



Southwest Baptist UNIVERSITY

Emotional Support Animal Guidelines:

The following guidance has been established by SBU to assist in making decisions regarding the presence of emotional support animals in the residence halls for students with disabilities. This guidance pertains to emotional support animals only, and not to service animals and pets. SBU reserves the right to amend this guidance at any time.

Section I: Emotional Support Animals

An “emotional support animal” is defined as an animal that alleviates one or more identified symptoms or effects of a person’s disability. It allows the student with a disability to receive full benefit or enjoyment of the residence facility. A “pet” is defined as an animal kept for ordinary use and companionship. Residents are not permitted to keep pets in University housing, other than fish.

Emotional support animals may not be brought into University housing without expressed approval from the Director of Residence Life. Generally, the presence of emotional support animals is approved for University housing only and will not be permitted in other campus buildings (e.g., libraries, academic buildings, classrooms, labs, student center).

Section II: Requesting Emotional Support Animals in University Housing

A student requesting permission to keep an emotional support animal in campus housing should complete the steps below. Approval of an emotional support animal, and (separately) the particular animal requested by the student, are determined on a case-by-case basis. Students should allow a minimum of 4 weeks for the review process to be completed. Students must reapply each academic year to have an emotional support animal in university housing.

- A. The student must complete a Disclosure of Disability. The form can be found on the SBU website at <https://www.sbuniv.edu/academics/academic-resources/disability-disclosure.php>. If a physical copy is needed, one can be obtained through the Accessibility Coordinator’s office located in the University Success Center. After the student has submitted the Disclosure of Disability form, the Director of Residence Life will contact the student to discuss their request to have an emotional support animal in college housing.
- B. The student should request permission to have an emotional support animal from the Director of Residence Life and provide current documentation of the disability from a physician, psychiatrist, psychologist, or other mental health professional. Documentation should include the following:
 1. Verification of a disability that substantially limits a major life activity.

2. A description of why the animal is necessary for the student to use or enjoy the living arrangements provided by the university.
 3. A description of an identifiable relationship or nexus between the disability and the support the animal provides.
- C.** Sign a release form that will be sent to your health professional allowing them to fill out the “Request for Information Re: Emotional Support Animal form.”
- D.** After steps A, B and C are completed, the Director of Residence Life will review the student’s request.
1. If the request is **approved**:
 - a. Communication will be sent to the student pertaining to their responsibilities of having an emotional support animal on campus (see Section III).
 - b. The student must complete the “Emotional Support Animal Registration Form” (see form below).
 - c. The student’s roommate(s), apartment mate(s), or housemate(s) will be notified, as appropriate, to obtain their agreement to have a specific emotional support animal housed in their living environment (see form below).
 - d. Should there be conflicting considerations between the student approved for an emotional support animal and the needs of roommate(s), apartment mate(s), or housemate(s), such as health/allergy conditions or fear of the animal, either the student requesting the emotional support animal or the non-approving roommate(s), apartment mate(s), or housemate(s) may be moved to a different location based on space availability. Residence Life will respond in a timely manner and will carefully consider options for all involved students.
 - e. The animal may not reside in campus housing until the following forms have been submitted: 1) Emotional Support Animal Agreement Form, 2) Emotional Support Animal Registration Form, and 3) Roommate/Apartment Mate/Housemate Acknowledgement Form, if applicable. Residence Life building staff will be notified (e.g., the Director of Residence Life and Resident Director), as appropriate.
 - f. The student must provide contact information for an alternate caregiver who lives off campus and can care for the animal if the approved student is unable to do so (e.g., unexpected hospitalization).

- g. SBU will assume no responsibility/liability for the care of a student's emotional support animal.
 - h. The student must notify the Director of Residence Life if the animal is no longer in residence or if the student is requesting that the approved animal be replaced by another Emotional Support Animal.
2. If the request is **denied**, the student may appeal the decision via the Provost.

Section III: Responsibilities of Students Approved for Emotional Support Animals

A. Care and supervision. The Emotional Support Animal is the responsibility of the student, who is required to maintain full control of the animal at all times.

1. An Emotional Support Animal must be contained within the student's privately assigned individual living accommodations (e.g., room, suite, apartment) except to the extent the individual is taking the animal out for natural relief. When transported outside of these environments, the animal must be on a leash or transported in an animal carrier.
2. The student is responsible for ensuring that the emotional support animal does not interfere with routine activities of the residence or cause difficulties for other residents.
3. Emotional support animals may not become the responsibility of another student living on campus. The animal must be taken with the student if leaving the campus for a prolonged period of time, as appropriate for the animal, including overnight.
4. The student is responsible for ensuring proper cleanup of the animal's waste and, when appropriate, must toilet the animal in designated areas. Solid waste—including litter—must be placed in a sturdy, securely tied bags before being disposed of in outside trash dumpsters.
5. The Director of Residence Life may place reasonable conditions or restrictions on approved animals, depending on the nature and characteristics of the animal.

B. Health and wellbeing. Local ordinances regarding animals apply to emotional support animals, including requirements for immunization, licensing, noise, restraint, at-large animals, and dangerous animals.

1. Dogs must wear a license tag and a current rabies vaccination tag.
2. Animals housed in campus housing must be in good health as established by a licensed veterinarian.

C. Financial responsibility. Any cost for the actions of the emotional support animal -- including bodily injury, property damage, pest control and/or non-standard cleaning -- must be met by the student. SBU reserves the right to bill the student's account for charges related to emotional support animals.

D. Animal Removal. Removal of the animal from the University may be necessary if there are any violations of student responsibilities, the animal poses a direct threat to health or safety of others, or other situations arise that negatively impact the campus environment. Should this occur, (1) the student will have 48 hours to remove the animal from campus; (2) If the animal is not removed, SBU reserves the right to remove the animal and take it to the nearest humane society location. (3) The student will be reported for violation of the student code of conduct. (4) The student will be expected to fulfill any housing obligations for the remainder of the student's housing contract.

Emotional Support Animal Agreement Form

By my signature below, I verify that 1) I have read, understand, and will abide by the guidelines outlined above, and 2) I agree to provide the additional information below that may be required to complete my request to have an emotional support animal in college housing.

Student Signature

Date

Student Life Representative

Date

Emotional Support Animal Registration Form

Student's Information

Student's Name

ID#

Phone

Student's On-Campus Address

Student's Permanent Address

City/State

Zip

Emotional Support Animal's Information

Animal's Name

Species

Breed

Animal's Sex

Color

Age & Weight

Description of Animal:

Alternate Caregiver's Information

Alternate Caregiver's Name

Phone

Alternate Caregiver's Address

City/State

Zip Code

Additional Documents

Please attach, as appropriate, a veterinarian's verification that the animal has all veterinary-recommended vaccinations to maintain the animal's health and prevent contagious disease, as required by local ordinances and regulation.

Roommate/Apartment Mate/Housemate Acknowledgement Form

By my signature below, I understand that I will share the common areas of my assigned residential space with the animal approved by this agreement. Should I have any concerns regarding the approved animal, I will discuss my concerns with the approved animal's owner and with Residence Life.

_____	_____	_____
Resident's Name	ID #	Date

_____	_____	_____
Resident's Name	ID #	Date

_____	_____	_____
Resident's Name	ID #	Date

_____	_____	_____
Resident's Name	ID #	Date

_____	_____	_____
Resident's Name	ID #	Date