

## Emotional Support Animal Policies and Procedures



Mount St. Mary's University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities both in the classroom and in the Residence Halls. The University complies with the regulations of the ADA in providing academic accommodations to eligible students within the academic division. The Fair Housing Act allows eligible students with documented disabilities the presence of an Emotional Support Animal within their assigned space in the Residence to afford the student an equal opportunity to use and enjoy the residential dwelling.

An accommodation of an Emotional Support Animal is unreasonable if it presents an undue financial or administrative burden on the University, poses a substantial and direct threat to personal or public safety, or constitutes a fundamental alteration of the nature of the service or program.

Please note that Emotional Support Animals are not allowed in the residence hall at any time prior to the owner receiving official approval for such under the guidelines of the Fair Housing Act, the ADA, and Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act.

### **Part I: Definitions**

Fair Housing Act (FHA): The Fair Housing Act is a federal law that prevents discrimination against tenants in their homes. Under the Fair Housing Act, a disability is defined as a physical or mental impairment which significantly limits a person's major life activities. Under the FHA, Mount St. Mary's University is required to make a reasonable accommodation to allow an eligible student with a documented disability to possess an Emotional Support Animal access to university housing.

Emotional Support Animal: Emotional Support Animals are a category of animals that may provide assistance, perform specific tasks, and/or provide necessary emotional support to an individual with a documented disability. Such support by the Emotional Support Animal must alleviate one or more identified symptoms of an individual's disability.

Owner: The student with a documented disability who has requested the accommodation and has received approval to bring an Emotional Support Animal into The residence hall.

Emotional Support Animals are NOT Service Animals. A service animal, as defined by the ADA, is a dog (or miniature horse) that is individually and specifically trained to work or perform a specific task for its handler.

## Part II: Requesting an Emotional Support Animals

A. To ensure that the presence of Emotional Support Animals is not an undue administrative burden or fundamental alteration of the residence hall, Mount St. Mary's reserves the right to assign or reassign an individual with an Emotional Support Animal to a single room without a roommate.

B. A student requesting permission to keep an Emotional Support Animal in the residence hall must make a formal request to Learning Services. To do so, the student must submit the Request for Housing Accommodations Request form via the Learning Services website and upload documentation of their disability for review.

The Housing Accommodations Request Form must be completed and submitted at least 30 days before the student intends to move into the residence hall.

While applications submitted after this timeframe may be accepted and considered, Mount St. Mary's cannot guarantee that it will be able to meet a late applicant's accommodation needs, including any needs that develop during the semester.

C. Documentation of disability that supports the request for an Emotional Support Animal must follow the Documentation Guidelines outlined by the Learning Services. In general, documentation should:

1. Be current.  
Updated documentation must be submitted every year.
2. Include testing information and scores used to diagnose the disability.
3. Be from a qualified physician, psychologist or other licensed professional who is in a position to know about the individual's disability.
4. Clearly identify the student's disability.
5. Should include a statement of why the Emotional Support Animal is necessary to ensure an equal opportunity to use and enjoy the residence hall.

D. For all requests for Emotional Support Animals, Learning Services will make a determination on a case-by-case basis, after reviewing the documentation, of whether an Emotional Support Animal is a reasonable accommodation.

A request for an Emotional Support Animal may be denied as unreasonable if the presence of the Animal:

1. Imposes an undue financial and/or administrative burden.
2. Fundamentally alters the residence hall policies.
3. Poses a direct threat to the health and safety of others or would cause substantial property damage to the property of others, including University property.

E. Mount St. Mary's may consider the following factors, among others, as evidence in determining whether the presence of the Emotional Support Animal is a reasonable accommodation or in the making of the residence hall assignments for individuals with Emotional Support Animals:

1. The size of the animal is too large for available assigned housing space.
2. The animal's presence would force another individual from individual housing (e.g. serious allergies).
3. The animal's presence otherwise violates individuals' right to peace and quiet enjoyment.
4. The animal is not housebroken or is unable to live with others in a reasonable manner;
5. The animal's vaccinations are not up-to-date.
6. The animal poses or has posed in the past a direct threat to the individual or others such as aggressive behavior towards or injuring the individual or others.
7. The animal causes or has caused excessive damage to beyond reasonable wear and tear.

