

Emotional Support Animal – Documentation Guidelines

Documentation submitted to the Center for Disability & Access must indicate that a specific condition exists and that the identified condition substantially limits one or more major life activity (e.g. walking, seeing, speaking, hearing, breathing, learning, etc.). A diagnosis of a condition does not automatically qualify a student for an emotional support animal. **The documentation for a psychological condition must demonstrate that the condition rises to the level of a disability.**

The documentation should include the following specific components:

- **Format** – typed/printed on official letterhead, dated, and signed from a licensed and qualified professional (e.g. psychologists, neuropsychologists, psychiatrists, clinical social workers, licensed counselors, psychiatric nurse practitioners, and other relevantly trained healthcare professionals qualified to make such diagnoses).
- **Diagnosis** – the specific DSM-V coded diagnosis is preferred.
- **Current Impact** – a summary of current symptoms, severity (frequency and duration), and impact of the condition.
- **Limitations** – a statement regarding the functional limitations of the condition on major life activities.
- **Accommodation** – documentation must state that a specific animal is needed in a particular location (i.e. a statement specifying a cat is necessary in student housing), including the rationale.
- **Documentation must be recent and specific.** Documentation should be specifically written to provide support for an emotional support animal and must be less than six months old.
- Psychological **diagnoses documented by family members will not be accepted** due to professional and ethical considerations even when the family members are otherwise qualified by training and licensure/certification.

Please also note the following statements regarding emotional support animals:

- Approved Emotional Support Animals must be under the control of their owner/guardian at all times. University policy requires pets to be on a leash and may not be left unattended outside. Animals may be excluded if they pose a direct threat to the health and/or safety of others. Emotional Support Animals that are not under the control of their

owner/guardian or who disrupt other guests may be considered a nuisance and will be asked to leave. Nuisance behavior could be any of the following examples or any other behavior that disrupts other guests, patrons, students, or employees. Examples: barking, growling, making noise, giving off offensive odors, chewing.

- Emotional Support Animals are subject to the U of U Policy 3-231 for Control of Animals on Campus as defined at <http://www.regulations.utah.edu/administration/3-231.html> and must be in compliance with state, county, and city laws regarding animals.
- The Emotional Support Animal owner or custodian must maintain sanitary conditions and clean any animal excretions (or eliminate waste) in public (or surrounding areas).
- An approval for an Emotional Support Animal only applies to housing and does not permit owner to bring animal to other areas on campus where pets are normally prohibited.
- Owner is responsible for any and all damage to apartment or University property associated with the Emotional Support Animal.