

Pennsylvania College of Technology

Procedure Statement

Title: Service and Emotional Support Animals

Number: PR 7.26

Approved by:
Presidential Action

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Persons/Departments Affected:
All Employees and Students

Responsible Department:
People & Culture, Disability and Access Resources

Definitions:

Disability- A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, a record of such impairment, or being regarded as having such impairment.

Service Animal – A dog that has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability. In some cases, a miniature horse may be permitted as a Service Animal. Other animals, whether wild or domestic, do not qualify as a Service Animal. The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the student/individual's disability. Examples of work or tasks include, but are not limited to, assisting individuals who are blind or have low vision with navigation and other tasks, alerting individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to the presence of people or sounds, providing non-violent protection or rescue work, pulling a wheelchair, assisting an individual during a seizure, alerting individuals to the presence of allergens, retrieving items such as medicine or the telephone, providing physical support and assistance with balance and stability to individuals with mobility disabilities, and helping persons with psychiatric and neurological disabilities by preventing or interrupting negative behaviors. The crime deterrent effects of an animal's presence and the provision of emotional support, well-being, comfort, or companionship do not constitute work or tasks for the purposes of this definition. Service Animals may be excluded in areas where the presence of a service animal fundamentally alters the nature of the program or activity or is disruptive.

Emotional Support Animal – Is an assistance animal that an individual with a disability requires *in the residence halls* in order to have an equal opportunity to use and enjoy their residence/dwelling, or to participate in the housing service or program. The animal provides passive emotional support that alleviates the impact of a disability. There must be an identifiable relationship between the individual's disability and the assistance the animal provides.

Emotional Support Animals are domesticated animals that are traditionally kept in the residence. Reptiles, barnyard animals, monkeys, kangaroos, and

other non-domesticated animals are not considered common household animals.

Service Animal in Training – Under Pennsylvania law, individuals with disabilities who use Service Animals, or trainers of such animals, are entitled to equal opportunity in all aspects of employment and education, as well as equal access to and treatment in all public accommodations, and any housing accommodation or commercial property without discrimination. Employers are not required to accommodate Emotional Support Animal trainers. Puppy rearing (for dogs typically under six months of age) focused on socialization in general obedience training is not typically considered to be in training. Services animals in training must be engaged in learning service tasks.

Pet – A pet is an animal kept for ordinary use and companionship. A pet is not considered a Service or Emotional Support Animal. Pets are prohibited in campus buildings and residence halls. Refer to Policy [P7.18](#) – Pets on Campus.

Owner – The owner is the student/employee with a disability who is utilizing a Service Animal or a student/employee with a disability who has received approval for the use of an Emotional Support Animal as a reasonable accommodation on campus.

Procedure:

I. Requesting Accommodations for Use of a Service Animal

Student Requests

Student requests for the use of a Service Animal should be directed to Disability and Access Resources.

- a. Students requesting use of a Service Animal on campus, including classrooms, are encouraged, but not required, to contact Disability and Access Resources indicating the need for a Service Animal. As part of a formal accommodation, Penn College may make two inquiries to determine whether an animal qualifies as a Service Animal if the student's disability is not readily apparent and/or the Service Animal's task related to that student's disability is not readily apparent: 1) Is the animal required because of a disability?; and 2) What work or task the animal has been trained to perform.
- b. Determination of reasonable accommodation will include, but not be limited to, consideration of the following: Does the animal pose a direct threat to the health and safety of others?; Would the animal pose an undue financial and administrative burden?; or Would the animal fundamentally alter the nature of any of the College's programs or operations?

Employee Requests

Employee requests for the use of a Service Animal should be directed to People & Culture.

- a. Employees requesting use of a Service Animal as a formal accommodation should complete the Reasonable Accommodation Request Form, in accord with Policy [P3.02.26](#), Disability Accommodations.
- b. As part of a formal accommodation, the employee may be asked to provide a description of their disability and documentation that establishes the relationship between the individual's disability and the support the Service Animal provides.
- c. Determination of a reasonable accommodation will include, but not be limited to, consideration of the following: Does the animal pose a direct threat to the health and safety of others?; Would the animal pose an undue financial and administrative burden?; or Would the animal fundamentally alter the nature of any of the College's programs or operations?

