

# Notification Regarding Service Animals in University Housing

## Overview of the Process for Notifying the University of Intent to Utilize a Service Animal in University Housing

The University of Pittsburgh permits students with a disability to utilize a Service Animal in University housing.

This document outlines the process to notify the University of your intent to utilize a Service Animal in University housing. This document does NOT pertain to a Support Animal or Emotional Support Animal.

### What is the difference?

- Service Animals are defined as dogs that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities. These tasks can include things like pulling a wheelchair, guiding a person who is visually impaired, or alerting a person who is having a seizure. The tasks a service dog can perform are not limited to this list. However, the work or task a service dog does must be directly related to the person's disability. Service Animals may accompany persons with disabilities into places that the public normally goes.
- A Support Animal is an assistance animal, other than a service animal, that does work, performs tasks, provides assistance, and/or provides therapeutic emotional support for individuals with disabilities. An Emotional Support Animal (ESA) is a type of Support Animal. An ESA provides emotional support and comfort to individuals with psychiatric disabilities and other mental impairments. A Support Animal, including an ESA, is typically a dog, cat, small bird, rabbit, hamster, gerbil, other rodent, fish, turtle, or other small, domesticated animal. A Support Animal need not be trained to perform tasks for a person with a disability. Students with questions about Support Animals should contact the Office of Disability Resources and Services using the appropriate campus contact information below.

To notify the University of your intent to utilize a Service Animal in University Housing the student may complete this form. This form is offered as a guide, however, and DRS will review all forms of documentation and/or requests submitted.

The information completed on this form will be reviewed to determine whether the service animal is trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of a student with a disability

In situations where the need for a Service Animal is readily apparent, the student must notify DRS of the presence of the Service Animal, but shall not be required to provide additional information related to the Service Animal or take additional action other than acknowledging and complying with the responsibilities set forth below.

In situations where the need for a Service Animal is not readily apparent, DRS will request information from the student, as necessary, as part of an interactive process, in order to determine that:

- The Service Animal is a dog required because of a disability; and
- The Service Animal has been trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities.

If the student informs DRS that the Service Animal is a dog required because of a disability and provides information related to the work or tasks the Service Animal has been trained to perform, the student shall not be required to provide additional information related to the Service Animal or take additional action other than acknowledging and complying with the responsibilities set forth below.

**The University will use good faith efforts to provide the student, in writing, with the student's right to have the Service Animal accompany and/or live with the student on campus within 2 weeks of its receipt of information appropriate to confirm the animal is a Service Animal.**

If the University determines that a student is not eligible for a Service Animal or the specific Service Animal requested, the University will provide the student with written notification of the denial and the reasons for the denial. The University will provide written notification of the grievance procedures that the student may use to challenge a denial.

All students utilizing a Service Animal will be required to acknowledge and comply with the Service Animal Owner's Rights and Responsibilities, as outlined below. These rights and responsibilities will be reviewed with the student by DRS.

For more information about having an animal on campus, see *University of Pittsburgh Office of Disability Resources and Services Guidelines Regarding Animals on University Property*.

## Submission Information

This form should be completed and submitted to the appropriate office, based on a student's campus of attendance. Information about campus specific submissions can be found in the chart below:

<i>Campus</i>	<i>Contact Information</i>
University of Pittsburgh Oakland Campus	Disability Resources and Services 412-648-7890 <a href="mailto:drsrecep@pitt.edu">drsrecep@pitt.edu</a>
Pitt Bradford	Disability Resources and Services 814-362-7609 <a href="mailto:mclh71@pitt.edu">mclh71@pitt.edu</a>
Pitt Greensburg	Disability Resources 724-836-7098 <a href="mailto:los3@pitt.edu">los3@pitt.edu</a>
Pitt Johnstown	Office of Health & Counseling Services 814-269-7119 <a href="mailto:OHCS@pitt.edu">OHCS@pitt.edu</a>

## Student Information – to be completed by the student

Student Name

University ID

Campus

Email

Home Address

Local Address

Home Phone

Local Phone

Is the service animal a dog that is required because of a disability?

- ☐ NO  
☐ YES

What work or task has the service animal been trained to perform?

I have read this document and understand the conditions outlined.

Student Signature

Date

## SERVICE ANIMAL OWNER'S RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A student who is approved for a Service Animal will be required to meet with DRS staff to review and agree to the following requirements. Failure to follow these requirements may result in the University requesting the removal of the Service Animal from University housing.

