



## **POLICY ON SERVICE AND EMOTIONAL SUPPORT ANIMALS IN CAMPUS HOUSING**

### **Introduction**

Oakland City University provides reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities in accordance with applicable law. When appropriate, service and emotional support animals are permitted to live with students in on-campus residences so long as they are confined to the student's personal residence. But for limited exceptions, service animals are permitted in certain non-residential areas as well.

Students requesting a service or emotional support animal as an accommodation in campus housing must read, understand, and comply with this Policy on Service and Emotional Support Animals in Campus Housing ("Policy"). Such students will be required to provide certain documentation, as permitted under applicable law, to OCU's Disabilities Coordinator ("DC") in conjunction with their request. Such documentation must be submitted to the DC at least 30 days prior to the housing move-in date for the term or academic year for which the student will be living in an OCU-owned residence. Once the proper documentation is provided, DSS will work with the student to determine whether a reasonable accommodation exists.

"Service animals" are those individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability. "Emotional support animals" provide emotional or other support that alleviates one or more of the identified symptoms or effects of a person's existing disability. Unlike service animals, emotional support animals are permitted in the student's on-campus residence only.

Service animals and emotional support animals may be prohibited to the extent such animals (1) constitute a direct threat to the health and safety of others; (2) would cause substantial physical damage to the property of others; (3) would pose an undue financial and administrative burden; or (4) would fundamentally alter the nature of OCU's housing or other services.

### **Service and Emotional Support Animals in Campus Housing – Overview of Approval Process**

Students are responsible for completing each of the following steps to process their request prior to bringing a service or emotional support animal into campus housing.

1. Submit a Request for Accommodation. Information is available through OCU's DC's office and at <https://www.oak.edu/student-services>.

2. OCU's DC will contact you to discuss your request and provide you with this Policy. Carefully read and understand this Policy and provide all documentation requested by OCU's DC necessary to support your request to bring a service or emotional support animal to campus housing. Depending on the nature of your disability and the request, documentation may include disability-related information and information related to the service or emotional support animal (e.g., vaccinations and other veterinary records). Generally, if the student's disability and the service animal's connection to the disability are apparent, only two questions will be asked about the service animal: (1) Is the service animal required because of a disability; and (2) What work or task is the dog trained to perform? Additional information is required prior to bringing an emotional support animal to campus. In the event a student's request is for an emotional support animal, documentation from a physician, psychiatrist, licensed clinical social worker, or licensed psychologist, must be provided to OCU's DC which: (1) Verifies that the student has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities; (2) Describes the need for the requested accommodation; and (3) Identifies the relationship between the resident's disability and the need for an emotional support animal. All requests for emotional support animals in University housing are subject to annual review by DSS.

3. If you are requesting to bring an emotional support animal to campus housing, have your health care provider complete and return the Documentation Form and Recommendation for an Emotional Support Animal in OCU Housing Form, a copy of which is attached to this Policy as Appendix A. If you are request to bring a service animal to campus housing, please do not complete Appendix A unless OCU's DC instructs you to do so.

4. Obtain written approval from the DC to bring your service or emotional support animal into campus housing.

5. Complete and return to OCU's DC the Service and Emotional Support Animal Registration Form, a copy of which is attached to this Policy as Appendix B.

6. Contact OCU's DC to resolve any questions or concerns that you may have relative to your service or emotional support animal.

7. Sign and return to OCU's DC the "Signed Acknowledgement."

8. A student must initiate this process at least thirty (30) days prior to the housing move-in date for the term or academic year for which the student will be living in an OCU residence. A failure to provide the necessary documentation or forms in a timely manner may result in OCU delaying or denying a service or emotional support animal's access to campus housing.

## **Guidelines Governing the Presence of Service and Emotional Support Animals at OCU**

The Student is responsible for maintaining control over the service or emotional support animal at all times, and is responsible for the care and supervision of the animal. A service or emotional support animal may be removed in the event it causes or poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others that cannot be reduced or eliminated by another reasonable accommodation.

