistance but does not perform work or tasks that would define it as a Service Animal. An Emotional Support Animal is a type of Assistance Animal.

Handler: A student with a disability who receives assistance from a Service Animal, a personal care attendant who handles the Service Animal for a student with a disability, or a student trainer of an Assistance Dog in Training.

Owner: A student with a disability who has been approved by Accessibility Resources to have an Assistance Animal in University housing.

University housing: All housing managed, controlled, or owned by the University.

Part II: General Rules Pertaining to Service Animals and Assistance Animals on Campus

Access to Campus Areas

The University generally permits Service Animals in all areas the Handler is allowed. A Service Animal may be restricted from areas of the University when consistent with other University policies, state, or federal laws or regulations. Examples of these areas may include:

- Food preparation areas;
- Animal research facilities and grounds;
- Medically sensitive patient and clinic areas; and
- Biologically sensitive or hazardous research sites.

If a Service Animal is restricted from certain areas, the Handler with a disability must be provided equivalent accommodations provided by the Service Animal. Accessibility Resources will evaluate and provide reasonable accommodations for the Handler with a disability.

Non-student Handlers with Service Animals visiting the University are welcome in all areas open to the general public, including specific events held in reserved classrooms or lecture halls.

Owners of an Assistance Animal living in University housing are allowed to have their Assistance Animal in their assigned rooms, and in certain areas of their specific University housing building, such as hallways, elevators, and stairwells. Owners may not take Assistance Animals approved solely as a housing accommodation into other student rooms in University housing, student lounges or common areas in University housing, laundry facilities, dining centers, or any other campus building (e.g. classroom, lecture hall, recreation center, etc.).

General Responsibilities of Handlers and Owners in University Housing

Any Handler or Owner with a Service Animal or Assistance Animal in University housing must abide by local, state, and federal ordinances, laws, and/or regulations pertaining to licensing, vaccination, and other requirements for animals. It is the Handler or Owner's responsibility to know and understand these ordinances, laws, and regulations. The University has the right to require documentation of compliance with vaccination requirements and state dog license requirements. The University may not ask for documentation or evidence that a Service Animal is licensed as, or has been trained to be, a Service Animal.

Handlers and Owners with Service Animals or Assistance Animals living in University housing may not transfer daily care responsibilities for their Service Animal or Assistance Animal to another person. Such care includes feeding, exercising/walking, waste clean-up, and supervision of the Service Animal or Assistance Animal outside of the Handler or Owner's assigned residence hall room. In a suite-style residence hall, the common area of the suite is outside the Handler or Owner's assigned private room and therefore requires the Handler or Owner to supervise their Service Animal or Assistance Animal in that area.

Overnight care of the Service Animal or Assistance Animal in University housing by another person in the absence of the Handler or Owner is prohibited. The Service Animal or Assistance Animal must be taken out of University housing whenever the Handler or Owner does not remain overnight in their assigned University housing room, including, but not limited to, the Handler or Owner's weekend travel plans or mid-semester breaks, and all other designated periods when students leave University housing overnight.

The University may charge a Handler or Owner for any damage caused by their Service Animal or Assistance Animal beyond reasonable wear and tear to the same extent that other individuals are charged for damages. The Handler or Owner's living accommodations in University housing may be inspected for fleas, ticks, or other pests if necessary as part of the University's standard or routine inspections. If fleas, ticks, or other pests are detected through inspection, the residence will be treated using fumigation methods by a University-approved pest control service. The Handler or Owner will be billed for the expense of any pest treatment above and beyond standard pest management in the residence halls. The University reserves the right to bill the Handler or Owner's account for unmet obligations under this provision.

Handlers and Owners are expected to convey the presence of a Service Animal or Assistance Animal to current or future roommate(s) in order to facilitate a discussion regarding the animal. Accessibility Resources, Housing, and Residential Education and Development (RED) do not contact roommates to disclose the forthcoming presence of Service Animals or Assistance Animals.

