

Service and Emotional Support Animals
Student Campus Housing Policy
Rhodes College

Rhodes College is committed to compliance with state and federal laws regarding individuals with disabilities. Rhodes recognizes the importance of Service and Emotional Support Animals to student residents with disabilities and has established the following policy and guidelines regarding Service and Emotional Support Animals. Rhodes reserves the right to amend this policy as circumstances require.

College faculty, staff, and students may ask two questions of a person with an animal: (1) Is the animal required because of a disability? (2) What work or task has the animal been trained to perform? Generally, staff will not make inquiries about a service animal when it is readily apparent that an animal is trained to do work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability.

Section I. Definitions

A. Disability

“Disability” is defined as a physical or mental condition or impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities. These limitations may include caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, working, and learning.

B. Service Animal

A “Service Animal” is a dog or miniature horse that has been individually trained to do work and perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a documented disability. Service Animals are working animals, not pets. The work or task a Service Animal has been trained to provide must be directly related to the person’s disability. Examples of such work or tasks include, but are not limited to, assisting a person with a visual impairment with navigation or other tasks, alerting a person with a hearing impairment to the presence of people or sound, providing physical support and stability assistance to a person with a mobility impairment, providing minimal protection or rescue work, pulling a wheelchair, assisting a person during a seizure, or retrieving items.

C. Emotional Support Animal

An “Emotional Support Animal” is an animal that provides comfort to a person with a disability upon the recommendation of a healthcare or mental health professional. The comfort from an Emotional Support Animal serves to alleviate one or more identified symptoms or effects of a resident’s documented disability. Unlike a Service Animal, an Emotional Support Animal does not assist a resident with a disability with activities of daily living, nor does it accompany the resident at all times. Emotional Support Animals may be considered for access to campus housing, but they are not permitted in other areas of the college (e.g., library, academic buildings, classrooms, labs, etc.).

D. Pet

A “Pet” is an animal kept for ordinary use and companionship. A Pet is not considered a Service or Emotional Support Animal. Pets are not covered by this policy. Student residents are not permitted to keep pets, other than fish, on college property or in on-campus housing.

E. Approved Animal

An “Approved Animal” is a Service Animal or Emotional Support Animal that has been granted as a reasonable accommodation under this policy.

F. Owner

The “Owner” is the student resident or other covered person who has requested the accommodation and has received approval to bring the “Approved Animal” on campus.

Section II. Procedures to have an Emotional Support Animal in campus housing

- A. A student requesting to keep an Emotional Support Animal in campus housing must make a formal request to the Office of Student Accessibility Services (901-843-3885) and submit an Emotional Support Verification Form.
- B. In order to be considered for approval, there must be a link between the animal and a documented disability. Emotional distress resulting from having to give up an animal because of a “no pets” policy does not qualify a person for an accommodation under federal law.
- C. Requests must be made in a timely manner. Incoming students requesting to have an Emotional Support Animal in campus housing should submit their request and supporting documentation to Student Accessibility Services by June 1 for review and determination before the beginning of fall semester. Returning students should submit paperwork by March 1. While applications after these dates will be accepted and considered, Rhodes cannot guarantee that it will be able to meet late applicants’ accommodation needs.
- D. Student Accessibility Services reviews each request on a case-by-case basis.
 - 1. If the request is approved, the student requesting that an Emotional Support Animal be housed in campus housing will meet with both Student Accessibility Services and Residence Life to carefully review this policy and to sign a release form giving permission for Campus Safety and Physical Plant to be informed of the animal’s location.
 - 2. If the student is dissatisfied with the determination of their accommodation request and/or has new information or concerns, the student will have the opportunity to request reconsideration.

Section III. Procedures to have a Service Animal in campus housing

- A. A student requesting to keep a Service Animal in campus housing must make a formal request to the Office of Student Accessibility Services (901-843-3885). Requests for Service Animals in housing may not require documentation of a disability.
- B. Requests must be made in a timely manner. Incoming students requesting to have a Service Animal in campus housing should submit their request and supporting documentation to Student Accessibility Services by June 1 for review and determination before the beginning of fall semester. Returning students should submit paperwork by March 1. While applications after these dates will be accepted and considered, Rhodes cannot guarantee that it will be able to meet late applicants’ accommodation needs.
- C. Student Accessibility Services reviews each request on a case-by-case basis.
 - 1. If the request is approved, the student requesting that a Service Animal be housed in campus housing will meet with both Student Accessibility Services and Residence Life to carefully review this policy and to sign a release form giving permission for Campus Safety and Physical Plant to be informed of the animal’s location.
 - 2. If the student is dissatisfied with the determination of their accommodation request and/or has new information or concerns, the student will have the opportunity to request reconsideration.

Section IV. Responsibilities and guidelines

A. Responsibilities

- 1. The Owner is responsible for assuring that the Approved Animal does not unduly interfere with the routine activities of the residence hall community or cause difficulties for students who reside there.
- 2. The Owner is financially responsible for the actions of the Approved Animal including bodily injury or property damage. The Owner’s responsibility covers, but is not limited to, replacement of furniture, carpet, window, wall covering, and the like. The Owner is expected to cover these costs at the time of repair and/or move-out.

