

Residence Life & Disability Support Services

Emotional Support Animal Policy

Policy Statement

It is the policy of the University of Wisconsin Superior that assistance animals (hereafter includes emotional support animals) are generally permitted in the residence halls on the University of Wisconsin- Superior campus as described below.

Definition

"Emotional Support Animals" are a category of domesticated animals (dogs, cats, rabbits, guinea pigs, and hamsters) that may provide necessary emotional support to an individual with a mental or psychiatric disability that alleviates one or more identified symptoms of the individual's disability, but which are not considered Service Animals under the ADA and UW-Superior's Service Animal Policy (OP-14-16-1). Some Emotional Support Animals are professionally trained, but in other cases, Emotional Support Animals provide the necessary support to individuals with disabilities without any formal training or certification.

The question in determining if an Emotional Support Animal will be allowed in university housing is whether the Emotional Support Animal is necessary because of the individual's disability to afford the individual an equal opportunity to use and enjoy university housing and its presence in university housing is reasonable. However, even if the individual with a disability establishes necessity for an Emotional Support Animal and it is allowed in university housing (not in public areas in Residence Life such as laundry rooms, kitchens, study lounges and the Community Center), an Emotional Support Animal is not permitted in other areas of the University (e.g., academic buildings, athletic buildings/facilities, classrooms, labs, dining, library, etc.). When approved, one ESA (Emotional Support Animal) will be permitted to reside in university housing per owner.

"Service animals" are defined as dogs (and in specific cases miniature ponies) that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities. Examples of such work or tasks include guiding people who are blind, alerting people who are deaf, pulling a wheelchair, alerting, and protecting a person who is having a seizure, reminding a person with mental illness to take prescribed medications, calming a person with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) during an anxiety attack, or performing other duties. Service animals are working animals, not pets. The work or task a dog has been trained to provide must be directly related to the person's disability. Dogs whose sole function is to provide comfort, protection, or emotional support do not qualify as service animals

Determination

UW-Superior provides reasonable accommodation for persons requesting an emotional support animal in the residence halls. The determination of whether an emotional support animal will be permitted in the residence halls is made on a case-by-case basis through an interactive process involving the individual requesting the accommodation and relevant campus personnel. In all cases, the needs of the individual are balanced with the impact of an animal on other residence hall students, patrons, or programs.

For an emotional support animal to be considered a reasonable accommodation in the residence halls, there must be current verification of need from a physician, psychiatrist, social worker, or other

healthcare or mental health professional provided to the Disability Support Services Coordinator. This form is provided to the student requesting accommodation so they can obtain the appropriate documentation from their care provider. **If it is the intent of the applicant to acquire an animal to serve as an ESA, the animal must be utilized by the applicant for a MINIMUM of 30 days PRIOR to moving the animal into university housing.** At the end of the 30 days, the applicant must provide updated documentation from their treatment professional confirming the ESA is having the desired effect for which it was prescribed. At that time, the application process can be finalized.

Process

There are five steps to the process:

1. Students requesting emotional support animals or service animals in the residence halls must begin by becoming registered with Disability Support Services via UWS Accommodate. Students should go to www.uwsuper/disability and complete the intake link at “First-Time Disability Support Services Users (Students Only).” If a student is already registered with Disability Support Services, they can complete a semester-specific request by logging into UWS Accommodate at the “Returning Disability Support Services Users (Student and Faculty).” Students must request “emotional support animal in residence halls” or “Service animal or service animal in training” accommodation.
2. Students will be emailed the Assistance Animal Medical or Mental Health Provider Form. The first page must be completed by the student, then sent to the provider with whom you have made the decision you need this accommodation. The provider must complete the form and return it to Disability Support Services (instructions within the form).
3. The Disability Support Services Coordinator will review the student’s information and the provider’s information and determine if an emotional support animal or service animal or service animal in training accommodation is appropriate. Students will be notified via their UW-Superior email account.
4. If approved, the Disability Support Services Coordinator will communicate this accommodation with appropriate Residence Life staff and the Dean’s Council.
5. The student must arrange a meeting with the Disability Support Services Coordinator to discuss Emotional Support Animal Policy and care procedures. Students can set this meeting up by emailing disability@uwsuper.edu. The student will also need to meet with their Hall Manager or Assistant Hall Manager to discuss the Emotional Support Animal in the Residence Halls. Once these items are completed the Emotional Support Animal can move to campus.

