

Policy – Emotional Support Animals on Campus
Approved by the Board of Governors, December 8, 2017
University of Central Missouri

Purpose/Policy Statement

The University of Central Missouri (the "University" or "UCM") supports the use of service animals and emotional support animals on campus by those with disabilities in appropriate circumstances and in accordance with this Policy. Students with questions about the use of emotional support animals should refer to this Policy and/or visit the Office of Accessibility Services located in 224 Elliott Union or contact the Office of Accessibility Services by phone at 660.543.4421 or email at access@ucmo.edu. Employees should contact the Office of Human Resources by phone at 660.543.4255 or by email to rtaylor@ucmo.edu.

Pets are not allowed inside UCM buildings or athletics facilities. UCM recognizes that, as outlined below, pets may be walked in appropriate outdoor public spaces and that activities or events on campus may involve animals with the appropriate approvals.

Definitions

1. Handler: An individual with a disability that a service animal assists or a personal care attendant who handles the animal for an individual with a disability; anyone with a pet on campus; anyone responsible for an animal on campus.

2. Emotional Support Animal: An emotional support animal is a companion animal that provides therapeutic benefit to a person with a disability, such as alleviating or mitigating symptoms of an individual's disability. Emotional support animals are not service animals. However, emotional support animals will be permitted in residential facilities with prior approval from the Office of Accessibility Services pursuant to the procedures and standards outlined below.

3. Owner: A student who has an approved emotional support animal in residential housing.

I. Specific Procedures

1. Students

a. Emotional Support Animals: Students who wish to bring an emotional support animal into residential facilities as an exception to the "no pet" policy must go through the reasonable accommodation process with the Office of Accessibility Services. While accommodation requests will be accepted and considered at any time, requests should be made as far in advance as is reasonably possible before the student intends to bring the animal to campus in order to ensure timely consideration. An emotional support animal will not be allowed until formal approval has been received. Housing will allow one comfort emotional support animal per owner.

i. Upon receipt of request for an emotional support animal, the Office of Accessibility Services will engage in communication with the student to determine if the use of the animal is a reasonable accommodation. This is an individualized assessment and determinations will be made on a case-by-case basis.

ii. In order for an emotional support animal to be considered as a reasonable accommodation for a student with a qualified disability, supportive documentation should be from a professional physician, psychiatrist, social worker, or other licensed mental healthcare provider (on letterhead) and generally include the following information:

- A current diagnostic statement that identifies the disability, including date of initial and most current diagnosis, and a description of the functional limitation or symptoms of the disability affecting the student;

- Information regarding the relationship between the disability and the relief the animal provides; and
 - Information that demonstrates the animal is necessary in order for the student to use and enjoy his/her living arrangement.
- iii. Emotional support animals that have been approved as a reasonable accommodation must be contained in the owner's residence or walked in appropriate outdoor spaces. Students are not permitted to bring emotional support animals into classrooms, meetings, or other University facilities and events.

2. Visitors

a. Emotional Support Animals: Visitors may not bring emotional support animals onto campus.

3. Employees

a. Emotional Support Animals: Employees may not bring emotional support animals onto campus unless the employee is required to live on campus. If the employee is required to live on campus and would like to have an emotional support animal, the procedure outlined above for Students should be followed.

II. Permitted Inquiries Regarding Service Animals

In general, University employees should not ask about the nature or extent of a person's disability. However, as permitted by the ADA, if it is not obvious that the animal is required because of a disability, the handler may be asked by University employees if an animal has been approved by the University. Public Safety, Human Resources, or Office of Accessibility Services may further inquire:

1. If the animal is required because of a disability, and
2. What work or task the animal has been trained to perform.

The handler should not be asked for documentation, such as proof that the animal has been certified, trained, or licensed as a service animal.

III. General Standards for the Disapproval/Removal of Emotional Support Animals or Removal of Pets

Decisions to remove a service animal or disapprove/remove an emotional support animal will be made on a case-by-case basis, taking into account all surrounding circumstances. However, the following general standards reflect reasons why an animal may be removed or disapproved:

1. The animal poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others. For example, the animal displays aggressive behavior towards others or has a serious illness.
2. The animal causes or would cause substantial physical damage to the property of the University and other community members, including but not limited to the property of students, faculty, staff, and visitors.
3. The animal poses an undue financial or administrative burden to the University.
4. The animal would fundamentally alter the nature of the University's housing and/or general operations.
5. The animal is out of control and the handler/owner does not take effective action to control it. If the out of control behavior happens repeatedly, the handler/owner may be prohibited from bringing the animal into University facilities until the handler/owner can demonstrate that s/he has taken significant steps to mitigate the behavior.
6. The animal is not housebroken.
7. The animal is defined as a dangerous wild animal according to the Revised Statutes of Missouri.
8. The animal is considered a high rabies-risk animal as defined by the Missouri Department of Health and Social Services.

