

Documentation Guidelines for Emotional Support Animal (ESA) and Support Animals

The University of Utah engages in an interactive process with students who are requesting an ESA in their University housing. The Center for Disability & Access reviews the requests in consideration of the University obligations under the Fair Housing Act (FHA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Students may request a reasonable accommodation for housing including Housing and Residential Education (HRE) facilities and University Sunnyside Apartments.

Documentation is required for the request from the student's healthcare or mental healthcare team to consider the impact of the animal on the student's disability and relief of the symptoms of the disability. The Center for Disability & Access (CDA) staff use information from the providers to make a decision about the request.

To begin the request for accommodation, please complete the following steps:

- 1) **Enter** intake information (name, contact information, etc.) through the student portal.
- 2) **Upload** supporting documentation in the student portal.
 - Documentation should be provided from a third party on official letterhead including: the name, title, professional credentials, address, phone number, signature, and date of the report
 - Providers often include information such as the nature and duration of the therapeutic relationship with the student, number of visits, diagnostic methodology used, and outcomes of interventions
 - Information provided in the documentation establishes evidence of a disability. Under FHA, Section 504, and the ADA a disability means a functional limitation of one or major life activities and how the limitation experienced is beyond that which the average person could expect to experience
 - Submitted documentation must also demonstrate how the assistance or support of the animal alleviates symptoms presented by the disability
 - Providers should also include any additional rationale or clarification the University may need to understand the intent and support of the assistance animal
- 3) **Review** with an Accessibility Consultant. Please note that a meeting is **NOT** required with an Accessibility Consultant. It may be helpful however in providing information to the consultant. The consultant will review the request with or without a meeting to determine the appropriate accommodation. Please contact CDA to review your documents if you choose not to meet with a Consultant.
- 4) **Approval** when appropriate. The Accessibility Consultant will provide a letter to HRE or Sunnyside Apartments. Students can also access the letter in the portal.

Requests for accommodations are processed as quickly as possible. Please note during peak semester times the process may require additional review time.

Additional Information

- Approved Assistance Animals are subject to the UofU Policy 2-231 for Control of Animals on Campus as defined at <https://regulations.utah.edu/administration/3-231.php>.

- Exotic or wild animals may not be allowed under the state, county and city laws. Additional information regarding Service and Assistance Animals can be found at <https://oeo.utah.edu/about-us/faq-support-animals.php>.
- The Assistance Animal owner or custodian must maintain sanitary conditions and clean any animal excretions (or eliminate waste).
- An approval for an Assistance Animal only applies to housing and does not permit owner to bring animal to other areas on campus where pets are normally prohibited
- Student/Owner is responsible for any and all damage to apartments or University property associated with the Assistance Animal.