3. The Owner is responsible for any expenses incurred for cleaning above and beyond a standard cleaning or for repairs to college premises that are assessed after the student and animal vacate the residence. The college shall have the right to bill the student account of the Owner for unmet obligations.
4. The Owner must notify Student Accessibility Services and Residence Life in writing if the Approved Animal is no longer needed as an Approved Animal or is no longer in residence. To replace an Approved Animal the Owner must file a new request.
5. Care and supervision of the animal are the responsibility of the individual who benefits from the Approved Animal's use. The Owner is required to maintain control of the animal at all times.
6. The Owner is also responsible for ensuring the cleanup of the animal's waste and, when appropriate, must toilet the animal in areas designated by the college consistent with the reasonable capacity of the Owner. Indoor animal waste, such as cat litter, must be placed in a sturdy plastic bag and securely tied up before being disposed of in outside trash dumpsters. Litter boxes should be placed on mats so that waste is not tracked onto carpeted surfaces.
7. In cases of emergency, the college and emergency services personnel will focus on human life and will not return to buildings solely to rescue animals.

B. Guidelines

1. The Owner's residence may be inspected for fleas, ticks or other pests as needed. Residence Life will schedule the inspection. If fleas, ticks or other pests are detected through inspection, the residence will be treated using approved fumigation methods by a college approved pest control service. The Owner will be billed for the expense of any pest treatment above and beyond standard pest management in the residence halls.
2. All roommates or suitemates of the owner must sign an agreement allowing the Approved Animal to be in residence with them. In the event that one or more roommates or suitemates do not approve, either the owner and animal or the non-approving roommates or suitemates, as determined by Residence Life, may be moved to a different location.
3. Service Animals may travel freely with their Owner throughout campus housing (and other areas of the college). Emotional Support Animals must be contained within the privately assigned residential area (room, suite, apartment) at all times, except when transported outside the private residential area in an animal carrier or controlled by leash or harness. When outside the residence, the Owner of an Emotional Support Animal shall carry proof that the animal is an Approved Animal.
4. Vaccination: In accordance with local ordinances and regulations the animal must be immunized against diseases common to that type of animal. For example, dogs must have current vaccination against rabies and wear a rabies vaccination tag. Local licensing requirements are followed.
5. Health: Animals to be housed in campus housing must have an annual clean bill of health from a licensed veterinarian. Documentation can be a vaccination certificate for the animal or a veterinarian's statement regarding the animal's health. The college has authority to direct that the animal receive veterinary attention. (Local licensing law is followed.)
6. Licensing: The college reserves the right to request documentation showing that the animal has been licensed.
7. Approved Animals may not be left overnight in campus housing to be cared for by another student. Animals must be taken with the Owner if they leave campus for a prolonged period.
8. Residence Life has the ability to relocate Owner and Approved Animal as necessary according to the housing contract.
9. The Owner agrees to continue to abide by all other residential policies. Failure to comply with the responsibilities and guidelines outlined in this policy may result in immediate removal of the animal from the college and may be reviewed through the college's judicial process.

Section V. Resident Owner Acknowledgements

By my signature below, I verify that I have read, understand and will abide by the guidelines outlined in the Student Campus Housing Policy for Service and Emotional Support Animals at Rhodes College.

Resident Owner Signature Date

Accessibility Services Representative Date

Residence Life Representative Date

I do ____ / do not ____ give permission for Student Accessibility Services to inform Residence Life, Campus Safety and Physical Plant of the approved accommodation, including animal type, photo, and location. Such information shall be limited to information related to the animal and shall not include information related to the individual's disability.

I do ____ / do not ____ give permission Residence Life to disclose information regarding the request for and presence of the Assistance Animal to those individuals who may be impacted by the presence of the animal including, but not limited to, Residence Life personnel and potential/actual roommate(s)/neighbor(s). Such information shall be limited to information related to the animal and shall not include information related to the individual's disability.

I do ____ / do not ____ give permission to have a small marker placed by my residence hall door knob indicating the presence of a service/emotional support animal inside the room. The marker will consist of a symbol that is known to campus staff.

Please list two emergency contacts who would be able to care for the Assistance Animal, in the event that you are unable to respond.

Name	Relationship	Phone number
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Name	Relationship	Phone number
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Section VII. Approved Animal Registration Form

Please complete the form below and submit the following:

- 1- The Veterinarian's verification that the animal has had all Veterinary-recommended vaccinations to maintain the animal's health and prevent contagious disease.
- 2- A copy of the state animal license, if appropriate.
- 3- A picture of the animal.

Owner's Name:	
Owner's R #:	
Owner's Address:	
Cell Phone:	
Work Phone:	
Animal's Name:	
Type of Animal:	
Physical Description of Animal:	
Other Relevant Information:	