Emergency Situations

In the event of an emergency evacuation, the Handler or Owner is responsible for the safe removal of their Service Animal or Assistance Animal. University personnel are not required to provide care or food for any Service Animal or Assistance Animal including, but not limited to, removing the Service Animal or Assistance Animal during an emergency evacuation (e.g., fire alarm). Emergency personnel will determine whether to remove a Service Animal or Assistance Animal and are not responsible for the care, damage to, or loss of the Service Animal or Assistance Animal. If an emergency occurs and the Handler or Owner is not with their Service Animal or Assistance Animal, then the situation may necessitate leaving the Service Animal or Assistance Animal behind until the area is safe for return by proper authorities.

Service Animal or Assistance Animal Waste Clean-Up

1. Outdoor Waste

Cleaning-up after the Service Animal or Assistance Animal is the sole responsibility of the Handler or Owner. The Handler or Owner must abide by the following guidelines:

- Always take the Service Animal or Assistance Animal to an appropriate, designated area for it to relieve itself.
- Always carry equipment sufficient to clean-up the Service Animal or Assistance Animal's feces whenever the animal is outdoors on campus.
- Properly dispose of outdoor waste in appropriate containers.
- Contact designated staff if arrangements are needed to assist with clean up. Any cost incurred for doing so is the sole responsibility of the Handler or Owner.

2. Indoor Waste

A Handler or Owner must notify University personnel immediately if their Service Animal or Assistance Animal has an accident and leaves any bodily fluids or other matter indoors in any location on campus other than their designated University housing room. The Handler or Owner may not clean this up themselves due to environmental safety standards, but they must remain onsite until a University employee arrives to address the situation. The University reserves the right to charge Owner or Handler for reasonable cleaning expenses.

Conflicting Disabilities

Some people may have serious allergic reactions to animals causing substantial impairment, which qualifies as a disability. The University will consider the needs of both the person with the disabling animal allergy and the Handler or Owner in meeting its obligations to reasonably accommodate all students with disabilities and to resolve the problem as efficiently and expeditiously as possible.

Students requesting animal-related allergy disability accommodations should contact Accessibility Resources.

Part III: Service Animals

Inquiries Regarding Service Animals

A Handler, whether or not they're living in University housing, is strongly encouraged to schedule an appointment to meet with Accessibility Resources to discuss issues regarding animal control, waste clean-up, and other responsibilities. The Handler should bring their Service Animal with them to the scheduled meeting.

The University will not ask about the nature or extent of a person's disability, but may make the following inquiries to determine whether an animal qualifies as a Service Animal:

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

The University cannot require documentation of proof that the animal has been certified, trained, or licensed as a Service Animal. Generally, the University may not make any inquiries about a Service Animal when it is readily apparent that the animal is trained to do work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability (e.g., the dog is observed guiding an individual who is blind or has low vision, pulling a person's wheelchair, or providing assistance with stability or balance to an individual with an observable mobility disability).

Accessibility Resources can provide resources to assist in addressing inquiries from faculty and staff about Service Animals. A Handler may meet with Accessibility Resources if they wish to discuss specific concerns.

Specific questions related to the use of Service Animals on the University's campus or in University housing by employees should be directed to University Human Resources at 513-556-6381.

Notice Requirement to have a Service Animal in University Housing

A Handler who resides, or will be residing, in University housing and wants to have a Service Animal live with them must schedule an appointment to meet with Accessibility Resources to determine if the animal qualifies as a Service Animal pursuant to the definition provided in this policy at least 14 days prior to the date the student would like to move the Service Animal into University housing.

If the animal meets the definition of a Service Animal, Accessibility Resources will:

1. Discuss and review restrictions on animal control, waste clean-up, and other responsibilities;
2. Help the student complete the Service Animal Residential Contract; and
3. Provide the Handler with the Veterinarian Verification Form

All Handlers who make a formal request to have a Service Animal in University housing must have a current housing placement for the term (building and room number), or have applied to [University Housing](#) for the upcoming term. Accessibility Resources cannot review a housing request for a Service Animal if neither one of these conditions are met.

