

# EMOTIONAL SUPPORT ANIMAL PROCESS OVERVIEW



## OVERVIEW

Residence Life recognizes the importance of “Service Animals” as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the broader category of “Assistance Animals” under the Fair Housing Act (FHA) that provide physical and/or emotional support to individuals with disabilities. Residence Life is committed to allowing individuals with disabilities the use of a Service Animal on campus to facilitate their full participation and equal access to the College’s programs and activities. Residence Life is also committed to allowing assistance animals (hereby referred to as emotional support animals or ESAs) necessary to provide individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to use and enjoy College housing. This policy explains the specific requirements applicable to an individual’s use of an ESA in the residence halls. **No ESA may be kept in College housing at any time prior to the individual receiving approval through this application process.**

Once a completed application is submitted to Residence Life, it is reviewed by the Medical Housing Committee, which consists of representatives from Accommodative Services, the Counseling Center, Residence Life/Student Affairs, and Student Health Services.

All documentation will be kept confidential, except in consulting with other offices to make a determination on the application and/or as required by law. Information provided is protected by FERPA. No information concerning inquiries about the accommodations or documentation will be released without the consent from the student requesting the accommodation.

The Medical Housing Committee reviews applications based on a number of factors to include (1) whether a student has a documented disability, (2) evidence of a connection between the individual’s disability and the assistance the animal provides, (3) evidence that the student will not be able to use and enjoy the residence hall or participate in the services Residence Life provides without the ESA.

Students should expect a response to their application within two weeks of it being received by the Office of Residence Life. Responses will be sent to the student’s SUNY Potsdam email address.

## DEFINITIONS

A **Service Animal** is defined by the ADA as a 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 the service animal must be directly related to the individual’s disability (28 CFR 35.104). Service Animals are working animals, not pets. Students who wish to bring a service animal to campus are encouraged to contact Accommodative Services so that appropriate accommodations can be arranged, if needed. Students with a service animal are not required to fill out this application, however, we do encourage you to let us know of your intention to have a service animal on campus.

An **Emotional Support Animal**, defined as assistance animal by the Fair Housing Act (FHA), is an animal that provides assistance in the form of emotional support which reduces or alleviates one or more identified symptom(s) or effect(s) of a person’s disability. Under the FHA, a person may keep an assistance animal in their dwelling unit if there is an identifiable relationship or nexus between the disability and the assistance the animal provides. An ESA may be allowed in housing as a reasonable accommodation, but they are not permitted in other areas of the campus. Students with an ESA must have this application approved prior to bringing the animal to campus.

## REQUIREMENTS OF ESA OWNERS

Individuals with ESAs are responsible for their animals at all times and must comply with the following:

1. The owner must have completed this application and received written approval from Residence Life prior to having the animal on campus.
2. The animal is approved for the owner's assigned room/suite/apartment and is not allowed in any other College operated space on campus, with the exception of immediate transport in and out of the owner's building.
3. The owner agrees to keep their animal away from the belongings of their roommate(s) and out of any common area spaces (in a suite/TH/apartment) if requested by the roommate(s). If the animal becomes an issue for the roommate(s), the owner agrees to move to a different room.
4. The animal must be under the owner's control at all times and must be kept within the private residential area of the owner at all times except when transported outside in an animal carrier or controlled by a leash/harness.
5. The owner will be solely liable for any damage, injury, sickness, or death of the animal. The owner will not hold SUNY Potsdam or its staff liable for any injury, sickness or death.
6. The owner will be financially responsible for any damage the animal may cause to facilities, to include removal of smells/odors and/or the removal of fleas/ticks/pests.
7. The owner will provide the animal with appropriate care to include maintaining food, water, consistent exercise, and a clean environment.
8. The owner will immediately pick up and properly dispose of any waste by placing it in the proper containers outside of the residence halls.
9. The owner agrees to allow College staff to enter their room at any time if there is reason to believe that the animal is being maltreated or damage is being done.
10. If appropriate for the type of animal, the owner will provide veterinary records (including proof of shots) and certify that the animal has been spayed/neutered.
11. The owner will comply with all state and local animal control laws.
12. The owner must take the animal whenever they leave campus for vacation, break, or for more than 24 hours.
13. The owner agrees to remove the animal from the residence halls if: (a) the animal becomes a nuisance to other students or staff in any way, (b) if the animal threatens any student or staff member, (c) if staff determines that the living space is not being cleaned appropriately or damage is being done by the animal, or (d) the animal is not being properly cared for. Should the ESA be removed from the premises for any reason, the student is expected to fulfill their housing obligation for the remainder of the Housing License.
14. The owner agrees to provide a 4x6 color photo of their animal.

## COMPLETING THE APPLICATION

Please use the following instructions to complete the Emotional Support Animal Application.

- **Section 1** needs to be completed by the **student** requesting the medical accommodation.
- **Section 2** needs to be completed by an **appropriate licensed diagnostician or qualified clinician**, which is defined as (but not limited to) a primary physician, nurse practitioner, physician's assistant, licensed mental health professional, etc. The diagnostician must (1) have an established patient relationship with the student, (2) have provided treatment for the condition, and (3) be an impartial individual who is not a family member of the student.
- **Section 3** needs to be completed by a **veterinarian** who has (1) an established patient relationship with the animal and (2) be an impartial individual who is not a family member of the student.
- Once all sections are completed, the application can be returned **in person or by mail** to the **Residence Life office** or **emailed** directly to Residence Life at [reslife@potsdam.edu](mailto:reslife@potsdam.edu).
- **A response will be emailed to the student** through their SUNY Potsdam email address **within two weeks** of receiving the application.

