



SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY



**CENTER FOR ACCESSIBILITY AND
DISABILITY RESOURCES**

Emotional Support Animal Exceptions

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Saint Louis University recognizes that living on campus and being in school can be stressful for students. The university maintains a “no pets” policy in the residence halls. However, in accordance with Federal law (Fair Housing Amendments Act), the university will consider requests for accommodations to the housing policy to allow students experiencing significant mental health problems to keep an Emotional Support Animal (ESA) with them in-residence. The presence of an ESA may help you to manage your symptomatology.

Our residence halls are generally not an animal-friendly environment. The communal living nature of the residence hall requires the institution to consider the comfort and concerns of all students in residence. Therefore, Saint Louis University offers some important guidance for those who are considering making a request for an ESA. (NOTE: ESAs are not permitted on campus until the accommodation request has been made and acted upon; students found with unauthorized animals in the residence hall will be subject to sanctions under the Student Code of Conduct.)

1. Documentation of your significant mental health problem and the associated need for an ESA should come from a mental health provider who knows and understands your difficulties and can explain how the presence of the animal may help to alleviate your symptomatology. Saint Louis University is concerned about the growing number of questionable website services that offer to create “ESA letters” for a set price, based on nothing more than (for example) answers to an online survey. There is no formal, recognized certification of ESAs, and such letters will rarely provide the information necessary to support your request for accommodations, and are not viewed by the institution as a reliable source of information.
2. It is important to note that the university may approve your request to have an ESA, but not approve the specific animal you were hoping to bring. For example, most reptiles and rodents may be rejected because of safety and health concerns, as they can carry zoonotic

diseases that pose a threat to the general welfare of residents in the communal living environment.

3. ESAs are restricted to the student's immediate living space. They are not allowed in common areas throughout the residence hall. Moreover, the ESA must be contained (caged or crated) any time the student is not in the room.
4. The ESA may not be left in the care of other residents. If the student leaves campus overnight, the ESA must be taken along.
5. Students bringing ESAs to campus are fully responsible for the animal's behavior and for any damage done. If the ESA is disruptive to the living environment for others (for example, barking or other loud noises, or significant odor from litter boxes or cages), or if there is damage done to college facilities, the ESA will need to be removed from the premises within 48 hours of notice being given. The student will be responsible for paying for property damage.

If you would like to request permission to bring an ESA to campus, please have your mental health professional fill out the ESA request form. Before meeting with the Department of Housing, please complete the full ESA Agreement, which is included in the final pages of the full ESA Policy.