After the Handler has met with Accessibility Resources and completed the required paperwork, Accessibility Resources will notify the Handler, Housing Services, and Resident Education and Development (RED) by email that the Service Animal has been approved to reside in University housing. The Service Animal is not permitted to reside in University housing until after Accessibility Resources sends this email notice of approval.

Handlers with a Service Animal in University housing are required to maintain all legally-mandated licenses for the Service Animal and ensure they are kept current. The Handler must provide a copy of the license(s) to the University upon request. NOTE: Handler is not required to have or keep evidence that their Service Animal is or has been trained to be a service animal.

The Handler is allowed to keep their Service Animal as long as they reside in University housing for the designated term. The Handler must notify Accessibility Resources in writing at accessresources@uc.edu if the Handler no longer has the Service Animal, the Handler leaves University housing, or the Handler replaces their Service Animal.

Renewal of Service Animal Housing Approval

The Service Animal Residential Contract coincides with the current academic year's housing contract. Therefore, Handlers who have been approved to have a Service Animal in University housing are required to complete and sign a new Service Animal Residential Contract and Veterinarian Verification Form for each academic year they wish to continue having the Service Animal in University housing. All renewal forms are required before moving into University housing for a new academic year and are available from Accessibility Resources in person, or by contacting the office at 513-556-6823 and/or email: accessresources@uc.edu

Responsibilities of Handlers

1. Service Animal Control

The Service Animal must respond to voice or hand commands at all times, and be under the full control of the Handler. Consistent with applicable federal and state laws, a Service Animal should be on a leash or harness at all times, unless the Handler's disability prohibits the use of a leash or harness, or the use of a leash or harness would interfere with the Service Animal's safe, effective performance of required work or tasks. In this case, the Service Animal must be under the effective control of the Handler by voice control, hand signals, or other effective means.

Any Handler approved to have a Service Animal in University housing must meet the requirements for animal health and behavior set forth in this policy, in addition to those provided for in their Housing Agreement and the Service Animal Residential Contract.

2. Service Animal Etiquette

Service Animal should be generally unobtrusive to other individuals and to the University's learning, living, and working environments unless it is part of the service, work, or task that is being provided to the Handler. Thus, the Handler must ensure that the Service Animal does not:

- Actively seek the attention of other people;
- Sniff people, dining tables, or food service bars, or the personal belongings of others;
- Display any behaviors or noises that are disruptive to others, unless it is part of the service, work, or task that is being provided to the Handler;
- Block an aisle or passageway for emergency/fire egress;
- Cause physical harm to humans or other animals;
- Destroy property of the University, staff, faculty, or other students.

Each Handler is responsible for any damage or injuries caused by their Service Animal. Accordingly, Handlers must take appropriate precautions to prevent property damage or injury. The cost of care, arrangements, and responsibilities for the well-being of a Service Animal are the sole responsibility of the Handler at all times.

Handlers residing in University housing must maintain a healthy and clean living environment for their Service Animal. Any environment or noise issues brought to the Handler from Resident Education and Development staff, Housing Services, or other University officials must be addressed immediately by the Handler.

Removal of Service Animals

A Handler may be directed to remove their Service Animal for any of the following reasons:

- **Out of Control Service Animal:** A Service Animal that is out of control and the Handler does not take effective action to control it. If the improper behavior happens repeatedly, the Handler may be prohibited from bringing the Service Animal into any University facility until the Handler can demonstrate that they have taken significant steps to mitigate the improper behavior.
- **Non-housebroken Service Animal:** A Service Animal that is not housebroken.

- **Direct Threat:** A Service Animal that is a substantial and direct threat to the health and safety of individuals. This may occur as a result of a very ill animal, a substantial lack of cleanliness of the animal, or the presence of an animal in a sensitive area like a medical facility, certain laboratories, or mechanical or industrial areas.

