

ELIZABETH CITY STATE UNIVERSITY
Animals on Campus Policy

Preamble

In consideration of the personal safety and well-being of the Elizabeth City State University (ECSU) campus community, and in accordance with applicable state and federal laws, this policy specifically addresses requirements and guidelines for having animals on campus including service animals, emotional support animals, and other animals of residential students, residential staff, non-residential students, and other individuals. Additionally, this policy establishes requirements for the accessibility, behavior, and treatment of animals on campus. Elizabeth City State University acknowledges that under certain circumstances, certain types of animals may be present on campus. These animals may include the following: emotional support animals in student housing, service animals assisting individuals with disabilities, and therapy animals, in connection with a therapeutic or other educational program.

1. DEFINITIONS

A. Service Animals

A Service Animal is a dog that is individually trained to perform tasks for an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability. Examples include, but are not limited to, guiding individuals who are blind, alerting individuals who are deaf, pulling a wheelchair, or providing assistance during a seizure. Service Animals are working animals, not pets. The work performed must be directly related to the person's disability.

B. Service Animals in Training

A Service Animal in Training is an animal in training to become a 'Service Animal' when accompanied by a trainer and appropriately identified with a harness, leash, or cape that indicates that the animal is in training.

C. Emotional Support Animals (ESAs)

An ESA is an animal prescribed by a healthcare or mental health professional to alleviate symptoms of a student's disability. ESAs do not assist with activities of daily living and are only allowed in assigned on-campus housing with prior approval.

D. Domestic Animals

Domestic animals are animals that customarily have been adapted to share human habitats, such as dogs, cats, fish, or caged animals. This is not an exhaustive list.

E. Personal Pets

Everyday companion, domestic or tamed animal, regardless of species or breed belonging to students, staff, or other individuals and have not been identified as Service Animals, therapy animals, or ESAs as defined above.

F. Handler

A handler is defined as the individual with a disability who is assisted by a service animal, or a third party assisting that individual. The handler is responsible for the care and control of the service animal. This includes ensuring the animal is trained and under control, meaning it does not pose a direct threat or disrupt the environment.

G. Exotic pets

Exotic pets are animals that are not traditionally kept as domesticated pets, often found in the wild rather than in common household settings. This can include a wide range of species including, but not limited to, reptiles like snakes, iguanas, and lizards to small mammals like hamsters and ferrets.

2. REQUIREMENTS AND RESTRICTIONS FOR ANIMALS ON CAMPUS

It is the general position of the University that no person may bring an animal onto the university campus. In consideration of the personal safety and well-being of the Elizabeth City State University (ECSU) campus community, and in alignment with state and federal laws, this policy establishes clear guidelines in instances where an animal may be permitted on campus and ensures the safety, accessibility, and well-being of the university community.

If an animal's presence on campus supports the accessibility, behavioral health needs of a student, or in conjunction with a security requirement as dictated by state and federal laws, the animal may be permitted on campus, and the requirements and guidelines are outlined below.

A. Animals That May be Permitted on Campus:

- i. **Service Animals and Service Animals in Training** as defined in Section 1.A and 1.B above and as provided in Section 2.B below.
- ii. **Approved Emotional Support Animals (ESAs)** in on-campus housing, as defined herein and pursuant to the procedures outlined through the Office of Student Accessibility (or Office of Human Resources for employees).
- iii. **Animals used for academic research**, but only as provided in university policies governing laboratory animals.
- iv. **Animals brought to campus for a specific purpose**, such as university-sanctioned events, under the direction of the Office of Student Accessibility and conditions established by the Vice Chancellor for the respective area.
- v. **Therapy Animals**, but only when the animal is present in connection with a hospital or health science related program or present in connection with another university-approved program or event.

B. Service Animals and Service Animals in Training

- i. Must be under the Handler's control and leashed, tethered, or harnessed, unless the individual's disability prevents using these devices or these devices interfere with the service animal's safe, effective performance of tasks. In that case, the Handler must maintain control of the animal through voice, signal, or other effective controls.
- ii. Service animals may accompany the Handler in all public spaces, regardless of allergies or the offense to others that the animal's presence may cause.
- iii. The university may prohibit a Service Animal if it poses a direct threat to others or causes a fundamental alteration to university operations.
- iv. A person with a disability cannot be asked to remove his service animal from the premises unless: (1) the dog is out of control and the handler does not take effective action to control it, or (2) the dog is not housebroken, this includes, but is not limited to, circumstances when the dog poses a danger to the campus community.
- v. When there is a legitimate reason to ask that a service animal be removed, staff must offer the person with the disability the opportunity to obtain goods or services without the animal's presence.
- vi. When faced with an animal on campus, University officials may ask only two questions of the animal handler: (1) Is the animal required due to a disability? and (2) What task has it been trained to perform?

C. Requirements for Emotional Support Animals in On-Campus Housing

- i. Students must request and receive approval from the **Office of Student Accessibility (OSA)** before bringing an ESA into on-campus housing.
- ii. Students must provide official documentation on letterhead of a licensed professional that outlines the need for the ESA and outlines information in the document that the student has a disability and needs the animal for emotional support. The documentation may be in the form of medical and/or psychological documentation.
- iii. Documentation must be from a certified medical or mental health provider with direct knowledge of the student's needs. Students providing documentation from companies known to provide, or later discovered be a provider of, ESA support documentation letters for cost, without actual knowledge of the student's need or condition, shall be denied or shall have their approval revoked until such time as the appropriate documentation is submitted and approved.
- iv. If approved, the Office of Student Accessibility will assign accommodations, and review expectations with the student. The Office of Student Accessibility will notify the Office of Housing and Residence Life (HRL) of the approved accommodations for residential students.
- v. ESAs are not permitted in public spaces including, but not limited to, administrative or academic campus buildings, dining halls, enclosed athletic facilities, reserved outdoor event spaces, or other public facilities. The only

exception is that which permits the handler of an approved ESA to take the animal outdoors to allow the ESA to expel waste or otherwise exercise the ESA.

