

Emotional Support Animal Policy

Longwood University provides reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities living in University-managed housing. Longwood University allows emotional support animals (also known as therapy animals or assistance animals) to live with students in their University-managed housing upon approval by the Accessibility Resources Office

It is important to distinguish between service animals and emotional support animals (ESAs). Service animals are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability. For example, service animals may guide individuals with impaired vision, alert individuals with hearing impairments to sounds, pull a wheelchair, or fetch items used in daily living. Longwood University's Service Animal Policy can be found here: <https://solomon.longwood.edu/studentaffairs/policies--procedures/service-animal.php>

An ESA is typically, but not limited to, a dog or cat, which provides a therapeutic benefit to alleviate or mitigate one or more symptoms of a mental or psychiatric disability. The animal provides support, well-being, comfort, aid, or a calming influence. Because ESAs are not trained to perform work or other service tasks, ESAs are not a service animal and thus not entitled to the same privileges as service animals. ESAs are not permitted in any other area other than the student's assigned living space and immediate surrounding area. ESAs are not permitted in Longwood University living spaces at any time prior to the owner receiving approval from the Accessibility Resources Office. The student is responsible for all costs related to any damage to persons or property created by their ESA.

The student will be asked to provide documentation verifying the following:

1. the student has a disability,
2. the animal is necessary to afford the student with a disability an equal opportunity to use and enjoy a dwelling, and
3. there is a clear and identifiable relationship between the disability and the assistance the animal provides.

The student will be asked to provide documentation for the ESA verifying the following:

1. Vaccinations: The animal must be immunized against diseases common to that type of animal as recommended by the American Veterinary Association. All vaccinations must be current, and proof of vaccinations required by law must be provided prior to moving the animal into University managed housing. Longwood University reserves the right to request updated verification at any time.

If the animal is a dog:

- The dog must be licensed with Prince Edward County and wear a current rabies tag and dog license tag at all times. Prince Edward County, following the Code of Virginia, require all dogs be licensed by the time they reach four (4) months of age. Documentation showing inoculation for rabies is a prerequisite to obtaining a dog license. Prince Edward County requires dogs to wear an owner identification tag at all times.
- The Town of Farmville requires dogs to be on a leash at all times, with the owner in full control of the animal.

2. Temperament: A letter from a veterinarian attesting to the animal's temperament. Longwood University may exclude an ESA from an assigned living space if it:
 - a. poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others;
 - b. the size of the animal is not suitable for Longwood University living spaces,
 - c. would cause substantial physical damage to the property of others;
 - d. would pose an undue financial or administrative burden, or
 - e. results in a fundamental alteration of the University's program(s).

The following steps will comprise the process for approval under this policy:

1. Registration with Accessibility Resources Office
2. Meet with Director of Accessibility Resources Office to review need for emotional support animal
3. If approved, review and sign the University's Emotional Support Animal Agreement