

SERVICE ANIMALS – HANDLERS

Section: Assignments

Policy: University Housing accommodates service animals in accordance with University Policy.

Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to identify procedures associated with requests for service animals in University Housing. This policy is meant to be housing-specific and works in support of the campus [Service Animals and UGA Animal Policy](#).

Scope: Applies to all residents (e.g., students, staff and guests of University Housing) with approved service animals who reside in University Housing.

Definition: According to the campus [Service Animals and UGA Animal Policy](#), a service animal is defined as any dog (or miniature horse) that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual or other mental disability. The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the handler's disability. A handler is the individual with a disability, as defined under federal and state law, who uses a service animal to perform a work or task related to the individual's disability.

Procedure:

- I. Residents who are accompanied by service animals must notify the associate director for assignments and contracts in writing at housing@uga.edu prior to the animal residing in University Housing.
- II. Residents are not required to register the service animal with the Disability Resource Center; however, they are encouraged to do so.
- III. Upon receiving notification, the associate director for assignments and contracts or their designee will send the resident a copy of the policy and a service animal verification form for review and signature.
- IV. The verification form asks the resident to answer two questions: 1) Is the dog a service animal required because of a disability? and 2) What work or task has the dog been trained to perform? The associate director for assignments and contracts may consult with the Disability Resource Center to confirm the description of work/tasks fits within the ADA definition for a service animal.
- V. The resident will complete and submit the verification form to the associate director of assignments and contracts and provide an electronic photo of the animal. The associate director will update the file on the shared drive, add the information to The Dawg House and notify appropriate housing staff.
- VI. Staff may not request any documentation for the dog, require that the dog demonstrate its task, or inquire about the nature of the person's disability.
- VII. If the assignment is in a double room, apartment or suite where a roommate will also reside or is currently residing, the Housing Assignments Office will notify the roommate that an animal, including the type of animal, will reside in the room. No

information as to the purpose or duties of the service animal will be disclosed to the roommate.

VIII. The resident must notify the Housing Assignments Office in writing (housing@uga.edu) when the service animal is no longer in residence or if a different service animal is used.

IX. Resident Responsibilities:

- a. All service animals must be treated humanely, including being housed in acceptable conditions (e.g., appropriately sized crate or carrier, ability to move freely in the assigned space). If mistreatment is reported or if the resident is not adhering to any section of this policy, the appropriate housing staff member will review the report with the resident and the resident may be referred to the Equal Opportunity Office and/or through a University student conduct process and/or a housing contract review.
- b. The resident must complete and email the verification form to the associate director for assignments and contracts at housing@uga.edu prior to the animal residing with the resident.
- c. The resident is responsible for ensuring the service animal does not interfere with the daily operations of the residential facility or cause difficulties for other residents who reside and work there.
- d. The resident agrees that sensitivity to individuals with allergies and to those who fear animals is important to ensure the integrity of the academic and residential community.
- e. The resident is responsible for properly containing and disposing of all animal waste. Outdoor animal waste must be immediately retrieved by the resident, placed in a plastic bag and securely tied before being disposed of in outside trash dumpsters.
- f. The resident agrees to continue to abide by all University Housing policies and procedures in accordance with the University Housing contract and Community Guide, including those regarding room condition and damages.
- g. The service animal must be under the direct control of the resident on leash/harness upon leaving a resident's room or apartment. If the disability is such that a leash or harness cannot be used, the resident must have full control of the animal at all times. The service animal must be always escorted by the resident. The service animal must not be left within the resident's living space should the resident leave their campus residence. If the resident is not leaving the building, the service animal may be left alone, crated, in the resident's room.
- h. The resident must ensure their animal is clean and well-groomed and kept in a healthy environment.
- i. Per university policy, the resident shall be liable for any and all resulting costs when an animal causes damage to University Housing facilities or property or causes injury to persons.

X. Animal Health and Behavior:

- a. Service animals will be permitted provided their behavior, noise, odor and waste does not exceed reasonable standards for a well-behaved animal and that these factors do not create unreasonable disruptions to the residential community.
- b. Service animals must be in compliance with state and local laws regarding health, vaccination and care for the service animal.

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