The completed **Special Housing Accommodation form** must be submitted and the documentation from a qualified professional uploaded, before the request for the accommodation of an Emotional Support Animal will be considered.

**Consent to release information.**

Students must provide written consent for Learning Services to disclose information regarding the presence of the Emotional Support Animal to those individuals who may be impacted by the presence of the animal. These individuals include, but are not limited to:

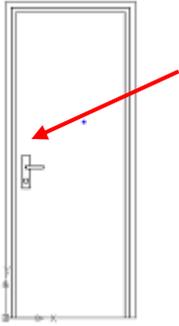
- Residence Life staff
- Housekeeping
- Physical Plant
- Public Safety
- Potential and/or actual roommates, or
- Neighbors.

Such information shall be limited to information related to the animal and shall not include information related to the individual's disability.

**Animal ID tags**

	<p>Emotional Support Animals must wear University issued ID tags at all times.</p> <p>Tags must be affixed to tanks and cages of animals who do not wear collars.</p>
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## Door stickers

	<p>For safety reasons and times of emergency, we ask Owners to place paw print sticker on their door.</p>
	<p>Please place sticker directly above the door handle, to be sure that campus and emergency personnel know that there is an animal in the room before they enter.</p>

## Conflicting Health Conditions

Residence Life staff will make a reasonable effort to notify students in the residence building where the Emotional Support Animal will be located. Students with medical condition(s) that are impacted by animals (e.g., respiratory diseases, asthma, severe allergies) are asked to contact Learning Services and the Office of Residence Life if they have a health or safety related concern about exposure to an Emotional Support Animal.

Mount St. Mary's administrators will consider the conflicting needs and/ or accommodations of all persons involved and arrive at a reasonable resolution of any such conflict on a case-by-case basis.

### **Please note:**

Emotional distress resulting from having to leave a pet at home because of a "no pets" policy does not qualify a person for an accommodation under federal law.

Animals that are used for personal protection are not classified as Emotional Support Animals and are not allowed in the residence halls.

Learning Services and Residence Life do not make any housing determinations regarding Emotional Support Animals for students living off-campus.

## No Exotic Animals Allowed

The State of Maryland does not allow exotic animals to be kept as pets and, therefore, these animals will not be allowed in University housing.

These include:

- raccoons,
- fox,
- skunks, and
- venomous snakes.

## Picture needed.



Owners must include a current, clear, picture in color of their Emotional Support Animal for identification purposes.

## Animal Vaccinations and Health Records

All animal Owners must abide by current local, state and federal ordinances, laws, and/or regulations pertaining to animal ownership, licensure, and vaccinations.

The State of Maryland requires that dogs and cats have specific vaccinations. The Mount requires documentation of these vaccinations from a veterinarian. Please note, some of these vaccinations require yearly boosters.

### Canines:

#### **Vaccines required by the State of Maryland:**

- Rabies.  
In Maryland, rabies vaccine is required for puppies, then one year later, and every three years as adults.
- Canine distemper, adenovirus, and parvovirus.  
Vaccine or antibody titers are measured to determine if revaccination for DAP is necessary.

#### **Canine vaccines recommended by the State of Maryland:**

- Bordetella and parainfluenza.  
Vaccination requires yearly boosters.
- Leptospirosis.  
Yearly vaccination for dogs is required for protection.
- Canine influenza.

**Felines:**

**Vaccines required by the State of Maryland:**

- Rabies.  
In Maryland, rabies vaccine is required for kittens, then at one year of age, then every three years thereafter.
- Feline rhinotracheitis, calicivirus and panleukopenia vaccine.  
Given every one to three years in adult cats

**Vaccines recommended by the State of Maryland:**

- Feline leukemia.

**Flea, Tick, and Other Pest Treatment**

The University requires that all animals be treated with a flea and tick prevention. Treatment must be documented by the veterinarian on the animal's health record.

The Owner's living space may 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, the residence will be treated.

The Owner may be billed for the expense of any pest treatment above and beyond standard pest management in the residence halls.

### Part III: Responsibilities of Owners in the Residence Hall

**Daily Animal Care:** Owners are responsible for the daily care of their animals. Owners may not transfer daily care responsibilities to another student on-campus. These include:

- feeding,
- exercising/walking, and
- waste clean-up.

The Owner must be responsible for their animal at all times.

