

Animals On Campus Policy

Introduction

Saint Peter's University generally does not permit animals or pets to reside on campus. However, registered service animals and emotional support animals (ESAs) are permitted on University property in accordance with applicable federal and state laws. This Policy is adopted to provide guidance to students in order to protect the rights of persons with disabilities, to ensure the protection of persons from animals, and to require the proper care for animals while on campus.

This Policy is adopted pursuant to Title I, Title II, the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 Act, 42 U.S.C. § 12101, et seq., the Fair Housing Act, 42 U.S.C. § 3601, et seq., their implementing regulations and interpretive guidance.

Scope of Policy

This policy applies to students with an animal on University Property.

Definitions

Controlled Spaces: Controlled spaces are defined as any indoor or outdoor areas of University Property where the general public is normally not permitted to be. Examples of Controlled Space include, but are not limited to, academic buildings, residence halls, classrooms, employee workstations, food preparation areas, athletic practice fields, and locker rooms.

Handler: An individual with a disability who is the user of a service animal or ESA.

Emotional Support Animal (ESA): An animal that is required by an individual with a disability and provides emotional support or alleviates one or more of the identified symptoms or effects of the person's disability. An ESA may provide companionship and help with depression, anxiety and certain phobias but does not have special training to perform tasks for a person with a disability. ESAs are also commonly known as companion or therapeutic animals. ESAs are not service animals.

Pet: A pet is any domesticated animal that is not a service animal or an ESA.

Public Spaces: Public spaces are indoor and outdoor areas on University Property where the public is generally allowed to occupy. Examples of public spaces include but are not limited to parking garages, shuttle buses, walkways, and dining areas open to the general public.

Service Animal: Any dog specifically trained to do work or perform task(s) for the benefit of and directly related to an individual's disability, including those retired from such service. Animals whose sole function is to provide comfort or emotional support are not service animals. A miniature horse may also be a service animal where reasonable if: 1) housebroken; 2) under the control of the handler; 3) in a facility that can accommodate its type, size and weight; and 4) its presence will not compromise the legitimate safety requirements necessary for the operation of the facility.

University Property: University property includes land and buildings owned, leased or controlled by the University and includes any satellite campuses.

Policy

Pets

Pets are prohibited on all University property other than outdoor public spaces. Exceptions may be made to permit pets on other University property when exceptional circumstances exist or for other good cause shown. Requests for exceptions may be made by individuals residing on campus to the Vice President for Student Affairs or a designee.

Service Animal

Service animals are permitted on University property wherever the handler is permitted. Service animals may be prohibited from controlled spaces if the animal's presence may compromise a sterile environment or create other

significant safety and health concerns. The determination to prohibit a service animal from a controlled space will be made on a case-by-case basis by the Director of Disability Services.

When it is not obvious what a service animal provides, University employees are permitted to make the following two inquiries from the handler:

1. Is the service animal required because of a disability?
2. What work or task has the service animal been trained to perform?

Handlers are responsible for any and all damages caused by their service animal on campus and must take appropriate precautions to prevent property damage and/or injury. If a student's service animal causes damage to University property, the cost of the damage will be assessed and assigned to the student's bill.

The cost of care, arrangements, and responsibility for the health and well-being of the service animal are the sole responsibility of the handler at all times. Service animals housed in University residences must be crated or caged when left unattended; they should not be left unattended for extended periods.

Service animals must be under the full control of the handler at all times on campus. Reasonable behavior is expected from all service animals while on campus. If a service animal exhibits behavior that could reasonably be deemed to be disruptive or detrimental to others, the handler is expected to take effective action to control the animal, correct the situation, or remove the animal from the affected area.

When outside of the handler's residence, the animal must be harnessed, leashed, or tethered unless these devices interfere with the work of the animal, or the individual's disability prevents using these devices. In that event, the handler must maintain control of the animal through voice, signal or other effective controls.

The animal must be house-trained. The handler is solely responsible for the clean-up of waste when the service animal relieves itself. Service animal waste clean-up includes appropriate waste clean-up equipment and proper disposal of waste.

