

Rule 3344-79-01 | Animals on Campus.

Ohio Administrative Code / 3344 / Chapter 3344-79 | Animals

Effective: February 9, 2026 Promulgated Under: 111.15

(A) Animals and pets are generally not permitted within Cleveland state university buildings or vehicles. The exceptions to this prohibition are:

- (1) Animals used in current teaching, research, and clinical activities, or other university-sponsored programs or activities; the presence of an animal(s) shall be approved by the office of environmental health and safety.
- (2) Service animals.
- (3) Emotional support animals (ESA).
- (4) Animals authorized by law (e.g., patrol dogs accompanying police).

(B) Definitions.

- (1) Handler. A person with a disability that a service animal assists or a personal care attendant who handles the animal for a person with a disability.
- (2) Service animal. Any dog or miniature horse individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability and meets the definition of "service animal" under the Americans with Disabilities Act ("ADA") regulations at 28 CFR 35.104. The work or tasks performed must be directly related to the individual's disability.
- (3) Owner. An individual who owns, harbors, or keeps an animal, accepts responsibility for its well-being and care.

(4) Emotional support animal. An ESA is any animal that provides emotional support alleviating one or more symptoms or effects of a person's disability. ESAs provide companionship, relieve loneliness, and sometimes help with depression, anxiety, and certain phobias, but do not have special training to perform tasks that assist people with disabilities.

(5) Unauthorized animal. Any animal in a residence hall room other than a fish kept in a single tank no larger than ten gallons or an ESA that has been officially approved and registered with the university.

(6) Assistance animal. An animal that works, aids, or performs tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability, or that provides emotional support that alleviates one or more identified effects of a person's disability. Under the Fair Housing Act, an assistance animal may be either a service animal or emotional support animal.

(C) Service animals.

(1) In compliance with applicable law, CSU generally allows service animals in its buildings, classrooms, residence halls, meetings, dining areas, recreational facilities, activities and events when the animal is accompanied by an individual with a disability who indicates the service animal is trained to provide, and does provide, a specific service to them that is directly related to their disability.

(2) CSU may not permit service animals when the animal poses a substantial and direct threat to the health or safety of the campus community or when the presence of the animal constitutes a fundamental alteration to the nature of the program or service. CSU will make those determinations on a case-by-case basis.

(3) In general, CSU will not ask about the nature or extent of a person's disability but may make two inquiries to determine whether an animal qualifies as a service animal. CSU may ask:

(a) If the animal is required because of a disability; and

(b) What work or task the animal has been trained to perform.

(4) CSU cannot require documentation, such as proof that the animal has been certified, trained, or licensed as a service animal. Generally, CSU may not make any 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.

(5) CSU community members who wish to bring a service animal to campus are strongly encouraged to partner with the office of disability and testing services (ODTS). Additionally, students who plan to live in on-campus housing must inform the department of residence life and housing (RLH) that they plan to have a service animal with them in student housing.

(6) Handlers are responsible for any damage or injuries caused by their animals and must take appropriate precautions to prevent property damage or injury. The cost of care, arrangements and responsibilities for the wellbeing of a service animal are the sole responsibility of the handler at all times.

(7) Service animal control requirements:

(a) The animal should respond to voice or hand commands at all times and be in full control of the handler.

(b) To the extent possible, the animal should be unobtrusive to other individuals and the learning, living, and working environment.

(c) Identification. It is recommended that the animal wear some type of commonly recognized identification symbol, identifying the animal as a working animal, but not disclosing disability.

(8) Removal of a service animal can occur due to the following reasons:

- (a) Out of control animal: a handler may be directed to remove an animal that is out of control and the handler does not take effective action to control it. If improper animal behavior happens repeatedly, the handler may be prohibited from bringing the animal into any university facility until the handler can demonstrate that the handler has taken significant steps to mitigate the behavior.
- (b) Non-housebroken animal: a handler may be directed to remove an animal that is not housebroken.
- (c) Direct threat: a handler may be directed to remove an animal that CSU determines to be a substantial and direct threat to the health and safety of individuals.