#### Waste Clean-up and Disposal

All animals must be housebroken BEFORE they arrive on campus.

Cleaning-up after the Emotional Support Anima, whether outside or within the residence hall, is the sole responsibility of the Owner.

The Owner must abide by the following guidelines:

For dogs:

- Maryland’s leash law requires dogs to be on a leash at all times.
- Dogs must be walked to a designated area for the animal to relieve itself.
- Owner is responsible to always pick up the animal's waste.
- Owners are responsible for disposing of the waste in an appropriate trash containers located outside of the ResidenceHall.



Cats and caged animals:

- Litter boxes, cages, and hutches must be cleaned daily.
- Waste and dirty litter must be bagged and disposed of in an appropriate trash containers located outside of the ResidenceHall.

#### Overnight Animal Care

If an Owner leaves campus overnight, the animal must also leave campus. Owners cannot ask another student to care for their animal in their absence. The animal must be taken off-campus whenever the owner does not remain overnight in their assigned residence hall room, including but not limited to the student's weekend travel plans, away games, and breaks.

See requirements for **Emergency Care** below in [Part VII: Emergencies](#).

#### Animal no longer Needed?

The Owner must notify Learning Services if the Emotional Support Animal is no longer needed or is no longer in residence hall. Permission must be granted before another animal is brought in.

## Part IV: Property Damage



Owners cannot be charged a pet deposit by the University, but may be charged for any damage to the Residence Hall and/or furniture caused by the Emotional Support Animal.

## Part V: Access to Campus

Emotional Support Animals do not have access to campus. They are not allowed in any academic buildings, Patriot Hall and the Café, or the library.

An Emotional Support Animal must be contained within the Owner's assigned room or common areas of their hall, except if/when the Owner must take their animal outside for natural relief.

When the Emotional Support Animal is outside the Owner's assigned room, it must be in an animal carrier or controlled by leash or harness.

The Owner is responsible for ensuring that the Emotional Support Animal is contained in their assigned room, in a crate or carrier, when the Owner is not present during the day while attending classes or other activities.

In a suite-style residence hall, the common area of the suite is outside the Owner's assigned private room and, therefore, the animal must be supervised by the Owner.

## Part VI: Removal of Emotional Support Animal

The Emotional Support Animal must be properly cared for, housed, and restrained at all times. No Owner shall permit their animal to run loose or be at large. If an Emotional Support Animal is found running at large, the animal is subject to capture and confinement and immediate removal from the residence hall.

A student can be ordered to remove their Emotional Support Animal from campus under the following conditions:

- The animal is out of control:  
The Owner may be directed to remove an animal that is off-leash, unsupervised, out of control, and/or barking excessively.
- The animal is not-housebroken:  
An Owner may be directed to remove an animal that is not housebroken. When the animal is kept in a cage or other small enclosure, the Owner may be directed to remove the animal if the Owner repeatedly fails to maintain a clean, healthy environment.
- The animal is a direct threat to others:

An Owner may be directed to remove an animal that Mount St. Mary's determines it to be a substantial and direct threat to the health and safety of others. This may occur as a result of a very ill animal, threatening or aggressive behavior of the animal, or a substantial lack of cleanliness of the animal.

Animal abuse and/or neglect will not be tolerated under any circumstance. Any and all instances of animal abuse or neglect will be reported to Frederick County Animal Control.

## **Part VII: Emergencies**

Owners must have an emergency preparedness plan for their animal. An emergency contact who can take responsibility for the animal is necessary. In the case of a hospitalization, or family emergency, someone (non-student) must be available to come to campus and remove the animal in a timely manner.

See attached **Emergency Preparedness Plan** attached.

### **Student Emergency**

Owners should have contact with a local veterinary office and have planned transportation there in case of animal illness or emergency.

### **Campus Evacuations**

In the event of an emergency evacuation on campus, the Owner, if present, is responsible for safe removal of their Emotional Support Animal.

University personnel shall not be required to provide care for any Emotional Support Animal including, but not limited to, removing the animal during emergency evacuation for events such as a fire alarm.

A suitable carrier should be maintained in the room for transporting a small animal as needed.

### **University Personnel and Emergency Personnel Responsibility**

Emergency personnel will determine whether to remove the animal and may not be held responsible for the care, damage to, or loss of the animal.