Exclusions

Emotional support animals are only allowed within a person’s dwelling in the residence halls, or other areas on campus where domesticated animals are permitted. Please reference Wis. Admin. Code UWS §18.08(1) for specific information. Emotional Support animals may be excluded from all campus areas including the residence halls if:

1. The size of the animal is too large for available assigned housing space;
2. The animal's presence would force another individual from individual housing (e.g., serious allergies);
3. The animal's presence otherwise violates individuals' right to peace and quiet enjoyment;
4. The animal is not housebroken or is unable to live with others in a reasonable manner;

5. The animal's vaccinations are not up-to-date;
6. The animal poses or has posed in the past a direct threat to the individual or others such as aggressive behavior towards or injuring the individual or others;
7. The animal causes or has caused excessive damage to housing beyond reasonable wear and tear.
8. The animal's risk of diseases, parasites or other hygienic concerns could impact the individual or others health and safety.

Requirements for Emotional Support Animals & Service Animals or Service Animals in Training

All University of Wisconsin- Superior residence hall students who are provided an emotional support animal or service animal or service animal in training accommodation must comply with all state laws and local animal ordinances, as well as all Residence Hall policies and guidelines including, but not limited to, the following:

1. Resident must provide appropriate food, water, and shelter for emotional support animal or service animal or service animal in training;
2. Residents are solely responsible for cleaning up and disposing of all animal waste (both indoors and outdoors) in a timely, effective fashion; cat litter boxes may not be placed directly on carpet and must have a protective layer between the box and the carpet that extends beyond the parameters of the litter box;
3. Residents are responsible for any odors, noise, damage, or other conduct of the animal that disturbs or damages the premises;
4. Any damage to room furnishings, carpeting or other finishes will result in assessment of replacement costs of property to the student hosting the animal;
5. Host roommate desires and needs will be factored into the decision regarding an emotional support animal or service animal or service animal in training. Roommate allergies and other considerations may result in a reassignment of student seeking an emotional support animal or service animal or service animal in training placement;
6. Emotional support animals or service animals or service animals in training may not be left overnight in University Housing to be cared for by any individual other than the Owner. If the Owner is to be absent from the residence hall overnight or longer, the animal must accompany the Owner. The Owner is responsible for ensuring that the animal is contained, as appropriate, when the Owner is not present during the day while attending classes or other activities. If an animal is left alone in a room or suite overnight and is not being properly cared for, Residence Life will attempt to contact the resident or the emergency contact to remove the animal. If this is not successful, Residence Life may notify the Superior Police Department and seek to have the animal removed. All costs associated with removing the animal shall be the responsibility of the resident;
7. Residents must comply with all required state and municipal license requirements, including current identification and vaccination tags when applicable. Assistance dogs must wear a current rabies vaccination tag. Residents must provide requested verification of all veterinarians recommended vaccinations as well as proof of absence of communicable diseases, fleas, and parasites (annually or as needed, thereafter);

8. Residents must not allow emotional support animals or service animals or service animals in training to disturb, annoy, or cause any nuisance to other members of the campus community;
9. Emotional support animals are not permitted in any public, common spaces within the residence halls, including community/shared bathrooms, lounges, laundry rooms, kitchens, indoor recreational rooms, computer labs and study rooms;
10. Emotional support animals are not permitted in other residence halls besides the one assigned to the owner;
11. Residents are solely responsible for the care and supervision of emotional support animals, service animals or service animals in training. Residence Life assumes no responsibility for the care of a resident's emotional support animal, service animal or service animal in training;
12. Emotional support animals are only allowed in areas of campus where domesticated animals are permitted. Please reference Wis. Admin. Code UWS § 18.08(1);
13. Violation of the above requirements will result in revocation of emotional support animal agreement.