The University will determine whether a Service Animal must be removed on a case-by-case basis. When a Service Animal is removed, Accessibility Resources will work with the Handler to find alternative opportunities to participate in the service, program, or activity without having the Service Animal on the premises.

Public Etiquette towards Service Animals

Faculty, staff, students, and visitors should avoid the following behaviors:

- Petting a Service Animal, as it may distract them from the task at hand;
- Feeding a Service Animal;
- Deliberately startling a Service Animal; or
- Separating or attempting to separate a Handler from their Service Animal.

Part IV: Assistance Animals

While it is University policy that pets are not permitted in University housing, the University will consider a request by a student with a disability to have an Assistance Animal (including an Emotional Support Animal) in University housing as a reasonable accommodation.

Request Procedures for Approval to have an Assistance Animal in University Housing

A student who resides, or will be residing, in University housing and is requesting to have an Assistance Animal is required to complete the online Assistance Animal Request Form and the Assistance Animal Health Professional Form at least 21 days prior to the date the student would like to move the Assistance Animal into University housing.

All students who make a formal request for an Assistance Animal must have a current housing placement for the term (building and room number), or have applied to [University Housing](#) for the upcoming term. Accessibility Resources cannot review a request for an Assistance Animal if neither one of these conditions are met.

All requests for an Assistance Animal must be verified by a qualified health practitioner and deemed necessary to mitigate symptoms imposed by the disability (See Assistance Animal Health Professional Form). If the Assistance Animal is approved as a reasonable accommodation, the Owner will need to do the following:

- Schedule a meeting with Accessibility Resources to discuss restrictions on access to non-public areas of campus, animal control, waste clean-up, and other responsibilities;

- Complete the Assistance Animal Residential Contract;
- Complete the Assistance Animal Veterinarian Verification Form; and
- Complete the Assistance Animal in University Housing Accommodation Form.

After the Owner has completed the required paperwork and met with Accessibility Resources, Accessibility Resources will notify the Owner, Housing Services, and Resident Education and Development (RED) by email that the Assistance Animal has been approved. The Assistance Animal is not permitted in University housing until after Accessibility Resources sends this email notice of approval. Emotional distress resulting from having to give up an animal because of a “no pets” policy does not qualify a student for an accommodation. Any student who brings a pet into University housing in violation of the housing pet policy before receiving approval from Accessibility Resources to have an Assistance Animal is in violation of the “no pets policy,” as stated in the [Housing Agreement Terms and Conditions](#), and will be referred to the office of Student Conduct and Community Standards.

Accessibility Resources does not control approvals for Assistance Animals in non-University housing. Students in non-University housing should contact their landlord for approval.

Specific questions related to an employee’s request to have an Assistance Animal in University housing can be directed to University Human Resources 513-556-6381.

Term of Approval for Assistance Animal

The Owner is allowed to keep their Assistance Animal as long as they reside in University housing for the designated term. The Owner must notify Accessibility Resources in writing at accessresources@uc.edu if the Owner, or the Owner’s health practitioner, no longer deems the Assistance Animal as necessary, or the Owner leaves University housing.

Owners who replace their Assistance Animal (i.e., death, age, etc.) must contact Accessibility Resources and complete a new Assistance Animal Veterinarian Verification Form and Assistance Animal University Housing Accommodation Form. Once all required paperwork is completed, Accessibility Resources will notify the Owner, Housing Services, and Resident Education and Development (RED) by email that the Assistance Animal has been approved.

Renewal of Assistance Animal Approval

The Assistance Animal Residential Contract coincides with the current academic year’s housing contract. Therefore, Owners who have been approved to have an Assistance Animal in University housing are required to complete a new Assistance Animal Residential Contract, Assistance Animal Veterinarian Verification Form, and Assistance Animal University Housing Accommodation Form for every academic year they wish to continue having the Assistance Animal. All forms are required before moving into University housing for a new academic year and are available from Accessibility Resources in person, or by contacting the office at 513-556-6823 and/or email: accessresources@uc.edu

Responsibilities of Owners

Any Owner approved to have an Assistance Animal in University housing must meet the requirements for animal health and behavior set forth in this policy, in addition to those provided for in their Housing Agreement and the Assistance Animal Residential Contract. An Owner is responsible for the Assistance Animal's behavior and for ensuring its presence is in authorized areas only.