Mount St. Mary's University  
Emotional Support Animal  
Application Checklist



For approval:	Completed	Date
Complete <b>Request for Accommodation</b> form located on the Mount St. Mary's University website: <a href="https://inside.msmary.edu/learning-services-office/accommodations-form.html">https://inside.msmary.edu/learning-services-office/accommodations-form.html</a> .  A printed version of this form is included in the Appendix, for ease of access.		
Upload documentation of need to your request. Please refer to the documentation guidelines below.		
Consent to Release Information form filled out and submitted.		
Animal vaccination and health record form filled out and submitted.		
Picture of the animal submitted.		
Owner Emergency Preparedness Plan filled out and submitted.		
Roommate agreement signed and returned (if applicable)		
Meet with Denise Marjarum, Director of Learning Services ( <a href="mailto:marjarum@msmary.edu">marjarum@msmary.edu</a> ) to discuss needs and request. Please bring all required documents to meeting.		
ESA Contract signed and submitted.		
<b>After approval:</b>		
MSM ID tag affixed to animals collar or cage.		
ESA sticker placed on residence door, above doorknob.		

Important notes:

Learning Services will make a decision on eligibility within <b>7 days</b> of receiving ALL necessary forms and documents.
All communication regarding the process will be via the student's Mount email.
Approval is valid for <b>ONE</b> school year (Aug-May) only and must be re-evaluated every year.

## Documentation Guidelines

A letter from the health professional who is overseeing the care and treatment of your medical condition or disability is required for approval of accommodations.

**The letter must be comprehensive** and should include:

- The age of onset of symptoms
- Severity of the symptoms
- Medical history, as pertinent
- Information about waxing and waning of symptoms
- Functional limitations in housing environment
- Support services and/or accommodations that were previously used

**The letter must be current.** In most cases, this means within the past 3 to 6 months. Since this documentation is the basis for determining reasonable accommodations, it is in the student's best interest to provide documentation that reflects the student's current level of functioning and ability to function in university housing.

**There must be a statement of the diagnosis and functional limitations for the housing environment. This statement must include a rationale for the specific accommodation(s) that you are requesting.**

**Qualified evaluator.** The letter must be written by a qualified medical professional with expertise in the diagnosis being discussed. The letter must be written on the evaluator's letterhead. Notes handwritten on prescription blanks are not acceptable.



Owner Information	
Name:	
Address:	
Veterinary Information	
Name:	
Address:	
Animal Information:	
Name:	
Type/Breed of animal:	
Animal size:	
Animal color and markings:	
Spay/Neuter date:	

\*These are required in the State of Maryland.

Vaccine	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	Veterinarian
*Distemper (DAP)							
*Rabies (canine)							
*Canine Adenovirus-2							
*Canine parvovirus							
Bordatella/Parainfluenza							
Leprospirosis							
Canine Influenza							
Other:							
Other Health							
Heart Worm							
Flea/tick treatment							
Other:							



Mount St. Mary's University  
Feline Vaccination and Medical Record



<b>Owner Information</b>	
Name:	
Address:	
<b>Veterinary Information</b>	
Name:	
Address:	
<b>Animal Information:</b>	
Name:	
Type/Breed of animal:	
Animal size:	
Animal color and markings:	
Spay/Neuter date:	

\*These are required in the State of Maryland.

Vaccine	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	Veterinarian
Rabies							
Feline Rhinotracheitis							
Calicivirus							
Panleukopenia (Distemper)							
Feline Leukemia							
Other:							
<b>Other Health</b>							
Flea/tick treatment							
Other:							



## ESA Emergency Preparedness Plan



Emergencies happen. People get sick or injured. All Owners must have a plan in place for such instances. Who will take care of your ESA if you are hospitalized or have another type of emergency?

<b>Owner/Animal Information:</b>
Owner:
Phone Number:
Residence hall:
Room Number:
Location of pet in room:
Location of leash/carrier and food:
Feeding/exercising schedule/routine:
Special needs/restrictions:

<b>Emergency Animal Caretaker Information:</b>
Name:
Phone:
Relation to Owner:
Address:
Does emergency caretaker know the animal?
Distance from campus (Must be under three hours):

Students sometimes opt to make arrangements with a local veterinary clinic or boarding kennel to care for the animal in the case of an emergency. In this case, please fill out the necessary information below.

