

### MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY

### SERVICE AND SUPPORT ANIMAL POLICY

#### Definitions

##### **Service animals**

A service animal is a dog\* that is individually and specially trained to perform specific work or a specific task for the direct benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric intellectual, or other mental disability. This work must be directly related to the disability. Such work would include, but is not limited to:

- Guiding individuals who are blind or visually impaired
- Alerting individuals with hearing impairments to the presence of sound
- Pulling a wheelchair and/or pushing elevator buttons
- Retrieving objects or fetching dropped objects for those with physical disabilities
- Alerting the onset or assisting an individual in the event of seizure
- Providing balance and stability to an individual who cannot ambulate independently
- Preventing or interrupting impulsive or destructive behavior for those with psychological/and or neurological conditions.

If a dog meets this definition, it is considered a service animal regardless of whether it has been licensed or certified by a state or local government or training program. Providing comfort, support, or companionship is not considered work or service for the purpose of this definition.

Service animals may accompany people with disabilities to all areas of the University where the public is allowed. This would include residence halls, classrooms, and dining facilities.

##### **Emotional Support Animals**

An emotional support animal is one who is playing a part in the treatment and/or recovery of an individual with a disability. An emotional support animal is prescribed or recommended by a mental health professional for that individual to assist in alleviating the symptoms of the disability. Unlike a service animal, an emotional support animal must not necessarily be a dog, nor must it assist with daily life activities. Emotional support animals may:

- Provide companionship
- Relieve loneliness and isolation

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- Help with depression, anxiety and phobias.

An emotional support animal may not accompany an individual into places where animals, other than service animals, are prohibited, but must be considered for access to university housing facilities. An emotional support animal must be caged, crated, or otherwise confined when the handler is not present. The animal must be under the control of the handler at all times when the handler is present.

\*If you have questions regarding ADA regulations concerning service animals other than dogs, please contact the Disability Resource Center.

## Documentation guidelines

Any student who wishes to bring an emotional support animal to Montclair State University must register with the Disability Resource Center, Cole Hall 331 (Phone - 973-655-5431) . Documentation that the individual is a person with a disability, and that the presence of the animal is a reasonable and appropriate accommodation must be provided from an appropriate medical clinician on the appropriate form. No inquiries can or will be made regarding the training or certification of the animal in compliance with federal law. Students who are requesting service animals must indicate what specific service or task the animal is trained to perform. No further documentation is required. Those requesting Emotional support animals must have the appropriate form completed by a mental health professional.

## **Responsibility of Persons with Service or Emotional Support Animals**

**Care and Supervision:** Care and supervision of the animal are the responsibility of the individual who benefits from the animal's use. The handler must commit to providing proper care of the animal, which includes, feeding, fresh water, exercise and rest. The handler is required to maintain control of the animal at all times. The animal must be on a leash, harness, or other tether when in public places, unless doing so would inhibit the animal's ability to be of service. The handler is also responsible for maintaining a clean living environment for the animal, ensuring the cleanup of the animal's waste and, when appropriate, must toilet the animal in areas designed by the University consistent with the reasonable capacity of the owner. Owners of service and emotional/support animals are responsible for their care in the residence halls at all times. If at any point, the owner cannot care for the animal, as in the case of illness or hospitalization, an emergency contact must be on file with the Disability Resource Center and Residential Education and Services, so the animal can be released to the care of the designated party.

**Health and Vaccination:** In accordance with local ordinances and regulations, the animal must be immunized against diseases common to that type of animal. For example, dogs must have current vaccination against rabies and distemper. Cats must have the normal shots required for licensure. Animals, other than cats and dogs, living  
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in University housing must have an annual clean bill of health from a licensed veterinarian. Documentation can be a vaccination certificate for the animal and/or a veterinarian's statement regarding the animal's health. The University has the authority to direct that the animal receive veterinary attention. The animal must be kept clean and free of fleas and other parasites.

**Licensing:** All Licensing laws must be followed in accordance with the town in which the student maintains permanent residency. If the animal is not licensed in the state of New Jersey, the owner must apply for a license within the municipality in which he/she resides on-campus. Dogs must wear license tags at all times. The tags verify that the shots (rabies, etc.) required by law have been given.

