

Service and Assistance/Emotional Support Animal Policy and Owner Agreement
Vincennes University
Housing/Residential Life

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Fair Housing Act, HUD, and other applicable local, state, and federal laws, Vincennes University generally permits students in University housing to have a service or assistance/emotional support animal if it is shown to be necessary to afford a student with a documented disability an equal opportunity to use and enjoy University housing. Specific requirements and guidelines concerning service and assistance/emotional support animals on campus are set forth below, and can be obtained by contacting the Office of Diverse Abilities and Accommodations at 812-888-4501. The University reserves the right to amend this policy at any time as circumstances may require.

Vincennes University recognizes the importance of service and assistance/emotional support animals to individuals with disabilities and has established this policy to assist Vincennes University students with disabilities. This policy serves to ensure that individuals with disabilities who require the use of a service or assistance/emotional support animal as a reasonable accommodation in order to fully participate in University life will receive the benefit of the support provided by such animals.

Definitions

Disability – A documented physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, or a record of such an impairment.

Service Animal – A dog 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.

Assistance/Emotional Support Animal (“ESA”) – An animal that provides emotional support, comfort, or therapy that alleviates one or more identified symptoms or effects of a person’s disability. Such animals may also provide assistance, or perform tasks for the benefits of a person with a disability. An ESA need not be individually trained or certified to perform any disability-related task.

Owner – A student with a disability requesting and possessing a service animal or assistance/emotional support animal.

Policy

Owners are permitted to keep a service animal or ESA in on-campus housing/University Owned Housing on a case-by-case basis as a reasonable accommodation for a documented disability, if the animal is deemed a service animal or ESA after the completion of an individualized assessment.

In order to bring a service animal or ESA to campus, the Owner must contact the Office of Diverse Abilities & Accommodations as early as possible to allow time to gather and review all necessary documentation. If possible, the Owner should make their request at least 30 days prior to the start of the academic term (Fall, Spring, and/or Summer). Approved requests shall extend through the length of the current academic year. A subsequent request should be made for each academic year that the Owner is requesting the use of a service animal or ESA. Service animals and/or ESAs may not be in the Residence Halls until approval is obtained by the Office of Diverse Abilities and Accommodations.

Owners must provide a letter granting their request for a service animal or ESA from the Office of Diverse Abilities and Accommodations to the Office of Residential Life. Vincennes University and the Housing/Residential Life Office have the discretion to determine where an Owner will be housed (hall, room, etc.). Owners may be required to relocate to a different room and/or building in order to accommodate their request. Service and/or ESA animals may not be in the Residence Halls until an Owner Agreement for service animals or ESAs is completed with the Office of Residential Life. Owners should be aware of all applicable conditions associated with the use of a service animal/ESA, as the conditions will be strictly enforced by the University. Roommates must sign a roommate agreement for the service animal or ESA to share the living space. A sign notifying others of the presence of an animal must be placed on the door to the residence hall room/apartment. Residence hall and apartment staff will be made aware of the service animal/ESA's presence; however, information shall be limited to information related to the service animal or ESA and shall not include information related to the Owner's disability.

In some circumstances, the Owner will be asked to provide reliable documentation that reasonably supports the Owner seeking the accommodation has a disability and disability-related need for an accommodation. Documentation from the Internet is not, by itself, sufficient reliable documentation if the documentation can be obtained solely by answering questions and paying a fee. The most reliable documentation is from a legitimate, health care professional who is familiar with the Owner's disability and the necessity for the requested accommodation.

Vincennes University, in consultation with the Owner and other parties, as appropriate, will make an individualized assessment in determining whether the presence of the service animal or ESA is reasonable in the making of housing assignments, including, but not limited to the following factors, taking into consideration whether any of the issues can be eliminated or reduced to an acceptable level:

- Whether the service animal or ESA poses or has posed in the past a direct threat to the health and safety of the owner or others;

- Whether the service animal or ESA causes or has caused excessive damage to housing, beyond reasonable wear and tear;
- Whether the service animal or ESA causes or has caused damage to the property of others;
- Whether the service animal or ESA's presence otherwise violates residents' right to peace, quiet, and an educational environment;
- Whether the service animal or ESA is housebroken or is able to live with others in a reasonable matter; and
- Whether the service animal or ESA's vaccinations are up-to-date.

Owner's Responsibilities

Owners granted a reasonable accommodation for a service animal or ESA shall be subject to the following conditions, in addition to any other University rules and regulations not specifically related to service animals and ESAs.

1. Owners will be held to the same standards as any other resident regarding cleanliness and community disruption. The room must be kept clean, odor-free and damage free, and the Owner must meet the service animal or ESA's daily needs. Failure to comply with residence hall or room cleaning standards may result in damage charges and/or immediate removal of the service animal or ESA from University housing.
2. An Owner may be charged for any damage caused by the service animal or ESA beyond reasonable wear and tear to the same extent that it charges other individuals for damages beyond reasonable wear and tear. The Owner's living accommodations may also be inspected for fleas, ticks or other pests if necessary as part of the University's standard or routine inspections. If fleas, ticks or other pests are detected through inspection, the Owner will be billed for the expense of any pest treatment above and beyond standard pest management in the residence halls. The University shall have the right to bill the Owner's account for unmet obligations under this provision.
3. The Owner is responsible for assuring that the service animal or ESA does not interfere with the orderly operation of the residence hall or cause difficulties for other residents or employees of the community. Sensitivity to residents and employees with allergies, personal views of animals living in a residence hall community and to those who fear animals is important to ensure a positive residence hall community. No Owner shall permit the service animal or ESA to go loose or run at large. If a service animal or ESA is found running at large, the service animal or ESA is subject to capture and confinement and immediate removal from University housing.
4. Owners shall purchase their own cleaning supplies (mops, brushes, vacuum cleaners, etc.) so that residents and employees will not be negatively impacted by possible animal odor, hair or dander, etc.