<b>Local Veterinarian/Kennel Contact</b>
Clinic/Kennel Name:
Phone:
Address:
How is the animal getting to the location?

**Anyone who is coming to campus to pick-up an animal  
must stop at Public Safety  
to gain access to the residence hall and room.**

# Request for Accommodations

## Request for Accommodations

If you are a current or accepted student, please complete the form below to request academic and/or housing accommodations.

Student's Name

Student ID Number

Address

Phone

Date of Birth



High School

Email

Intended Major

Enrollment Status

- Undergraduate - Main Campus     Graduate     Undergraduate - Frederick Campus  
 Warriors to Workforce (W2W)     Seminarian

Which accommodation do you need to complete (select all that apply)

- Academic Accommodations     Housing Accommodations     Temporary Accommodations

\* Eligibility for the accommodations listed on this form will be determined when the appropriate documentation is received. Accommodations can only be provided once all necessary documentation is submitted.

## 1:2 Request for Accommodations form

### Housing Accomodations

#### Housing Accommodations Needed

Single Room

Air Conditioning

1st Floor

Wheelchair Accessible Room

Bathroom Modifications

Emotional Support Animal

Other

#### Description of Need

### Housing Documentation Guidelines

**A letter from the health professional who is overseeing the care and treatment of your medical condition or disability is required for approval of accommodations.**

1. **The letter must be comprehensive and should include:**

- The age of onset of symptoms
- Severity of the symptoms
- Medical history, as pertinent
- Information about waxing and waning of symptoms
- Functional limitations in housing environment
- Support services and/or accommodations that were previously used

2. **The letter must be current.** In most cases, this means within the past 3 to 6 months. Since this documentation is the basis for determining reasonable accommodations, it is in the student's best interest to provide documentation that reflects the student's current level of functioning and ability to function in university housing.

3. **There must be a statement of the diagnosis and functional limitations for the housing environment. This statement must include a rationale for the specific accommodation(s) that you are requesting.**

4. **Qualified evaluator.** The letter must be written by a qualified medical professional with expertise in the diagnosis being discussed. The letter must be written on the evaluator's letterhead. Notes handwritten on prescription blanks are not acceptable.

#### Documentation file upload

or drag files here.

## 2:2 Request for Accommodations form

# Release of Information

-For Students with Emotional Support Animals

Name:	Animal Type:
ID #:	Campus Residence:

## Statement of Confidentiality

Information regarding my disability and the accommodations that I am eligible to use is protected information under the ADA and Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act. I understand that Learning Services cannot disclose any information regarding my disability, accommodations and academic standing without my written consent. I also understand that I can withhold consent at any time.

**For the safety of Owners, Emotional Support Animals, University employees and students, permission to disclose information regarding the request for and presence of the Emotional Support Animal to those individuals who may be impacted by the presence of the animal is needed.**

**These individuals include, but are not limited to:**

- **Residence Life**
- **Housekeeping**
- **Public Safety**
- **Potential and/or actual roommates**
- **Neighbors**

**Such information shall be limited to information related to the animal and shall not include information related to the individual's disability**

*The staff of Learning Services will keep all academic and disability related information confidential, except when given permission by the student. However, Learning Services' staff are required to disclose information when an individual presents a danger to self or others, when subpoenaed for records or testimony in courts, or on a need to know basis by university officials.*

I, \_\_\_\_\_ have read the above statement fully understand its terms and conditions.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



## Emotional Support Animal Roommate Agreement Form

This form must be completed and submitted by each roommate prior to the animal occupying the assigned space.

**Resident Name** (Animal Owner): \_\_\_\_\_

**Resident Name** (Roommate): \_\_\_\_\_

I acknowledge that my roommate (Animal Owner) is allowed to have an Emotional Support Animal in his/her room. The type of animal is a \_\_\_\_\_.

**I agree / I do not agree** (circle one) to reside with the resident and his/her animal.

I understand that I may file a grievance to Learning Services and Residence Life if the animal displays disruptive and/or threatening behavior.

I understand that I will not be held responsible for any damages or cleaning costs associated with my roommate's animal.

Printed Name of Roommate: \_\_\_\_\_

Residence Hall: \_\_\_\_\_ Room Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Roommate: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_