**Damage:** Owners of service or emotional support animals are solely responsible for any injury to others or damage to University property caused by their animals. If the animal is infested with fleas or other parasites, the owner is responsible for all pest control costs.

## **Removal of Service or Emotional Support animals**

The University may exclude/remove a service animal when

- It poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others by being unruly, disruptive or aggressive
- the animal is not housebroken
- the animal is objectively determined to be incapable of performing appropriate and disability-related work or tasks for the handler
- the animal is ill or suffers from flea (or other parasitic) infestation
- the animal is destructive
- the animal makes noise that disturbs others

## **Areas Off Limits to Service Animals**

The University may prohibit the use of service animals in certain locations due to health and safety restrictions. Restricted areas may include, but are not limited to, the following areas, food preparation areas (with the exception of those in private residences), facility equipment rooms, research laboratories, classrooms with research/demonstration animals, areas where protective clothing is necessary, rooms with heavy machinery and or any area that may pose an environment risk to the health or safety of the animal.

Exceptions to restricted areas may be recommended on a case-by-case basis by contacting the Disability Resource Center, however, the person directing the restricted area has the final decision.

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### Roommates and Conflicting Disabilities

Residence Life personnel will make a reasonable effort to notify tenants in the residence building where the animal will be located of the existence of a service or emotional support animal. Students with medical conditions that are affected by animals (respiratory diseases, asthma, severe allergies) are asked to contact the Disability Resource Center if they have a health or safety related concern about exposure to a service or emotional support animal. The individual will be asked to provide medical documentation that identifies the condition(s), and will allow determination to be made as to whether the condition is disabling and whether there is a need for an accommodation. The Residence Life staff will resolve any conflict in a timely manner. Staff members will consider the conflicting needs and/or accommodations of all persons involved.

Roommates or apartment mates must agree to the presence of the animal. In situations where that is not the case, the owner of the animal may be required to move to a single room

My signature below indicates that I have had the opportunity to review this policy and that I agree to abide by all regulations

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name Printed

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Emergency Contact for my service/ emotional support animal:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Relationship to you

\_\_\_\_\_  
Home Phone Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Cell Phone Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Email

**REQUEST FOR INFORMATION**  
**Emotional Support Animal**

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed ESA: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Type of animal: \_\_\_\_\_

Age of animal: \_\_\_\_\_

The above-named student has indicated that you are the (physician, psychiatrist, mental health worker) who has suggested that having an Emotional Support Animal (ESA) in the residence hall will be helpful in alleviating one or more of the identified symptoms or effects of the student's disability. We will accept documentation from providers in the State of New Jersey or the students' home state. So that we may better evaluate the request for this accommodation, please answer the following questions:

**Information About the Student's Disability**

*(A person with a disability is defined as someone who has "a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.")*

What is the nature of the student's mental health impairment (that is, how is the student substantially limited?)

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Does the student require ongoing treatment?

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How long have you been working with the student regarding this mental health diagnosis?

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**Information About the Proposed ESA**

Is this an animal that you specifically prescribed as part of treatment for the student, or is it a pet that you believe will have a beneficial effect for the student while in residence on campus?

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What symptoms will be reduced by having the ESA?

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Is there evidence that an ESA has helped this student in the past or currently?

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**Importance of ESA to Student's Well-Being**

In your opinion, how important is it for the student's well-being that the ESA be in residence on campus? What consequences, in terms of disability symptomology, may result if the accommodation is not approved?

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Have you discussed the responsibilities associated with properly caring for an animal while engaged in typical college activities and residing in campus housing? Do you believe those responsibilities might exacerbate the student's symptoms in any way?

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Thank you for taking the time to complete this form. If we need additional information, we may contact you at a later date. We recognize that having an ESA in the residence hall can be a real benefit for someone with a significant mental health disorder, but the practical limitations of our housing arrangements make it necessary to carefully consider the impact of the request for an ESA on both the student and the campus community.

Please provide contact information, sign and date this questionnaire (below), and return it to *drc@montclair.edu*.

Contact information: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

FAX and/or Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

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

License #: \_\_\_\_\_