An Assistance Animal must be contained within the Owner's assigned room or common areas of their specific University housing building, except when the Owner must take their animal outside for natural relief. The Owner is responsible for ensuring that the Assistance Animal is contained in the Owner's assigned room when the Owner is not present. Owners must maintain a healthy and clean living environment for their Assistance Animal. Any environment or noise issues brought to the Owner by Resident Education and Development (RED) staff or Housing Services must be addressed immediately by the Owner.

When the Assistance Animal is outside the Owner's assigned room, it must be in an animal carrier or controlled by leash or harness. No Owner shall permit their Assistance Animal to run loose or be at large on University premises. If an Assistance Animal is found running at large, the Assistance Animal is subject to capture, confinement, and immediate removal from University housing.

Owners must decline all invitations from others to take their Assistance Animal into non-authorized rooms or residence halls. Owners must also decline all invitations to take their Assistance Animal into non-public campus areas, including invitations from faculty to bring the Assistance Animal to class lectures or labs.

Removal of an Assistance Animal

Notwithstanding the restrictions set forth herein, the Assistance Animal must be properly housed and restrained, or otherwise under the dominion and control of the Owner at all times. An Owner may be directed to remove their Assistance Animal for the following reasons:

- **Out of Control Assistance Animal:** An Assistance Animal that is out of control and the Owner does not take effective action to control it. If the improper behavior happens repeatedly, the Owner may be prohibited from keeping the Assistance Animal in University housing until the Owner can demonstrate that they have taken significant steps to mitigate the improper behavior.
- **Unreasonable Disruptions:** An Assistance Animal whose behavior, noise (including when the Owner is not present), odor, and waste exceeds reasonable standards for a well-behaved animal and/or creates unreasonable disruptions for other residents.
- **Non-Housebroken Assistance Animal:** An Assistance Animal that is not housebroken. When the Assistance Animal is one that is kept in a cage or other small enclosure, the Owner may

be directed to remove the Assistance Animal if the Owner repeatedly fails to maintain a clean, healthy environment for it.

- **Direct Threat:** An Assistance Animal that is a substantial and direct threat to the health and safety of individuals. This may occur as a result of a very ill animal, threatening or aggressive behavior of the animal, or a substantial lack of cleanliness of the animal.

Part V: Grievances

Any Handler or Owner who is dissatisfied with a decision concerning a Service Animal or Assistance Animal may appeal the decision through the [Disability Grievance Procedure](#). The Executive Director for Accessibility is available for consultation at 513-556-9791.

Part VII: Student Conduct Referral Process

A Handler or Owner who fails to meet or violates the applicable rules and requirements of this policy may be referred to the office of Student Conduct and Community Standards.

Part VIII: Contacts

Accessibility Resources

Phone: (513) 556-6823

Email: AccessResources@uc.edu

[Accessibility Resources Website](#)

Address: 210 University Pavilion
2618 McMicken Cir, Cincinnati OH 45221

Housing Services

Phone: 513-556-6461

Email: uchousing@uc.edu

[Housing Service Website](#)

Address: 2911 Scioto Lane
Cincinnati, OH 45221

Resident Education & Development

Phone: 513-556-6476

Email: resedev@uc.edu

[Resident Education & Development Website](#)

Address: 2911 Scioto Lane
Cincinnati, OH 45221

Human Resources

Phone: 513-556-6381

[Human Resources Website](#)

Address: 340 University Hall
51 Goodman Drive
Cincinnati OH 45221-0039

Athletics (Facilities & Operations)

Phone: 513-556-2141

Address: Fifth Third Arena
2700 O'Varsity Way
Cincinnati OH 45221