The student must ensure that the service or emotional support animal is kept clean and well-groomed at all times. The animal must also be housebroken. Consistent with the student's housing contract, the student agrees to leave his or her residence in a clean and orderly condition. The student will be held financially responsible for the actions of his or her service or emotional support animal, including bodily injury or property damage, and any expenses incurred for cleaning and/or for repairs outside of standard cleaning/repairs. The student's responsibility covers, but is not limited to, costs to replace furniture, carpet, windows, wall covering, and the like, beyond the cost for normal wear and tear, of the residence. Students are encouraged to consider obtaining insurance to protect against damages that may be caused by service or emotional support animals.

OCU reserves the right to enter the student's residence for custodial services, safety inspections, repair and maintenance, pest control, and emergency situations. As such, the student's residence may be inspected for fleas, ticks, or other pests. If fleas, ticks, or other pests are detected through inspection, the residence will be treated using approved fumigation methods by a OCU-approved pest control service. The student will be billed for the expense of any pest treatment related to his or her service or emotional support animal that is above and beyond standard pest management in the residential housing community.

The student is expected to notify OCU's DC in writing if the approved service or emotional support animal is no longer living in the residence. Requests for new or different service or emotional support animals must be approved through OCU's DC following the procedures set forth in this Policy.

For the safety of the student, other students, and the service or emotional support animal, all service and emotional support animals should have a tag that identifies the owner and provides contact information in case of emergency. To the extent applicable, service and emotional support animals should wear a rabies tag.

The student is responsible for properly containing and disposing of all animal waste. For instance, indoor animal waste, such as cat litter, must be placed in a sturdy plastic bag and tied securely before being disposed of in an outside garbage receptacle. Outdoor animal waste, such as dog feces, must be immediately picked up by the student, placed in a plastic bag, and securely tied before being disposed of in an outside garbage receptacle. For the health and safety of OCU's students, employees, and visitors, OCU reserves the right to designate specific sites (indoors and outdoors) to be used for the elimination of animal waste.

The student shall not leave his or her campus residence for prolonged periods of time (e.g., overnight) without taking his or her service or emotional support animal. Neither service nor emotional support animals may be left overnight with others. During periods where the student is not with an emotional support animal (e.g., the student is attending class), the animal must be restricted from accessing the property of roommates or others or any shared living spaces to the fullest extent possible. The student

must keep the service or emotional support animal on a leash when the animal is in a public area (e.g., in the event of a service animal, in a class room; in the event of an emotional support animal, when taken outdoors for relief). OCU recognizes there may be exceptions for certain services animals trained to perform tasks with which a leash may interfere and will make accommodations under this Policy as necessary. The student is reminded that an emotional support animal is not permitted in any area other than the student's private on-campus residence except when the student is taking the animal out for natural relief.

The student is responsible for instructing others on appropriate interactions with the service or emotional support animal and setting clear expectations. Roommates will be made aware of the presence of a service or emotional support animal. OCU recognizes that other individuals may be averse to the presence of a service or emotional support animal for various reasons, including allergies, asthma, fear of animals, or for religious reasons. OCU may also accommodate any roommates as may be necessary. The student recognizes these possibilities and will, to the extent possible, ensure that the animal does not display any behaviors or noises that are disruptive to others (e.g., barking or growling, unless such behavior or noise is part of the task the animal has been trained to perform).

In the event the student requires in-residence service from maintenance or another member of the campus community, the student will arrange for the visit to occur during a time when he or she will be present. For the health and safety of all involved, the student should alert the person they are speaking with that a service or emotional support animal is in the room. The student agrees that OCU's DC may disclose the presence of a service or emotional support animal to others who may be impacted by the animal's presence (e.g., roommates and maintenance personnel). Such information will be limited to the service or emotional support animal and will not include information related to the student's disability.

Depending on the nature of the service or emotional support animal request and other factors, OCU may be required to reassign or relocate the student to another residence. Service and emotional support animals are allowed in OCU housing only as long as it is necessary because of the student's disability. The student shall notify OCU's DC immediately if the service or emotional support animal is no longer present in OCU housing or if the service or emotional support animal is no longer needed.