D. Domestic Animals and Personal Pets

- i. **Domestic animals, wild pets, and personal pets are not permitted in University buildings** (see procedures for ESA and Service Animals). Domestic Animals and personal pets are not permitted inside university buildings, except as approved under specific university policies.
- ii. When permitted, domestic animals must be under control and restrained by a leash or similar device no longer than six (6) feet.
- iii. Must be vaccinated per **Pasquotank County regulations**, with proof provided upon request, and meet any other requirements as outlined in applicable policies, local, state, or federal laws.

E. Additional Criteria and Requirements for Animals on Campus

- i. Animals may **not be left tethered, unattended, or abandoned**; violators may face disciplinary action, which may include loss of ESA privileges.
- ii. Animals left in parked vehicles must not be in distress or cause a public nuisance.
- iii. Animals found to be aggressive, disruptive, not housebroken, nor well-behaved, shall be removed from campus.
- iv. Owners must clean up and properly dispose of animal waste immediately and only in outdoor waste or trash containers. Handlers caught disposing of animal waste inside of any university building shall be subject to charges and potential sanctioning under the Student Code of Conduct, applicable ECSU policies, or, in the case of non-students or other individuals, trespassed from campus.
- v. Flea, tick, or other pest infestations must be remedied at the Handler's expense.
- vi. The Handler or other owner of any animal on campus in any building or residence hall is solely responsible for the evacuation of their animal in the event of an emergency such as fire, flooding, or any other emergent situation that may arise within a building.
- vii. The university is not, under any circumstances, responsible or liable for loss of life or injury to animals on campus,
- viii. University officials may enter student's rooms and suites at any time for maintenance, inspections, or other emergent situations and may enter a student's room or suite more frequently when it has notice of serious or repeated violations related to the animal.
- ix. ECSU is not responsible for escaping animals under any circumstances, even when maintenance or other support services enter the room or suite with or without notice to the Handler, and even when the animal is injured or killed after escaping from the Handler's room or suite.
- x. The Handler is responsible for the animal's overall health and well-being. ECSU is not responsible for the health and overall well-being of the animal.
- xi. Students must reapply for approval for an ESA each semester.

- xii. Single occupancy housing options are subject to availability and may not be available for all requestors. Single occupancy housing options are limited.

F. Campus Unit Responsibilities:

- i. The **Office of Student Accessibility (OSA)** maintains documentation for Service Animals, Service Animals in Training, and ESAs, and is responsible for the enforcement of this policy.
- ii. The **Office of Housing and Residence Life (HRL)** enforces ESA regulations in campus housing.
- iii. **Campus Police and Public Safety** should only be contacted in situations where an animal poses an immediate risk of harm to someone on campus. Enforcement of this policy remains under the jurisdiction of the ****Office of Student Accessibility (OSA)**.
- iv. ****To report violations, contact the Office of Student Accessibility at (252) 335-3642.** Campus Police and Public Safety should only be contacted in situations where an animal poses an immediate risk of harm to someone on campus and/or when it has been determined that the animal in question is not a university approved animal.
- v. The **Office of Conduct and Community Standards** is responsible for the enforcement of cases involving violations of the Student Code of Conduct and other related campus policies or contractual agreements (See, including, but not limited to, ECSU Policy 500.1.1 “Disruptive and Disorderly Conduct”, “Failure to Comply”).
- vi. The **Office of Human Resources** is responsible for approving ESA or Service Animals for ECSU faculty or staff whose role requires them to live on campus, as outlined in the Americans with Disability Act, or other applicable employment laws.

G. Consequences for violations:

- i. A written warning may be issued for minor infractions or the Handler could be subject to disciplinary action under the Student Code of Conduct.
- ii. Suspension or termination of ESA approval may occur for repeated or serious violations and/or when it is determined that the ESA or other animal poses a health and safety risk to the campus.
- iii. Fines may be imposed for non-compliance and violation of university policy.
- iv. Students and/or Handler’s may be charged for damage on campus caused by their animal.
- v. Individuals must remove unauthorized animals immediately.
- vi. Feeding or attracting unauthorized animals may result in disciplinary action.
- vii. Unattended animals may be impounded and transferred to local animal control authorities.

- viii. Any person found to have provided falsified documentation for animals on campus shall be denied approval and subject to disciplinary action under the Student Code of Conduct or other applicable policy.
- ix. If an animal discovered on campus does not have the proper approvals, student infractions will be processed according to the housing agreements, Student Code of Conduct policy, or any other applicable policy. Employee infractions will be processed through the appropriate human resource policies.

This policy may be amended according to the established university administrative protocols, from time to time, and any such changes shall take effect upon approval. If there are any related conflicts between the terms of this policy and any applicable UNC System office policies, then the conflict shall be resolved in favor of the UNC System office policy. If there are any related conflicting terms in this policy and any other ECSU policy, then this policy shall resolve the conflict. This policy is approved by the Chancellor and effective on the date adopted.