

UHD Service and Emotional Support Animal Policy

Subject to this policy, students, faculty or staff may be allowed to have a service animal (dog) in campus facilities where animals would typically not be permitted. Also, subject to this policy, students or staff residing in University housing may request as an accommodation that an emotional support animal be allowed to reside in the student's or staff member's university residence.

The health and safety of UT students, faculty, staff, and the service or emotional support animal is an important concern; therefore, each request for such an accommodation will be made on a case by case basis. Only in cases where animals and the relevant facts satisfy the applicable criteria described below will the animal be exempt from rules that otherwise restrict or prohibit animals from residing in the student's or staff member's university residence. Except in cases where it is readily apparent that an animal is a service animal, requests for an accommodation regarding service animals or emotional support animals should be supported by sufficient information or documentation for proper consideration of the request.

In all cases, the owner of the animal is responsible for the animal's behavior. The removal of any animal, including, but not limited to, service animals (dogs) and emotional support animals, and any necessary cleaning, repairs and/or pest control will be done at the expense of the resident responsible who will also be subject to disciplinary action. Resident will be permitted to have no more than one animal due to the confined residential living space and any exceptions will be reviewed and made on an individualized basis by SSD (Services for Students with Disabilities).

Service Animals (Dogs)

Per Titles II and III of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the University of Texas at Austin allows a person with a disability to be accompanied by a service animal which is by definition limited to dogs. Service animals (or service dogs) are defined as dogs that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities. Examples of such work or tasks include guiding people who are blind, alerting people who are deaf, pulling a wheelchair, and alerting/protecting a person who is having a seizure. The provision of emotional support, well-being, comfort, or companionship do not constitute work or tasks for the purposes of defining a service dog. The work or task a dog has been trained to provide must be directly related to the person's disability. Students with service dogs are permitted to bring their service dog in all areas of a place of public accommodation. This includes any University housing assigned to the student.

Emotional Support Animals

Per the Fair Housing Act, UT provides reasonable accommodations for an emotional support or assistance animal in university housing. An emotional support animal is an animal that is necessary to afford a person with a disability an equal opportunity to use and enjoy a dwelling when there is an identifiable relationship or nexus between the person's disability and the assistance the animal provides. Typically, an emotional support animal is prescribed to an individual with a disability by a healthcare or mental health professional and is an integral part of a person's treatment process. An emotional support animal is not necessarily a service animal (dog), although in some instances a service animal (dog) could qualify as one. Except to the extent that a service animal also qualifies, emotional support animals are only allowed within a person's residence in university housing.

UHD Service and Emotional Support Animal Procedure:

1. Obtain approval from SSD to have a service/emotional support animal in campus housing
 - a. Complete and submit Request for Housing Accommodations Form
http://housing.utexas.edu/sites/default/files/RequestHousingAccommodations_62718.pdf
 - b. Submit the Housing Accommodation Verification Form for Students with Disabilities (completed by a qualified licensed provider)
<https://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/HousingVerificationForm.012918.pdf>
2. Provide UHD with Signed and Approved Request for Housing Accommodation Form (from SSD office). This form is usually provided to UHD by SSD.
3. Review UHD's Service and Emotional Support Animal Policy
4. Review UHD's Service and Emotional Support Animal Procedure at http://housing.utexas.edu/sites/default/files/SESAnimal_procedures.pdf and submit the signed Procedure Acknowledgment and Information Form, which includes immunization documentation and spay/neuter documentation
5. In cases in which requests for service/emotional support animals in campus housing are denied, students may request a re-review of the decision by the University ADA Coordinators.