Emotional Support Animal (ESA)

An ESA is only permitted in an individual's unit of housing on University property, and is prohibited in all other controlled spaces. An ESA is permitted in outdoor public spaces when confined to an animal carrier or controlled by a leash or harness that is no longer than 6 feet in length, and is prohibited in all other public spaces.

The cost of care, arrangements, and responsibility for the health and well-being of the ESA are the sole responsibility of the handler at all times. The handler of the ESA must provide appropriate food, water, and shelter to the ESA, and keep the ESA and its shelter clean and free of odors. The ESA must be fed and watered inside the residential unit on University property; food and water may not be left outside of the unit or the building.

The handler of the ESA is solely responsible for its care and supervision; the University assumes no responsibility for the care or comfort of an ESA.

Routine maintenance of the ESA must be provided by the handler. For dogs and cats, this means flea and tick prevention and deworming, vaccinations, and annual examinations. Residence Life may request updated veterinary verification annually or at any time during the individual's residency.

The handler of the ESA must comply with all required State and municipal license requirements, including current identification and vaccination tags, as applicable to the animal. If applicable, the ESA must meet the requirements of State regulations concerning the possession of nongame and exotic wildlife in N.J.A.C. 7:25-4.1, et. seq. ESAs should be tagged with contact information for the handler.

The ESA must be confined to the handler's residential unit and be housebroken or caged at all times. If the unit is occupied by more than one resident, the ESA must be confined to a cage or kennel. The handler of the ESA is responsible for disposing of all animal waste in a sturdy bag tied securely before being disposed of in an outside trash receptacle.

An ESA may be left unattended for reasonable periods of time based on the breed and totality of the circumstances. The ESA may not be left overnight in University housing to be cared for by anyone other than the handler unless

approved by Residence Life. If the handler leaves the ESA unattended for longer than a reasonable period of time and it places the animal's health or safety in jeopardy, the animal may be removed from campus.

The ESA may not be neglected or abused. If neglect or abuse is suspected, Residence Life will contact the handler of the ESA, Campus Safety, and the Humane Society. Residence Life and, where appropriate, an animal control officer or humane society representative, may enter a residential unit to remove the ESA if, in the University's judgment, an emergency requires removal, or the handler has abandoned the animal, left the animal for an extended period without food or water, or has failed to care for a sick animal. In such an event, Residence Life will notify the handler of the animal as soon as reasonably possible after removal.

Handlers are responsible for any and all damages caused by their ESAs on campus and must take appropriate precautions to prevent property damage and/or injury. If a student's ESA causes damage to University property, the cost of the damage will be assessed and assigned to the student's bill.

Registering On-Campus Animals

Approved Animal

Either a Service Animal or an Emotional Support Animal, which has been approved by the University for the handler to use the animal on campus and/or to bring the animal into University housing.

Service Animals

The Office of Disability Services encourages all those using service animals on campus to register with the office. By having a Service Animal on file, Disability Services can assist the handler in addressing any issues that may arise on campus. Students looking to reside on campus with a service animal must complete the Accommodation Request (https://saintpeters-accommodate.symplicity.com/public_accommodation/) form to receive Housing accommodations. Upon receipt of your application, Disability Services will contact you to complete the process of registering your animal.

Emotional Support Animals (ESAs)

The Office of Disability Services requires documentation and an intake meeting to verify the need for an Emotional Support Animal (ESA) on campus. Follow these 3 steps to initiate your application to have an ESA on campus:

1. Have your appropriate treating medical professional complete the Certification of Healthcare Provider (<https://www.saintpeters.edu/wp-content/blogs.dir/265/files/2025/01/Certification-of-Health-Care-Provider-01-2025.pdf>) to document your need for the Emotional Support Animal on campus.
2. Have the support animal's Veterinarian complete the Veterinarian Verification Form, including a copy of the animal's vaccination record.
3. Complete and return an Accommodation Request (https://saintpeters-accommodate.symplicity.com/public_accommodation/) specifying your request to have an Emotional Support Animal accompany you on campus. Upload the Certification of Healthcare Provider form (from step 1) and the Veterinarian Verification form (from step 2) right from within the web-based Student Intake Application (this step, 3) before you do the final submit.