II. Requesting Accommodations for Use of an Emotional Support Animal

Student Requests

Student requests for the use of an Emotional Support Animal must be directed to Disability and Access Resources. Only students living in the Residence Halls may request use of an Emotional Support Animal. If students request an Emotional Support Animal to accompany them anywhere else on campus, the request must be treated as any request for a reasonable accommodation.

- a. Students requesting use of an Emotional Support Animal must complete a self-disclosure form indicating the need for an Emotional Support Animal.
- b. If the disability is not readily observable to form the basis for an Emotional Support Animal request, the student will be required to provide documentation from a qualified third-party (psychiatrist, psychologist, or clinical licensed social worker, etc.) who has personal knowledge and is providing treatment to the student to assist Disability and Access Resources in determining that the student has a disability, that the animal is necessary for the individual to have an equal opportunity to use and enjoy the residence hall, and that there is an identifiable relationship between the disability and the assistance that the animal provides. Disability and Access Resources will also consider information shared on the student's self-disclosure and information from

federal, state, or local government agencies offering disability benefits and/or services.

- c. Determination of reasonable accommodation will include, but not be limited to, consideration of the following: Does the animal pose a direct threat to the health and safety of others?; Would the animal pose an undue financial and administrative burden?; or Would the animal fundamentally alter the nature of any of the College's programs or operations?

Employee Requests

Employee requests for the use of an Emotional Support Animal must be directed to People & Culture. Only employees living in the Residence Halls may request use of an Emotional Support Animal.

- a. Employees requesting use of an Emotional Support Animal must complete the Reasonable Accommodation Request Form, in accordance with Policy [P3.02.26](#), Disability Accommodations.
- b. The employee will be required to provide documentation from a treating physician or qualified mental health provider in order to assist People & Culture in determining that the employee has a disability, that the animal is necessary for the individual to have an equal opportunity to use and enjoy the residence hall, and that there is an identifiable relationship between the disability and the assistance that the animal provides.
- c. Determination of a reasonable accommodation will include, but not be limited to, consideration of the following: Does the animal pose a direct threat to the health and safety of others?; Would the animal pose an undue financial and administrative burden?; or Would the animal fundamentally alter the nature of any of the College's programs or operations?

III. Owner Responsibilities

Employees and students are responsible for the supervision, care and maintenance of their Service or Emotional Support Animal. Service and Emotional Support Animals must be housebroken.

Owners of Service Animals must:

- a. Service Animals must comply with all applicable Pennsylvania laws including licensing, ID tags, vaccinations, rabies, and other requirements. Animals must have up to date vaccination records and clean bill of health from a licensed veterinarian on file with Disability and Access Resources for students and People & Culture for employees.
- b. Be in full control of the animal at all times. The animal must be under the owner's physical control with a harness, leash, or other tether unless

the owner is unable because of disability to use these, or if the use of these would interfere with the Service Animal's safe, effective performance of work or tasks. If so, the Service Animal must be otherwise under the owner's control (voice control, signals or other effective means).

Ensure the animal's behavior must not be disruptive to its surroundings or other members of the College community. Disruptive behavior includes, but is not limited to, jumping on people, barking, growling, taking food from dining area tables, or taking personal belongings of individuals other than the owner.

- c. Always carry equipment and bags sufficient to clean up the animal's waste and immediately remove and dispose of the waste. Owners who are not physically able to pick up and dispose of the waste are responsible for making all necessary arrangements for assistance.
- d. Keep the animal clean, well groomed, and free of pests. If College facilities are used to bathe the animal, the owner will clean the area when done.
- e. Ensure the health, safety, and humane treatment of the animal.
- f. If part of a formal accommodation, submit an annual proof of immunizations.
- g. Ensure the animal wears a commonly recognized identification symbol when in public.

