

# **THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA ANIMAL CONTROL GUIDELINES AND ASSISTANCE ANIMAL POLICY**

## **I. Animal Control Guidelines for The University of Alabama (“UA”)**

The Office of Environmental Health and Safety is responsible for promulgating health and safety standards for students, faculty, staff and campus visitors, and has promulgated the following guidelines regarding animal control in its on-line safety manual, subject to the guidelines set forth below for accommodating individuals with disabilities:

1. Animals shall not be brought onto UA grounds unless they are under the complete control of the owner and present no hazard to people. The owner must at all times clean up after the animal.
2. Animals are not permitted in any UA building or in any UA transit vehicles even though leashed, except for animals involved in research projects or as otherwise set forth herein.
3. Animals may not be tethered on campus.
4. Animals, including dogs and cats, found running at large or without evidence of current rabies vaccination are subject to confinement in the Tuscaloosa Metro Animal Shelter.
5. Complaints concerning animals in UA buildings or running loose on campus should be reported to the UA Customer Service Center at 348-6001.
6. Concerns relating to dead animals on the UA campus should be referred to the UA Customer Service Center at 348-6001.

Tuscaloosa municipal ordinances prohibit any dog from being at large within the city limits. Per that ordinance, for dogs controlled by a leash, the leash must not be more than ten feet in length. Additionally, all Tuscaloosa Municipal Ordinances and Alabama State Laws regarding animal care, vaccinations, etc. must be followed.

## **II. UA Assistance Animal Policy**

### **A. Policy Statement**

It is the policy of UA to ensure that people with disabilities who require the use of service or support animals (collectively referred to as “Assistance Animals”) as a reasonable accommodation receive the benefit of the work or tasks performed by such animals or the therapeutic support they provide. As such, service animals assisting individuals with disabilities are generally permitted in all facilities, UA-owned housing, transit vehicles and programs on the UA campus that are open to the public or to students except as described below. Support animals are generally permitted only in UA-owned housing and only when it is necessary to afford the individual with a disability an equal opportunity to use and enjoy UA-owned housing, provided certain conditions, as described herein, are met.

## **B. Definitions**

Service animal is defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) as any dog that is 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. Other species of animals, whether wild or domestic, trained or untrained, are not service animals for the purposes of this policy.<sup>1</sup> Support animals, sometimes referred to as emotional support animals, therapy animals and/or companion animals, are not service animals under the ADA.

Work or tasks performed. Work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the handler's disability. Examples of work or tasks include, but are not limited to:

- Assisting individuals who are blind or have low vision with navigation and other tasks,
- Alerting individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to the presence of people or sounds,
- Pulling a wheelchair,
- Assisting an individual during a seizure,
- Alerting individuals to the presence of allergens,
- Retrieving items such as medicine or the telephone,
- Providing physical support and assistance with balance and stability to individuals with mobility disabilities, and
- Helping persons with psychiatric and neurological disabilities by preventing or interrupting impulsive or destructive behaviors.

The crime deterrent effects of an animal's presence and the provision of emotional support, well-being, comfort, or companionship do not constitute work or tasks for the purposes of this definition.

Support animal, sometimes referred to as an emotional support animal, therapy animal, and/or companion animal, is defined as an animal that is necessary to afford the student with a disability an equal opportunity to use and enjoy UA-owned housing, and provides emotional or other support that ameliorates one or more identified symptoms or effects of a person's disability. Unlike service animals, support animals are not required to be trained to perform work or tasks.