# EMOTIONAL SUPPORT ANIMAL APPLICATION



## SECTION 1: TO BE COMPLETED BY THE STUDENT

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

SUNY Potsdam ID #: P0 \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

SUNY Potsdam email: \_\_\_\_\_@potdam.edu Cell Phone Number: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Semester that you are requesting the accommodation to begin:  Fall \_\_\_\_\_  Spring \_\_\_\_\_  Summer \_\_\_\_\_

1. Please identify the type of animal and provide the requested information.

Dog Breed: \_\_\_\_\_

Cat Breed: \_\_\_\_\_

Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

Animal's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Animal's Color: \_\_\_\_\_

Animal's Weight: \_\_\_\_\_ Animal's Height: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Please briefly describe the condition/diagnosis for which you are requesting an emotional support animal (ESA).

How long have you owned your ESA?

In what ways does the ESA reduce or alleviate one or more of the symptoms/effects of your condition?

*I authorize SUNY Potsdam to receive information related to my disability from my medical provider. I understand that once submitted, the documentation included in my application will be reviewed by members of the Medical Housing Committee. The statements and documentation in my application are accurate as I know them. I understand that providing false information would constitute a violation of SUNY Potsdam's Student Code of Conduct and Responsibilities and might result in disciplinary action.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

SUNY POTSDAM OFFICE OF RESIDENCE LIFE  
44 PIERREPONT AVENUE  
POTSDAM, NY 13676

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

PHONE: 315-267-2350  
EMAIL: reslife@potdam.edu

# EMOTIONAL SUPPORT ANIMAL APPLICATION



## SECTION 2: TO BE COMPLETED BY THE LICENSED DIAGNOSTICIAN OR CLINICIAN

The student is applying for use of an emotional support animal (ESA) in the residence halls. An ESA is an animal that provides assistance in the form of emotional support which reduces or alleviates one or more identified symptoms or effects of a person's disability. Under the Fair Housing Act, a person may keep an assistance animal in their dwelling unit if there is an **identifiable relationship or nexus between the disability and the assistance the animal provides.**

This form needs to be completed by an **appropriate licensed diagnostician or qualified clinician**, which is defined as (but not limited to) a primary physician, nurse practitioner, physician's assistant, licensed mental health professional, etc. The diagnostician must (1) have an established patient relationship with the student, (2) have provided treatment for the condition, and (3) be an impartial individual who is not a family member of the student. Additional pages may be attached if needed.

The application can be returned to the Residence Life office or emailed to Residence Life at [reslife@potdam.edu](mailto:reslife@potdam.edu).

Patient/Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

What is the student's current diagnosis, and how long have they had it? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How long has the student been under your care? \_\_\_\_\_

What are the dates of the last two appointments that you had with this student? \_\_\_\_\_

What evidence can you provide between the diagnosis/symptoms, the need for the emotional support animal, and how the specific animal will benefit the student? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What evidence can you provide that would indicate that the student would not be able to use, and enjoy living in, the residence halls if an ESA is not approved? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## PROVIDER INFORMATION

Provider Name/Title (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

Clinic Name & Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Certification/License Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# EMOTIONAL SUPPORT ANIMAL APPLICATION



## SECTION 3: TO BE COMPLETED BY A VETERINARIAN

The student is applying for use of an emotional support animal (ESA) in the residence halls. An ESA is an animal that provides assistance in the form of emotional support which reduces or alleviates one or more identified symptoms or effects of a person's disability. Under the Fair Housing Act, a person may keep an assistance animal in their dwelling unit if there is an identifiable relationship or nexus between the disability and the assistance the animal provides.

This form needs to be completed by a **veterinarian** who has (1) an established patient relationship with the animal and (2) be an impartial individual who is not a family member of the student. Additional pages may be attached if needed.

The application can be returned to the Residence Life office or emailed to Residence Life at [reslife@potdam.edu](mailto:reslife@potdam.edu).

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Animal's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Type of Animal: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Is the animal housebroken or confined as such that being housebroken is not necessary?  
 Yes                       No, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Has the animal received all appropriate vaccinations? (please attach vaccination record as appropriate)  
 Yes                       No, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Has the animal been spayed/neutered, if applicable?  
 Yes                       No, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Is the animal in overall good health?  
 Yes                       No, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Does the animal exhibit behaviors that could unduly interfere with the enjoyment of campus living facilities by roommates, suitemates, and/or members of the College community?  
 No                       Yes, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_
6. The average sized room is approximately 150 square feet. This space may be occupied with or without a roommate depending on the student's housing assignment. Based on your assessment of this animal and owner, do you feel that the animal can appropriately reside in the residence hall without detriment to the animal's health?  
 Yes                       No, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

## CONTACT INFORMATION

Veterinarian Name: \_\_\_\_\_ License Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Clinic Name & Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_