

CSUF Emotional Support Animals in Student Housing Policy and Procedures

CSUF policy prohibits animals in Student Housing except as otherwise permitted by University policy or approved as a reasonable accommodation. Disability Support Services (DSS) will consider requests from individuals with disabilities seeking an exception to this policy to keep an Emotional Support Animal (ESA) in Student Housing.

Unauthorized animals may not be kept in Student Housing before an accommodation request has been reviewed and approved. Animals brought into Student Housing prior to receiving approval must be removed immediately and remain off campus. Failure to remove an unauthorized animal may constitute a violation of Student Housing policy and may delay or otherwise affect the accommodation review process.

ESA Request Process

On-campus residents requesting an ESA should follow DSS's accommodation request process. Ideally, ESA requests should be submitted prior to receiving a housing assignment. Requests submitted fewer than sixty (60) days before the intended move-in date may limit CSUF's ability to implement the accommodation during that academic year. If the need for an accommodation arises after an individual has moved into Student Housing, the resident should contact DSS and complete the accommodation request process as soon as possible. CSUF cannot guarantee that accommodation needs can be met during the academic year in which the request is received.

DSS requires documentation from a reliable third party verifying that the resident has a disability and that the requested animal provides emotional support or other assistance that alleviates one or more symptoms or effects of that disability. A reliable third party is a California-licensed provider who maintains a therapeutic relationship with the student, is familiar with the student's disability and the disability-related need for the requested accommodation and is not related to the student. Examples of reliable third parties include, but are not limited to, physicians, physician assistants, psychiatrists, psychologists, marriage and family therapists, licensed professional clinical counselors, and licensed clinical social workers.

Students approved to have an ESA in Student Housing must provide evidence of the continued need for the animal and current vaccination and health records for each academic year they reside in housing.

ESA as a Reasonable Accommodation

In determining whether an ESA is appropriate in Student Housing, DSS and Student Housing may consider factors including whether the animal:

- Poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others;
- Has caused substantial property damage beyond normal wear and tear;
- Is appropriate in size and temperament for the assigned housing environment;
- Creates an unavoidable conflict with another resident's disability-related needs (e.g., severe allergies);
- Unreasonably interferes with another resident's use and enjoyment of Student Housing;
- Is housebroken and able to reside appropriately in a communal living setting; or
- Exhibits behaviors that result in excessive noise, disruption, or other disturbances.

Students must provide documentation demonstrating that the ESA meets all applicable state and local requirements related to vaccinations, health certifications, licensing, and rabies vaccination before the animal is permitted in Student Housing.

Generally, only one approved ESA will be permitted per residential unit.

Students must authorize DSS to share information regarding the approved accommodation, as necessary with Student Housing personnel, health and safety officials, and potential or assigned roommates. Student Housing may also place a notification marker at the entrance of the housing unit to alert emergency and maintenance personnel to the presence of an approved animal.

CSUF reserves the right to reassign a resident with an approved ESA to another housing unit when necessary to implement the accommodation or address operational needs.

Owner Responsibilities

Owners approved to have an ESA in Student Housing are responsible for complying with all applicable Student Housing policies and the following requirements:

- **Keep the ESA in approved areas.** ESAs must remain within the owner's assigned living space except for natural relief or exercise. When outside the assigned space, the animal must be secured in a carrier or on a leash no longer than six feet. ESAs are not permitted in other CSUF facilities unless otherwise authorized by law.
- **Maintain control of the ESA.** The animal must always be under the owner's control, and safely contained within the owner's private sleeping space when the owner is absent. Animals found roaming freely may be removed from Student Housing.
- **Comply with applicable laws.** Owners are responsible for meeting all licensing, vaccination, and other legal requirements, and must provide documentation upon request.
- **Provide proper care.** Owners are responsible for the ESA's care and well-being, and must provide Student Housing with an off-campus emergency contact. Student Housing staff are not responsible for the care of approved animals.
- **Do not leave the ESA unattended overnight.** If the owner is away overnight or longer, the animal must accompany the owner or be cared for off campus by an appropriate caregiver.
- **Maintain cleanliness and accept responsibility for damages.** Owners must promptly dispose of animal waste, keep their living space clean, report any damage caused by the ESA, and assume

financial responsibility for cleaning, repairs, pest treatment, or other costs beyond normal wear and tear.

- **Notify DSS of changes.** Owners must notify DSS in writing if the ESA is no longer needed or no longer residing in Student Housing. Approval applies only to the specific approved animal and is not transferable.

Removal of an Emotional Support Animal

Student Housing may require the removal of an ESA if the animal poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others, causes substantial property damage, fundamentally alters Student Housing operations, creates a significant disruption within the residential community, or if the owner fails to comply with this policy.

Removal decisions will be based on an individualized assessment of the specific circumstances and behavior of the animal and resident, in consultation with DSS and other appropriate parties, and will not be based on assumptions, stereotypes, or generalized fears about a particular type or breed of animal. Residents may appeal the removal of an ESA through the applicable University grievance procedures. If an ESA is removed, the resident remains responsible for fulfilling the terms of the housing contract.

Emotional Support Animal (ESA) Acknowledgement and Release of Information Consent Form

This agreement serves as an addendum to the Student Housing License Agreement.

I understand and agree with the following:

- ☐ I have read and understand the CSUF Emotional Support Animals in Student Housing Policy and Procedures and agree to comply with all requirements applicable to Emotional Support Animals (ESAs).
- ☐ I understand that failure to comply with the policy may result in the removal of my ESA from Student Housing. I further understand that I remain responsible for fulfilling all housing, academic, and other University obligations for the remainder of my housing contract.
- ☐ I authorize Disability Support Services (DSS) and Student Housing to disclose information regarding the presence of my approved ESA, as necessary, to individuals who may be impacted by the accommodation, including Student Housing personnel, health and safety officials, and potential or assigned roommates and neighbors. I understand that this information will be shared solely to facilitate the accommodation and address any related concerns. I release and hold harmless California State University, Fullerton from any liability arising from such disclosure.
- ☐ I understand that the presence of my ESA may be observed by other individuals residing in or visiting Student Housing and that University staff may acknowledge the presence of the animal and explain that, under certain circumstances, ESAs are permitted as disability-related accommodations.
- ☐ I understand that approval of my ESA applies only to the current housing contract period and must be renewed with each new housing license agreement.

Emergency Contact for Animal Care

In the event of an emergency or unforeseen circumstance in which I am unable to care for my ESA, I authorize the University to contact the individual listed below to retrieve and care for the animal.

Name: _____

Relationship to Student: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Student Acknowledgement

By signing this form, I understand my rights and responsibilities related to maintaining an approved ESA in Student Housing.

Student Name: _____ CWID: _____

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____