(9) Where a service animal is properly removed pursuant to this policy, CSU will work with the handler to determine reasonable alternative opportunities to participate in the service, program, or activity without having the service animal on the premises.

(D) Emotional support animals. Under the Fair Housing Act, students with disabilities may request an ESA as a housing accommodation. To qualify, the ESA must be necessary for the student to access and enjoy residential life, with a clear link between the documented disability and the support the animal provides. ESAs are only allowed in the student's residence hall room and outdoor areas.

(1) Reasonable accommodation decisions are made on a case-by-case basis based on the application and supporting documentation. Once ODTS completes the process of determining whether an ESA is a reasonable accommodation, it will notify the student as well as RLH. Alternative accommodations may be considered. If approved, the student must meet with RLH to review responsibilities and register the animal. No animal is allowed on campus until final approval is granted by RLH.

(a) ESA applications with supporting documentation must be received by the following dates for consideration. Requests beyond the deadline will be considered on a case-by-case basis as determined by ODTs:

(i) Fall semester - June first for returning students and July first for new students.

(ii) Spring semester - December first for all students.

(b) The university may inspect the owner's residence to ensure cleanliness and maintain safe, sanitary conditions.

(c) Violating the ESA agreement may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including immediate removal of the animal.

(2) Owner's responsibilities for emotional support animals.

(a) ESAs must be licensed in accordance with Cuyahoga county and Ohio state laws.

(b) ESA records must be submitted to RLH, with all vaccinations kept current. Rabies tags must be visibly displayed at all times.

(c) ESAs must be kept in the owner's residence hall room and are not permitted in public areas of the residence hall except to enter or exit the building and are not permitted in other campus buildings. During transit, the animal must be leashed, harnessed, or caged.

(d) ESAs must behave appropriately and not be disruptive. Owners are responsible for managing behavior, and repeated disruptions may result in removal from campus.

(e) ESAs must be in good health, and owners are responsible for addressing any health issues promptly at their own expense.

(f) ESA owners are responsible for their ESA's hygiene, grooming, and routine flea/tick prevention at their own expense. University facilities may not be used for bathing, and the university is not liable for these tasks. If fleas, ticks, or other pests are found, the residence will be treated by a university-approved pest control service. Any cost for the specialized treatment(s) beyond routine pest management will be billed to the owner

(g) Owners must care for their housebroken animals, carry cleanup supplies, and dispose of waste immediately. All approved ESAs must be a year of age or older.

(h) Owners must dispose of animal waste in designated trash areas. Residence hall trashcans may not be used.

(i) Approved animals may not stay overnight in university housing without their owner. If the owner leaves campus for more than one day, the ESA must go with them.

(j) The owner must notify RLH in writing if the approved ESA is no longer needed or no longer resides with them. A new request is required to replace the animal.

(k) Owners are responsible for cleaning and repair costs beyond standard services after vacating. The university may charge these expenses to the owner's student account.

(l) Any violation of these responsibilities may result in immediate removal of the animal from the university and referral to the university community standards process.

(m) If the approved ESA is removed for any reason, the owner must continue to meet housing obligations unless a waiver is granted.

(n) Owners will sign an annual emotional support animal agreement.

(3) Removal of emotional support animals. The university may issue a warning or remove an ESA from campus for the following reasons:

- (a) The ESA is not under the direct physical control of the owner;
- (b) The ESA's behavior is disruptive to its surroundings or other members of the university community;
- (c) The ESA poses a direct threat to the health and safety of others;
- (d) The ESA's presence fundamentally alters the nature of a program or activity;
- (e) The owner fails to comply with any of her/his responsibilities under this policy and corresponding procedures; or
- (f) The owner violates any aspect of their ESA agreement.

(4) Any unauthorized animal violation will be subject to the community standards process.

(E) Appeals and grievances. Any person dissatisfied by a decision concerning a service animal or emotional support animal may appeal through the office for protected rights.

(F) Policy review cycle. The compliance office is responsible for this policy. At a minimum, every five years, the compliance office shall ensure that the policy is reviewed and recommend whether the policy should be reaffirmed without revision, amended, or rescinded. Policies may be reviewed on an earlier timeline depending on necessity and change in law or practice.

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Supplemental Information

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