9. The handler/owner does not abide by his/her responsibilities as outlined in Section VI of this policy.

Where an animal is properly removed pursuant to this Policy, the University's Office of Accessibility Services and/or Office of Human Resources will work with the handler/owner to determine reasonable alternative opportunities to participate in the service, program, or activity without having the animal on the premises.

IV. Responsibilities of Handlers/Owners

1.Laws, Ordinances, and Policies — Handlers/owners are responsible for complying with all state and local animal ordinances and are subject to all University policies and guidelines.

2.Caring for the Emotional Support Animal - The cost of care, arrangements and responsibilities for the well-being of the animal are the sole responsibility of the handler/owner at all times. The University will accept no responsibility for the care of any animal covered by this Policy.

Animals must be well groomed (residential facilities such as showers, tubs, sinks, and the like may not be used for this purpose). Animals cannot be left unattended overnight at any time. If the handler/owner must be away, s/he must either take the animal with him or her or make arrangements for the animal to be cared for elsewhere off campus. Animals cannot be confined to a vehicle, tethered, or abandoned at any time. Regular and routine cleaning of floors, kennels, cages, etc. must occur. The odor of an animal emanating from the residence hall room or apartment is not acceptable.

3.Keeping the Animal Under Control - The animal should respond to voice and/or hand commands at all times, and be fully controlled by the handler/owner. The animal must be as unobtrusive as possible and not block an aisle, sidewalk, or passageway.

4.Being Responsible for Damage Caused by the Animal — Handlers/owners are personally responsible for any damage or injuries caused by their animals and must take appropriate precautions to prevent property damage or injury. The handler/owner may be required to pay for any damages caused by the animal. If related to an event on campus, the sponsoring student or external organization may also be required to pay for any damages caused by the animal.

Any flea infestation must be attended to promptly by a professional extermination company coordinated by the University at owner's expense. Owners are expected to promptly notify their RA and arrange for extermination when a flea problem is noted. Animal owners may take some precautionary measures such as: flea medications prescribed by veterinarians, flea and tick collars, taking your animal to the veterinarian for flea and tick baths. Because not all of the precautions listed here can prevent flea and tick infestations, the owner is responsible for extermination costs after vacating their residential area.

5.Being Responsible for Waste: Cleaning up after the animal is the sole responsibility of the handler/owner. In the event that the handler/owner is not physically able to clean up after the animal, it is then the responsibility of the handler/owner to hire someone capable of cleaning up after the animal. It is the owner's responsibility to remove feces from University grounds, dispose of it in a plastic bag, and then place that bag in the outside garbage dumpsters. Cleanup must occur immediately. Animal feces may not be disposed of in any trash receptacle or through the sewer system inside any building at the University. Waste must be taken to an external dumpster for disposal.

6. Leash Requirements - The animal should be on a leash at all times, unless the owner is unable to use a leash due to a disability or the use of the leash would interfere with the animal's ability to perform its duties.

7. Proper Identification — All animals must be licensed and have a collar and identification tags.

8. Health and Vaccination —Animals must be immunized against diseases common to that type of animal. All vaccinations must be current, and the animal must wear a rabies vaccination tag and, in the case of emotional support animals, vaccination documentation must be provided to the Office of Accessibility Services and/or the Office of Human Resources. Animals to be housed in University housing must have an annual clean bill of health from a licensed veterinarian. Documentation with a veterinarian's statement regarding the animal's health must be submitted to Office of Accessibility Services and/or the Office of Human Resources.

9. Observing Good Animal Etiquette - To the extent possible, the handler/owner should ensure that the animal does not display behaviors or make noises that are disruptive or frightening to others, unless part of the service being provided to the handler (e.g., barking to alert the handler of danger). The animal must possess friendly and sociable characteristics that do not pose a risk to other members of the University community.

10. Spayed/Neutered — All emotional support animals must be spayed or neutered and a copy of the veterinarian's report indicating such must be on file with the Office of Accessibility Services and/or the Office of Human Resources.

11. Other Conditions and Restrictions — In response to a particular situation, the University reserves the right to impose other reasonable conditions or restrictions on the use of service animals and emotional support animals or the presence of pets or other animals on campus as necessary to ensure the health, safety, and reasonable enjoyment of University programs and activities by others.

V. Cleaning and Damages

1. When an owner moves out of his/her residential facility or no longer owns the animal, the residence will be assessed to determine if damage to University property can be attributed to the animal. The University maintains the right to conduct facility inspections for the purpose of assessing damage caused by the animal or otherwise determining the owner's compliance with this policy.