A violation of this Service and Emotional Support Animal Policy may result in the animal's removal from OCU housing.

### **Signed Acknowledgement**

By my signature below, I verify that I have read this Policy on Service and Emotional Support Animals in Campus Housing as well as the policy statement contained in the Student Handbook. I agree to comply with all requirements and standards set forth in this Policy and the Student Handbook. I understand that violation of these requirements and standards may result in immediate removal of the animal from OCU housing. In the event such an animal must be removed, I understand that I am still required to fulfill any contractual obligation related to my OCU housing. I also understand that I will be responsible for any damage caused by my service or emotional support animal to OCU and others, including bodily and property damage. I give OCU permission to disclose the presence of the service or emotional support animal to staff or others who may be impacted by the animal on a need-to-know basis. I understand this information will be shared with the intent of preparing for the presence of the service or emotional support animal or resolving any potential issues associated with the presence of the service or emotional support animal in OCU housing.

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Student's Name (Printed)

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Student's Signature and Date

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Parent's Name (Printed) (for students under 18 only)

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Parent's Signature (for students under 18 only) and Date

Please contact the following representative if you have any questions or concerns:

Karen Nasser  
Disabilities Coordinator  
[knasseri@oak.edu](mailto:knasseri@oak.edu)  
Kennedy Center Room 203E  
Extension 483

## APPENDIX A

### Documentation Form and Recommendation for an Emotional Support Animal

Student's Name:	_____
Type of Animal:	_____
Age of Animal:	_____
Date of Request:	_____

The above-named student has indicated that you are the (physician, psychiatrist, mental healthcare provider) who has suggested that having an emotional support animal in his or her OCU residence will be helpful in alleviating one or more of the identified symptoms or effects of the student's disability. So that we may better evaluate the request for this accommodation, please answer the following questions:

1. What is the nature of the student's mental health impairment?

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2. Does the student require ongoing treatment? If so, what type of treatment and how often is treatment required?

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3. When was the student first diagnosed with this impairment? When did you first meet with the student regarding his or her mental health diagnosis?

\_\_\_\_\_

(Please note, there may be restrictions on the kind of animal that can be approved for OCU housing. Therefore, it is possible that the student may be approved for an emotional support animal, based on the information you provide here, but may not be allowed to bring the specific animal named.)

4. Is the emotional support animal named here one that you specifically prescribed as part of treatment for the student, or is it a pet that you believe will have a beneficial effect for the student while living on campus?

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Please describe what symptoms will be reduced by having the proposed emotional support animal?

\_\_\_\_\_

6. Is there evidence that this emotional support animal has helped this student in the past or currently? If so, please describe the evidence.

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7. In your opinion, how significant is it for the student's well-being that this emotional support animal be in the student's residence? What consequences, in terms of the student's disability, may result if the accommodation is not approved?

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8. Have you discussed the responsibilities associated with proper care for an animal while engaged in activities in a communal residential environment and residing in campus housing? Do you believe those responsibilities could exacerbate the student's symptoms in any way?

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Please provide your contact information below and return the completed form to the student. OCU thanks you for your support of students requesting housing accommodations.

Name:	_____
Address:	_____
Telephone:	_____
Email Address and/or FAX:	_____

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## APPENDIX B

### Support and Service Animal Registration Form

#### Student Information

Academic Year for Which Accommodation Requested:	
Name:	Today's Date:
Email Address:	DOB:
City/State:	Phone #:

#### Information of Contact who will accept the animal in the event of emergency/removal

Name:
Phone:
Address:

#### Animal Information

Name:	Type of Animal:
Breed:	Weight:
Color:	Sex (Male or Female):
Age:	Date of Spay/Neuter:
Vaccination Information* (Please provide vaccine information in the boxes listed below):	
Vaccine:	Date:
Vaccine:	Date:
Vaccine:	Date:

\*Official Veterinarian vaccination records should be provided as an attachment to these documents.

Veterinarian Contact Information

Name:	Phone #:
Full Address:	
Email Address:	

*Oakland City University may request additional information from the veterinarian or student as necessary.*