Owners of Emotional Support Animals must:

- a. Emotional Support Animals must comply with all applicable Pennsylvania laws including licensing, ID tags, vaccinations, rabies, and other requirements. Animals must have up to date vaccination records and clean bill of health from a licensed veterinarian on file with Disability and Access Resources for students or People & Culture for employees.
- b. Be in full control of the animal at all times.
- c. Not leave Emotional Support Animals alone for extended periods of time, either unattended or to be cared for by someone other than the owner.
- d. Always carry equipment and bags sufficient to clean up waste and immediately remove and dispose of the waste. Owners who are not physically able to pick up and dispose of the waste are responsible for making all necessary arrangements for assistance.

- e. Ensure the animal's behavior must not be disruptive to its surroundings or other members of the College community. Disruptive behavior includes, but is not limited to, jumping on people, barking, growling.
- f. Employ regular cleaning and grooming habits for the animal. If College facilities are used to bathe the animal, the owner will clean the area when done.
- g. Ensure the health, safety, and humane treatment of the animal.
- h. Submit an annual proof of immunizations.

The owner is responsible for any damage to College property or individual property incurred by a Service or Emotional Support Animal and will be billed for the expense of any damage to College property, including pest treatment. College personnel shall intervene if the animal is found unattended, is in need of care, or is causing a disturbance.

IV. Individuals Affected by Service or Emotional Support Animal

Students

Students with a medical condition(s) who are affected by animal dander (i.e. respiratory diseases, asthma, severe allergies) are asked to contact Disability and Access Resources if they have a health or safety related concern about exposure to an animal in a College facility and require an accommodation.

Within the residence halls, the health and well-being of all roommates, suitemates, and building occupants will be considered. Roommates/suitemates will be made aware of the planned presence of an animal in their residence by Residence Life staff. They will be asked to sign an acknowledgement stating that they understand they will be living in the presence of an animal and are aware of how to address concerns if needed.

Employees

Employees with a medical condition(s) who are affected by animal dander (i.e. respiratory diseases, asthma, severe allergies) are asked to contact People & Culture if they have a health or safety related concern about exposure to an animal in a College facility and require an accommodation.

V. Complaints Regarding Service or Emotional Support Animals

Students

Any member of the College community may submit a complaint about a service or assistance animal, identifying one or more concerns in the areas identified in Policy [P7.26](#) Section X.

- a. Concerned students should contact College Police or Disability and Access Resources.

A statement will be taken to initiate an investigation.

- b. An investigation will be completed by the appropriate department and determination will be made with respect to an alleged violation of the owner responsibilities. The determination will be provided to the owner and the individual submitting the complaint.
- c. If the investigation determines that the guidelines have been violated by a student, the matter will be referred for violation of the Student Code of Conduct.
- d. A violation of the guidelines may lead to the exclusion of the animal.

Employees

Any member of the College community may submit a complaint about a service or assistance animal, identifying one or more concerns in the areas identified in Policy [P7.26](#) Section X.

- a. Concerned employees should contact College Police or People & Culture. A statement will be taken to initiate an investigation.
- b. An investigation will be completed by the appropriate department and determination will be made with respect to an alleged violation of the owner responsibilities. The determination will be provided to the owner and the individual submitting the complaint.
- c. If the investigation determines that the guidelines have been violated disciplinary action may result in accord with the appropriate personnel policy.
- d. A violation of the guidelines may lead to the exclusion of the animal.

Revision History:

Date: 01/2025 Changes made to name of People & Culture, clarifications to reflect most current guidance from OCR, HUD, and recent case law.

Date: 02/2022 Changes made to Disability and Access Resources department name.

Date: 07/2019 Procedure edited for clarity; Change title of Procedure to Service and Emotional Support Animals

Date: 07/2014 Procedure implemented

Cross References:

Disability Accommodations Policy, [P3.02.26](#)

Performance Improvement Policy, [P3.04.01](#)

Pets on Campus Policy, [P7.18](#)

Service and Emotional Support Animals Policy, [P7.26](#)