2. The owner has an obligation to make sure that the residence is as clean as the original standard, excepting normal wear and tear. If the residence has carpeting, this also includes regular vacuuming and spot cleaning. Damages and extraordinary cleaning caused by the animal are the responsibility of the owner and may require professional cleaning by a vendor approved by the University (to be paid for by the owner). Replacement or repair of damaged items will also be the financial responsibility of the owner. All other conditions of the housing agreement relating to damages remain in effect.

VI. Additional Matters

1. Roommates: Upon approval of an emotional support animal, or if a student intends to have a service animal in residential housing, the student's roommate(s) or dwelling mate(s) will be notified (if applicable) to inform them that the approved animal will be residing in shared assigned living space and solicit their acknowledgement of such.

a. All roommates of the owner must sign an acknowledgement allowing the approved animal to be in residence with them. In the event that one or more roommates or dwelling mates do not approve, either the owner and animal or the non-approving roommate(s) or dwelling mate(s), as determined by the Residential Life office, may be moved to a different location.

b. If at a point later in time there is a conflict between roommates regarding the animal that cannot be resolved amongst the parties, University Housing should be contacted. Appropriate parties will be consulted in order to reach a solution.

2. Animal No Longer Necessary: The Office of Accessibility Services and/or the Office of Human Resources should be notified when an animal covered by this policy will no longer be in residence or, in the case of emotional support animals, is no longer needed as an accommodation.

3. Conflicting Disabilities: Some people may have allergic reactions, asthma, respiratory diseases, etc. to animals that qualify as disabilities. The University will consider the needs of both persons in meeting its obligations to reasonably accommodate all disabilities to resolve the problem as efficiently and expeditiously as possible. Students or employees requesting allergy accommodations should contact the Office of Accessibility Services and/or the Office of Human Resources.

4. Service Animals in Training: A service animal being trained generally has the same rights as a fully trained service animal when accompanied by a trainer and identified as such in any place of public accommodation. However, handlers of service animals in training must also adhere to all of the requirements for service animals above and are subject to the removal policies as outlined in this Policy.

5. University Events with Animals: From time-to-time the University may hold events on campus that include animals (e.g., dogs/puppies on campus for petting during midterms or finals). University events that include animals on campus must receive prior approval from the Office of Student Experience and Engagement. When an on campus event that includes animals is approved, all applicable sections of this Policy that apply to service or emotional support animals shall apply to animals that are part of the event including, specifically, Sections III, IV, V and VI set forth above. Individuals with questions or concerns regarding on campus events with animals should contact the Office of Student Experience and Engagement.

6. Concerns: Concerns regarding an animal covered by this Policy should be brought to the attention of the Office of Residence Life, Office of Accessibility Services, and/or the Office of Human Resources.

a. Also, owners should understand that having an animal in a residence may raise issues with other residents. The owner should be receptive to these concerns and, if necessary, contact the Office of Residence Life, Office of Accessibility Services, and/or the Office of Human Resources for assistance in resolving the situation.

b. Other residents with minor concerns about an animal in their residence hall may discuss the matter with the owner or talk with a representative of the Office of Residence Life. Major concerns should immediately be brought to the attention of the Office of Residence Life, Office of Accessibility Services, and/or the Office of Human Resources.

c. Visitors may also raise concerns about this policy with the Office of Accessibility Services.

7. Grievances: If the decision is made to deny a request for or to remove a service animal or an emotional support animal covered by this Policy, a student may informally discuss the situation with the Office of Accessibility Services, and an employee may discuss with the Office of Human Resources, in order to reach a resolution or may proceed with a formal written complaint/grievance. The discrimination complaint/grievance procedures applicable to students or employees will be utilized for formal complaints of this nature, as applicable.

Decisions to remove an animal from campus that is not a service animal or emotional support animal may not be grieved.

8. Exemptions: The Residence of the University President and any animals used in teaching or research that have been approved through the appropriate academic channels are not covered by this Policy.

Roommate/Housemate Acknowledgement

By my signature below, I understand that I will share my assigned residential space with an approved animal. Should I have any concerns regarding the care and control of the approved animal, I will discuss my concerns with the approved animal's owner and then with the Office of Accessibility Services if the approved animal owner and I cannot come to an agreement.

Resident's Name Signature Date

Owner Acknowledgement of Responsibility

My signature indicates that I have read, understand, and agree to abide by the University's Animals on Campus Policy, which may change from time to time. I understand that University personnel may communicate as needed regarding my approved emotional support or service animal. I understand that failure to comply with University requirements may result in the loss of approval to have the animal on campus or in University Housing, and/or in my removal from University Housing. I know that I am responsible for all behaviors of my animal.

Print Name & ID Number Signature Date

Campus address (residence or office)

Description of animal, including emotional support, species, breed, physical description, name of animal (example: emotional support animal, dog, poodle, black, Fifi)