5. Upon the approval of the service animal or ESA request, the Owner must update the service animal or ESA's immunization records. This agreement and the immunization records must be renewed every year and will be kept on file in the residence hall office. All service animals and ESAs must be consistently free of fleas and other parasites.
6. Anytime the service animal or ESA is transported outside the Owner's room, within the residence hall and outside the confines of the Owner's room, the service animal or ESA must be in a carrier, or on a leash or harness. The ESA should only be outside the confines of the residence hall room for transportation or hygiene care. ESAs are not allowed in any University facilities other than the University room or apartment to which the resident is assigned.
7. Service animals or ESAs are not permitted on University grounds unless they are appropriately leashed or caged and under the control of and accompanied by their Owners who have responsibility for the control and care of the service animal or ESA. The ESA should be kept only in the Owner's room and is not allowed in other residence hall rooms, lounges, lobbies, restrooms, or other residence hall or dining facilities. Service animals and ESAs are not to be used as entertainment for other residents. Service animals and ESAs must be social and not be a nuisance (i.e. excessive barking, howling, meowing, crying, scratching of doors or facilities, making unwanted contact, biting, escaping the room). Any injuries caused by the service animal or ESA will be the responsibility of the Owner.
8. Any time the Owner leaves campus for an extended period of time (overnight, a weekend, breaks, etc.), they must take the service animal or ESA with them or find someone to care for the service animal or ESA off campus. The Owner is required to ensure the service animal or ESA is well cared for at all times. Any evidence of mistreatment, abuse, neglect, or leaving the service animal or ESA unattended for unreasonably long periods of time may result in immediate removal of the service animal or ESA and/or discipline for the responsible individual pursuant to the University Student Code of Conduct and/or any housing-related sanctions within the Office of Housing and Residence Life.
9. At no time does the service animal or ESA become the responsibility of a roommate, University staff or other residence hall students. University personnel shall **not** be required to provide care or food for any service animal or ESA including, but not limited to, removing the service animal or ESA during emergency evacuation for events such as a fire alarm. Emergency personnel will determine whether to remove the service animal or ESA and may not be held responsible for the care, damage to, or loss of the service animal or ESA.
10. If the service animal or ESA goes missing for more than a period of two hours, the Owner must notify the Residence Hall staff IMMEDIATELY.
11. All service animal or ESA waste must be disposed of in a timely fashion, secured in a plastic bag and placed in an outside public dumpster. Waste should not be placed in any in hall

waste containers. Owners must take their service animals or ESAs to a pre-designated area(s) to relieve waste.

12. If the Owner decides that the service animal or ESA can no longer live with them, they must notify the residence hall office immediately and then undergo an inspection to assess for any damages and cleaning. The service animal or ESA is allowed in University housing only as long as it is necessary because of the Owner's disability. The Owner must notify the Office of Diverse Abilities and Accommodations in writing if the service animal or ESA is no longer needed or is no longer in the residence.

Removal of the Service Animal or ESA

The University reserves the right to remove the service animal or ESA at any time should its presence be a sanitary concern or a disruption to the educational community that cannot be eliminated or reduced to an acceptable level. If this occurs, the Owner will be asked to remove the service animal or ESA from the residence hall within 48 hours. If the service animal or ESA bites, scratches or in any way causes harm to a student, staff member or guest of the hall, the student may be required to remove the service animal or ESA from the residence hall immediately. The University may also require the Owner to remove the service animal or ESA from University housing if:

- The service animal or ESA poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others or causes substantial property damage to the property of others, including University property;
- The service animal or ESA's presence results in a fundamental alteration of a University program;
- The Owner does not comply with the Owner's Responsibilities set forth above; or
- The service animal or ESA or its presence creates an unmanageable disturbance or interference with the University community.

The University will base such individualized determinations upon the consideration of the behavior of the particular service animal or ESA and Owner on a case-by-case basis, in consultation with the Housing/ Residential Life office, the Owner, and other parties as appropriate. The University will not base this determination on speculation or fear about the harm or damages a service animal or ESA may cause.

Should the service animal or ESA be removed from University housing for any reason, the Owner is expected to fulfill his/her housing contract obligation.

Please note under Indiana Code § 22-9-7-12, which took effect on July 1, 2018, falsely representing the need for an ESA is a Class A infraction.

I have read this document and agree to abide by all policies to support my emotional health and the welfare of the residence hall/University owned housing community. I am aware that the service animal or ESA is my sole responsibility and that all information and documents given to the University to support my service animal or ESA are accurate and truthful. Failure to meet the requirements in the service animal ESA policy may result in the removal of the service animal or ESA.

Owner Signature

Date

Owner Printed Name

Director, Diverse Abilities and Accommodations
Vincennes University

Associate Dean for Housing & Residential Life
Vincennes University