

HOUSING ACCOMMODATIONS

EMOTIONAL SUPPORT ANIMALS

Emotional Support Animal Definition

An animal that provides emotional support that alleviates one or more identified effects of a person's disability.

Emotional Support Animal Request Process

- Contact USI Disability Resources regarding the ESA procedure. The office will email the student with an electronic form link to complete. Additionally, the email includes a PDF document that must be completed by the student's medical provider and returned to Disability Resources. It is important to make the provider aware that in addition to the verification form, additional information is required on the provider's letter head, which is outlined on the form. The request is unable to be processed without both components being completed.
- The ESA committee meets weekly to review the requests and ensure all documentation is present.
- After the request has been reviewed and meets the criteria, a representative from the Disability Resources office will complete an intake appointment with the student to assess their eligibility for an ESA on campus. If the student is approved, Disability Resources will send an email notification to the Housing office.
- Upon receiving approval for the ESA from Housing, the student is sent an email containing instructions on how to register the ESA on the Housing Portal.
- If the student plans to bring a cat or dog, Housing mandates the submission of rabies vaccine documentation. The student is required to upload this documentation to the Housing Portal using the account created for the ESA.
- Housing is notified by email when a student registers their ESA and uploads vaccine documentation. After verifying the documentation, Housing contacts the student via email to arrange an in-person meeting.
- During the meeting with Housing, the student will review the University's animal guidelines, initialing and signing the document. Staff will also review specific aspects of the policy that are crucial for students to be aware of, such as the requirement that the ESA cannot be left unattended in the room for 12 hours or more. In such cases, the student must either take the ESA with them or make arrangements for boarding. Additionally, the ESA must be crated whenever the student is not in the room, such as during work or classes.
- After the in-person meeting with Housing is concluded, the student is then permitted to have the animal reside with them in their designated living space.

Note: Students must follow the Priority Accommodation Deadlines when requesting to have an ESA or service animal in University Housing.

Priority Accommodation Deadline for Returning Residents	Priority Accommodation Deadline for New Residents
Fall semester – February 1	Fall semester – May 1
Spring semester - December 1	Spring semester - December 1
Summer terms - April 1	Summer terms - April 1

SERVICE ANIMALS

Students with service animals are not obligated to register with Disability Resources or the University. However, if a student living on campus needs a service animal to reside with them on campus, the student must contact Housing before bringing the animal.

Service Animal Definition

The animal is a service animal as defined by current Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and State of Indiana regulations. Under these laws, a service animal is defined as an animal that is specifically trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a physical, sensory, psychiatric/mental or intellectual disability; and the work or tasks performed by the animal must be directly related to the individual's disability.

Animals that only provide crime deterrent effects, emotional support, wellbeing, comfort or companionship do not fall under the legal definition of service animal. The University reserves the right at any time to ask if the animal is required because of a disability and what specific work or task the animal has been trained to perform. The University also reserves the right to request that the animal be removed from the property if it does not meet the legal definition of service animal, if the handler fails to keep it under appropriate control or if it is not housebroken. An animal meeting the complete and proper definition of service animal will otherwise be permitted anywhere on campus that is typically open to students and visitors.

Service Animal Request Process

- Student should contact Housing and Residence Life that they have a need for a service animal to reside in their designated living space.
- Housing will send the student an email with instructions on how to register the service animal on the Housing Portal.
 - The University is committed to respecting and protecting the confidentiality of all students with disabilities. However, given the number of staff persons who are responsible for operating and maintaining campus housing, Housing and Residence Life does share limited information about the presence of a service animal with University staff on a need-to-know basis.
- Housing contacts the student via email to arrange an in-person meeting. During the meeting with Housing, the student will review the University's animal guidelines, initialing and signing the document.

Note: Students must follow the Priority Accommodation Deadlines when requesting to have a service animal in University Housing.

Priority Accommodation Deadline for Returning Residents	Priority Accommodation Deadline for New Residents
Fall semester – February 1	Fall semester – May 1
Spring semester - December 1	Spring semester - December 1
Summer terms - April 1	Summer terms - April 1