## **C. Information Regarding the Use of Service Animals in UA Non-Residential Facilities**

Students who use a service animal in UA facilities are not required, but strongly encouraged, to contact the University's Office of Disability Services ("ODS"), which can

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<sup>1</sup>Although not a "service animal", the use of a miniature horse by an individual with a disability is permitted under the ADA in limited circumstances.

assist in making recommendations on how the student can handle inquiries. UA officials may appropriately ask the student to answer: a) whether the service animal is required because of a disability, and b) what work or tasks the animal is trained to perform. It is helpful for ODS to know the type of service animal, a description of the service animal (e.g. weight, breed, etc.), and the animal's name. A student dissatisfied with a decision concerning an animal as a reasonable accommodation in UA programs or facilities may seek further review through the UA Conflict Resolution Policy at <http://www.ods.ua.edu/students/Conflict%20resolution.htm>.

Employees requesting to have a service animal at work should present the type of information noted above to the Department of Human Resources, G-69 Rose Administration Building, (205) 348-7733. Employees dissatisfied with a decision concerning a service animal at work may seek further review through the UA ADA/504 Coordinator at 171 Rose Administration Building, Box 870300, Tuscaloosa, AL, Phone: (205) 348-5855; TDD: (205) 348-5573; Fax: (205) 348-7153, or via email at [ghood@aalan.ua.edu](mailto:ghood@aalan.ua.edu).

Visitors. Service animals accompanying individuals with disabilities are welcome in all areas of campus that are open to the public, except as otherwise prohibited in this policy. Specific questions related to the use of service animals on the UA campus by visitors can be directed to the ADA/504 Coordinator (contact information above).

#### **D. Information Regarding the Use of Assistance Animals in UA-owned Housing.**

Pets, other than fish, are generally prohibited in UA-owned housing. Service animals and approved support animals are not considered pets, and are permitted to reside in UA-owned housing with the student with a disability whom they accompany.

A student with a disability residing with a service animal in UA-owned housing must complete and return to Housing and Residential Communities (“HRC”) the Assistance Animal Agreement prior to the service animal moving into the UA-owned housing (preferably at least 30 days prior to move in). Students may choose to submit the voluntary Service Animal Registration form in order to provide information about the service animal to HRC. For further information on service animals in UA-owned housing, a student may contact HRC at 205-348-6676 or [housing@sa.ua.edu](mailto:housing@sa.ua.edu).

If a student with a disability needs to reside in UA-owned housing with a support animal in order to afford the student an equal opportunity to use and enjoy said housing, the student must request a modification to UA’s no-pet policy. Specifically, before a support animal can move into UA-owned housing, the student must submit and return to ODS the (1) Support Animal Accommodation Request form, and (2) Support Animal Accommodation Request Supporting Medical Documentation form which must be completed by the student’s physician, psychiatrist, or other mental health professional. This documentation should be provided in time to allow ODS to make a decision at least thirty days prior to move in. The request will be reviewed to determine whether such request (1) constitutes a reasonable accommodation for a student with a documented

disability; and (2) the animal is necessary to afford the student with a disability an equal opportunity to use and enjoy UA-owned housing; and (3) there is an identifiable relationship or nexus between the student's disability and the assistance the animal provides (i.e., that the animal provides supports that alleviates at least one of the identified symptoms or effects of the disability). A request will not, however, be granted if the animal poses a direct threat to the health and safety of others; would cause substantial physical damage to the property of others; would pose undue financial and administrative burden; or would fundamentally alter the nature of UA housing operations. If ODS approves the support animal, the student must complete and return to HRC the Assistance Animal Agreement prior to the support animal moving into the residence hall.

Generally, support animals are not allowed indoors on UA's campus other than in UA's residence halls.

A student dissatisfied with a decision concerning an animal as a reasonable accommodation in UA-owned housing may seek further review through the UA Conflict Resolution Policy at <http://www.ods.ua.edu/students/Conflict%20resolution.htm>.

#### **E. When an Assistance Animal May be Asked to Leave or Prohibited in a UA Facility or Program**

In certain situations discussed below, an Assistance Animal may not be permitted or UA may ask that the Assistance Animal leave a UA facility or program. In those instances, UA will give the individual with a disability the opportunity to participate in the service, program, or activity without having the Assistance Animal on the premises.

