



**THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA**  
**OFFICE OF DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES**  
**127 PRYZBYLA CENTER**  
**202-319-5211**  
[WWW.DSS.CUA.EDU](http://WWW.DSS.CUA.EDU)

## **Considerations and Guidelines for requesting a support/ emotional therapy/ assistance animal**

The Catholic University of America is committed to making a reasonable effort to make appropriate accommodations that afford all students barrier free access to University facilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and the Fair Housing Act. On the basis of a medical condition or disability, there is a process for requesting, as an accommodation an emotional support animal, therapy animal, or assistance animal (hereinafter called “Support Animal”) in a residence hall.

As defined by the Fair Housing Act, a Support Animal may provide physical assistance, emotional support, calming, stability, and other kinds of support. The presence of the animal must be necessary in order to provide the resident with a disability the use and enjoyment of the dwelling. There must be an identifiable relationship between the disability and the assistance or support the animal provides to the resident. Support Animals do not perform work or tasks that qualify them as “Service Animals” under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

- A resident is encouraged to call the CUA Office of Disability Support Services at 202-319-5211 to schedule an appointment to discuss the residents request for an accommodation. Disability Support Services may require up to 30 business days to review the request, make a determination for accommodation for a Support Animal, and make the necessary arrangements for the animal to be on campus.
- A resident requesting a Support Animal will provide documentation from a licensed clinician establishing the need for the resident to request this accommodation.
- If an animal is approved as an accommodation by DSS for a resident, the housing office and the Dean of Students will be notified. The housing office will in turn notify the other residents of the floor or community where the individual with the Support Animal resides.
- Like classroom and testing accommodations, a resident is required to request this accommodation every semester. Should the student determine the Support Animal is no longer needed, Disability Services must be notified. If the student wishes to replace one Support Animal for another, a new application and review of the request and animal must be submitted.

- The student will also be given a letter of accommodation verifying the approval of the accommodation. The letter of accommodation should be retained by the student so that she or he can provide it as proof of the approval of the accommodation, in the event that it is questioned. The letter will specifically state that the animal has been approved to accompany the student in his or her residence hall.
- No emotional Support Animal may be in a residence hall without it having been approved as an accommodation for the resident by the Office of Disability Support Services (DSS).
- Support Animals are only permitted in an individual's university residence, and campus areas approved by the Housing Office. The animal is not allowed in University classrooms, labs, library, or dining facilities.
- All Support Animals must be under the control of the individual who has had the animal approved as an accommodation by DSS (hereafter referred to as "owner").
- The animal must never be let out of the residence hall room without being attended and under the control of the owner. This means the animal must be on a leash or in a carrier or cage. The owner is liable for all actions of the animal and should be in total control and restraint of the animal at all times.
- The animal must be properly cared for and nourished.
- If the animal repeatedly acts inappropriately or is not under control, the animal may be excluded from being on campus until it can be demonstrated that the animal's inappropriate behavior has been addressed and the animal is under control.
- An animal may also be excluded if it poses a demonstrable risk to the health and safety of individuals. This might include, but is not limited to, the animal's illness, lack of cleanliness, and presence in an inappropriate area that might put the animal or others at risk, and/or aggressive behavior.
- Cleaning up the waste of a Support Animal is the sole responsibility of the owner. The animal's waste must be removed by placing the waste in a closed container and depositing it in an appropriate outdoor waste receptacle. It is the responsibility of the owner to clean up any mess created by the animal.
- Any cost incurred by the University to clean up a mess or repair property damage caused by an animal is the responsibility of the owner.

- All liability for the actions of the animal (bites, scratches, running away, etc.) are the responsibility of the owner. The University encourages owners to consider appropriate liability insurance.
- If the owner takes vacation or has extended leave (more than 24 hours), the animal must be removed from the residence hall.
- The owner will notify the Resident Assistant and Community Director if the animal escapes.
- The University is not liable if the animal escapes from the owners' room.
- The owner of an emotional Support Animal in a residence hall will provide to the Resident Assistant and Community Director, the emergency contact information of an individual who will be on call to care for the animal in the event the owner is unable to care for the animal.
- The owner's residence may be inspected for fleas, ticks or other pests once a semester or as needed. The applicable housing office for the residence hall will schedule the inspection. If fleas, ticks or other pests be detected during inspection, the residence will be treated using approved fumigation methods by a university approved pest control service. The owner will be billed for this service and the approved animal will not be allowed back in the residence hall until the owner provides proof that the animal has been treated for the condition by a veterinarian.

Licensing Requirements for an animal, approved as a Support Animal, must be provided to the Office of Disability Support Services. Other requirements;

1. Proof of up-to- date rabies and distemper vaccinations;
2. Proof of sterilization (spaying or neutering); and
3. Each dog over four months old must have a DC license and wear it on a collar at all times.  
(Licenses can be obtained through the District of Columbia's Department of Health.)

**Questions or concerns about these guidelines should be addressed to:**  
**Office of Disability Support Services**  
**The Catholic University of America**  
**Pryzbyla Center 127**  
**620 Michigan Avenue, NE Washington, DC 20064**  
**202-319-5211**  
**[cua-dss@cua.edu](mailto:cua-dss@cua.edu)**