

Service Animals and Emotional Support Animals (ESA)

Service Animals

Service animals are trained to provide a specific service or services to an individual with a disability. Examples include a dog that guides an individual who is blind, alerts a deaf or hard of hearing person when a doorbell rings, or picks up and hands a pen to a person with a mobility impairment. With a limited exception for miniature horses, a service animal can only be a dog. Generally, service animals are permitted to go anywhere on campus that is open to students.

A college may recommend to a student (the handler) that he/she register a service animal with the Disability Support Services (DSS) office but may not require the handler to do so. Nor may a college require documentation for review by the DSS office before the dog is permitted on campus.

An individual with a service animal is not required to obtain permission to bring the animal on campus. Service animals are not designated on a student's Memorandum of Accommodations (MOA). Students who use a service animal may or may not have any other accommodations.

When a student appears with a service animal, the college may ask only two questions:

- Is the dog required because of a disability?
- What work or task has the dog been trained to perform?

These are the only two questions that may be asked. You may not inquire as to the nature of the student's disability. You may not attempt to verify or confirm that the animal performs the service indicated by the handler.

The handler is expected to maintain control of the animal at all times. If the presence of a service animal causes a disruption, contact the DSS counselor at your campus as soon as possible to enlist their help in resolving the matter.

If there are any other problems or concerns about having a service animal present – i.e. allergies or fear of the animal - contact the DSS counselor at your campus as soon as possible to enlist their help in resolving the matter.

Emotional Support Animals

An emotional support animal, by its mere presence, is used to ameliorate or reduce the limitations associated with a disability. For example, the companionship of a large German Shepard may reduce the anxiety level of a war veteran to such a degree that coming to college becomes possible when it would not otherwise be. Emotional support animals are not trained to perform a specific task.

An individual who wishes to bring an emotional support animal on campus **must obtain approval** through the college's Request for Accommodations process. Emotional support animals **MUST** be designated on a student's Memorandum of Accommodations and the MOA must be presented before the animal is allowed in the classroom. There should be no further discussion about the purpose or function of the animal.

As with a service animal, the handler is expected to maintain control of the ESA at all times. If the presence of the animal causes a disruption, or if there are other concerns, contact the Disability Support Services counselor at your campus as soon as possible to enlist their help in resolving the matter.