Upon receipt of a completed application, Disability Services will schedule an intake appointment with you to review the request. If approved, you will need to sign an ESA Handler Agreement before bringing the animal to campus.

Appeals and Grievances

First, you must contact the Dean of Students' office in writing and request that your application and documentation be reviewed again. At this time, you may also provide additional supporting documentation. An administrator will reach out to you within 3 business days to set up a meeting to discuss the matter and attempt to resolve the issue. A student may select one advisor or support person of their choice to be present during the meeting. This person may include a parent, guardian, friend, attorney, or other person of their choice. The individual must notify the administrator two (2) University business or class days in advance of the meeting if accompanied by an advisor or support person is an attorney. The advisor's actions are limited to advising the student. The purpose of the advisor or support person is to assist the student in preparation for the meeting, to accompany them to the meeting, and to provide support. An advisor or support person is prohibited from presenting information, asking questions, or making any statements during the meeting. Saint Peter's is committed to working with you and providing you with a safe and

comfortable environment to discuss these matters. You will be told within 10 business days whether any additional or alternative accommodations will be made.

If your meeting with an administrator does not resolve a housing accommodation issue, you may file a formal Housing Accommodation Appeal with the Vice President for Student Affairs at studentlife@saintpeters.edu. The appeal must include your contact information, student ID number, a detailed description of what happened, and a requested solution. Your appeal must be filed within 10 days of the decision. The Vice President for Student Affairs will consider your appeal and may schedule a meeting to discuss the matter with you further. You can expect a decision within 10 days of receipt of your housing accommodation appeal. This decision will be final.

Removal of Animal

A person with a disability may be asked to remove a service animal from University property if: a) the service animal is out of control and the handler does not take effective action to control it and; b) the service animal is not housebroken. If there is a legitimate reason to ask that a service animal be removed, the handler must be offered the opportunity to participate in the University program, activity and service without the service animal's presence.

Approval of an ESA may be rescinded if: a) the ESA is out of control and the handler does not take effective action to control it; b) the ESA's presence fundamentally alters the nature of a program or activity; c) the ESA has caused substantial physical damage to the property of others; d) the ESA creates a substantial threat to the health or safety of persons; e) the ESA substantially interferes with the reasonable enjoyment of University property by others; f) the handler neglects or abuses the ESA; or g) the ESA is disruptive.

It is a crime in the State of New Jersey to recklessly interfere with, injure or cause the death of a service animal. N.J.S.A. 2C:29-3.2. Any employee, student or visitor who, through their actions, inactions or the actions of their pet or ESA, recklessly interferes with, injures or causes the death of a service animal, shall be in violation of this Policy and New Jersey law. Violations shall be enforced by University Police and will also require restitution for the value of the service animal and its replacement, veterinary expenses for the service animal, and lost wages and medical expenses for the handler.

Community Considerations and Conflicting Disabilities

The use of Service and Emotional Support Animals may negatively affect others with allergies, respiratory impairments, and other relevant disability conditions. Individuals with conditions that are negatively affected by the presence of an animal on campus should contact Disability Services. The individual with the affected condition who is raising the concern may be asked to provide medical documentation that identifies the condition(s) as a disability and register with Disability Services; a determination will be made on whether there is a need for an accommodation. Any accommodations made will consider the needs of both individuals to resolve the conflict as efficiently and expeditiously as possible. Concerns of this nature will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

Disability Services will work in conjunction with the Residence Life Staff to alert potential roommates/suitemates that an Approved Animal will be present in an effort to address concerns, including those related to allergies and objections or fears related to certain types of animals, as early as possible in the housing assignment process. Issues or concerns that may arise during the academic year should be reported as quickly as possible to Disability Services.

Campus community members should contact Disability Services to discuss any special situations (regarding Approved Animals) that are not covered by this Policy, as well as any exceptions to this Policy that might be requested.

Last Updated: November 2025