### Student's Responsibilities as the Animal Owner:

- The student is responsible for the behavior of the animal at all times while on University property.
- The student will provide DRS with a photograph of the animal.
- The animal shall wear a collar with basic identification information at all times.
- The student must abide by current city, county, and state ordinances, laws, and/or regulations pertaining to licensing, vaccination, and other requirements for animals. The student must know and understand these ordinances, laws, and regulations. The University has the right to require reasonable documentation of compliance with such ordinances, laws, and/or regulations, which may include a vaccination certificate or a veterinarian's statement regarding the animal's health. The University reserves the right to make reasonable requests for documentation showing that the animal meets these requirements.
- The student is required to immediately clean up after and properly dispose of the animal's feces in a safe and sanitary manner. The animal must be housebroken and kennel trained.
- In the case of an emergency, the University is not responsible for evacuating the animal. The student is responsible for providing DRS with an emergency contact for the animal that does not reside in University housing.
- The student's living accommodation must be kept reasonably clean and free of animal odors.
- The student is financially responsible for any and all costs associated with the care, maintenance and removal of the animal. This includes any costs of damage to University property caused by the animal, including but not limited to cleaning and repairs beyond reasonable wear and tear, and pest control. The University shall have the right to bill the student's account for unmet obligations under this provision.
- The student is responsible for maintaining control of the animal at all times. If an animal causes a threat to the health or safety of others, the student shall immediately take steps to maintain or control the animal (e.g., keeping the animal in a secure enclosure). In the event the student cannot control the animal's behavior, the student shall remove the animal from the area.
- The student agrees to abide by all equally-applicable policies that are unrelated to the student's disability such as assuring that the animal does not unduly interfere with the routine activities of the residence or cause unreasonable difficulties for other students residing in University housing. If an animal's behavior creates a significant disturbance to University operations (for example, through excessive barking or other similar behavior), the student shall immediately take steps to maintain or control the animal. In the event the student cannot control the animal's behavior, the student shall remove the animal from the area.
- The Service Animal is permitted in University housing only as long as it is necessary due to the student's disability. The student must notify the University, in writing, if the animal is no longer needed or is no longer in residence. To replace an animal, the student must submit a new request to demonstrate that the new animal is necessary due to the student's disability.
- A material violation of the responsibilities described above may result in a written warning. If the student receives more than one written warning in an academic calendar year, the student may be required to re-engage in the interactive process with DRS to discuss the violations and whether an alternative accommodation may be effective in meeting the individual's disability-related needs. Repeated material violations or severe violations may result in one or more of the following: removal of

the animal from campus; banning of the animal from all or part of campus; and disciplinary action against the student in accordance with other applicable University policies.

- Students found to be falsely characterizing their animal as a Service Animal or Support Animal may be subject to discipline in accordance with other applicable University policies.
- University employees with responsibility for maintaining or controlling a specific area of campus may ask a handler whether the animal is a pet, Support Animal, or Service Animal, unless the need for the Service Animal is readily apparent, and the student must respond to same.

### **Student's Rights as the Animal Owner:**

- The University may not ask for or require a student with a disability to pay a surcharge or comply with other requirements generally not applicable to students without animals.
- A student with a disability may submit a request for a Service Animal in University housing at any time. The University must consider this request, even if the school year is already in session and/or the student has already brought the animal into University housing.
- The student is not required to equip a Service Animal or Support Animal with a vest or other item identifying it as such.
- While the interactive process is necessarily an open exchange of information, the University may not require the student to disclose details about their diagnosis, the severity of their disability, or medical records. The University may not require a medical examination.
- The University may not insist on specific types of evidence if the information provided to the University meets the requirements of the University's policy with respect to Service Animals, as set forth in the Guidelines regarding Animals on University Property.
- The University will not deny a reasonable request for a Service Animal because the request would impose a fundamental alteration to the nature of the University's operations or impose an undue financial and administrative burden on the University, without first engaging in an interactive process with the student to discuss whether an alternative accommodation may be effective in meeting the student's disability-related needs.
- In the event the University determines that a student is not eligible or is no longer eligible for a Service Animal, or the specific Service Animal requested, the University will provide the student written notification of the reasons for this denial. The University will provide written notification of the grievance procedures that the student may use to challenge this denial.