- Assistance Animals must not engage in unacceptable or disruptive behavior that is disruptive to other participants within the program or facility. If an animal does engage in unacceptable behavior, the owner is expected to use proper training techniques to correct the behavior. UA may ask the owner to remove an Assistance Animal from the premises if the animal is out of control and/or disruptive and the owner does not take effective action to control it. UA may bar the animal from the facility until significant steps (such as additional training for the animal and owner) are taken to mitigate the behavior.
- UA may ask the owner to remove an Assistance Animal from the premises if the animal is not housebroken or, in the case of a support animal that uses a designated cage or litter box, the owner fails to clean such cage or box such that the cleanliness of the room is not maintained.
- Service animals may be excluded in areas where the presence of the animal fundamentally alters the nature of a program or activity or presents a safety hazard. Examples may include, but are not limited to, research labs, areas requiring protective clothing, food preparation areas, primate labs, and areas with sharp objects on the floor or protruding from a surface, extremely hot or cold material on the floor, or a high level of dust. Service animals are not permitted in

any lab area requiring Personal Protective Equipment, unless a documented need is reviewed and approved by ODS and Environmental Health and Safety. Support animals are generally permitted only in UA-owned housing, and may be excluded where the presence of the animal fundamentally alters the nature of the program or activity or presents a safety hazard.

## **F. Requirements for Assistance Animals**

An infraction of any of the following behaviors or policies may result in the exclusion of the Assistance Animal from campus property.

- Compliance with City Ordinances/Laws. All individuals must abide by current city ordinances/laws pertaining to licensing and vaccination requirements for animals. It is the responsibility of the owner and/or user of the animal to know about and comply with these ordinances and/or laws, some of which are noted below.
- Immunization. An Assistance Animal must be immunized when three months of age and annually thereafter. Proof of such immunization is required. Current rabies vaccination tags must be attached to a collar or harness worn by the Assistance Animal.
- License or Documentation. A service animal does not have to be licensed or certified as a service animal. Licensing or certification as a support animal is neither sufficient nor necessary to establish that the animal is a support animal.
- Control. An Assistance Animal shall be under the full control of its owner at all times. An Assistance Animal shall have a harness or leash. If the owner is unable because of a disability to use a harness, leash, or other tether for his or her service animal, or if the use of a harness, leash, or other tether would interfere with the service animal's safe, effective performance of work or tasks, then the service animal must be otherwise under the owner's control (e.g., voice commands, signals, or other effective means). The care and supervision of the Assistance Animal is the responsibility of the owner.
- Hygiene and Cleanliness. Assistance Animals must be clean. Daily grooming and occasional baths should be utilized to keep animal odor to a minimum. Adequate flea prevention and control must be maintained. If an Assistance Animal's odor is offensive to other individuals, the owner will be directed to bathe the Assistance Animal prior to returning to the facility. Repeated occurrences may result in the Assistance Animal being temporarily barred from the facility until steps are taken to comply with the rules regarding cleanliness.
- Cleanup Rule. Owners must clean up after the Assistance Animal. If a disability prevents the owner from cleaning up after the service animal, this information must be provided to ODS if a student, the Office of Human Resources if an

employee, or the ADA Coordinator for all other circumstances. Those offices will work with the individual with a disability on reasonable modifications to this rule.

- Animal Health. Animals to be housed in UA-owned housing must have an annual clean bill of health from a licensed veterinarian.
- Expense and Care. The care, arrangements and responsibilities for the Assistance Animal, and the costs associated with the same, are the sole responsibility of the owner at all times.
- Assistance Animal Agreement. Students residing with an Assistance Animal in UA-owned housing must abide by the terms and conditions of the Assistance Animal Agreement.
- Damages. Assistance Animal owners are financially responsible for the actions of the Assistance Animal including bodily injury, property damage, cleaning and/or replacement of furniture, carpet, blinds, and any and all other damages which may arise.

**Effective Date:        December 1, 2013**  
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