

Service and Support Animal Policy

Service and Support Animal Policies

Wallace State Community College is committed to assuring equal access for students with disabilities as well as guests that may visit campus. The College complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) and the Fair Housing Act. The policies and requirements are designed to allow equal access while addressing health and safety concerns. The “owner” hereafter refers to a student with disability that the animal is accommodating on campus, whether it be service or support animal.

Service Animals

A service animal is 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. (There is an exception that allows miniature horses). Service animals (including puppies and trainees) may be identified to the faculty, staff, and community by a harness, service animal vest, and/or other identifying gear noting that it is a service animal. If there are concerns about legitimacy of the service animal, faculty or staff may ask two permissible questions:

1. Is the service animal required because of a disability?
2. What task(s) is your service animal trained to perform?

The work or task a service animal has been trained to perform must be directly related to the person’s disability. Service animals are allowed in all areas where the general public is allowed. The service animal must be under the control of the person with a disability at all times. The individual may do this on his or her own or with the assistance of family, friends, volunteers, or service providers. The owner is responsible for the well-being and hygiene of his/her service animal. The owner is also responsible for the removal of animal waste and maintaining clean conditions for the service animal. The service animal must be harnessed, leashed, or tethered unless the services or task(s) provided would be impeded; in that case, the person may use signals or voice commands to maintain control of the service animal.

Allergies and/or fear of service animals are not acceptable reasons for excluding a service animal; however, it is appropriate to cooperate with others who may have allergies or other conflicting disabilities. Individuals with conflicting disabilities may be asked to provide proper documentation of the disability to determine a reasonable solution for both individuals with disabilities.

Support Animals

A support animal (often referred to as emotional support animal) is not trained to do work or perform certain task(s) and is used for therapeutic emotional support for a person with a disability. The Fair Housing Act allows for the accommodation of support animals in public housing, (i.e. dorm rooms). These animals are not necessarily allowed in places the general public is allowed; hence, support animals may be excluded from classrooms or common areas of dorms unless provided as an accommodation by the ADA Office. Additionally, it cannot be an animal that poses a health or safety threat to other individuals.

Student requesting to have a support animal residing in the dorms must register the animal with the ADA Office and provide information from a licensed health care professional regarding the student’s disability; the disability-related need for the animal as it relates to the prescribed treatment plan; the provider’s professional relationship with that student, involving the provision of health care or disability-related services; and the type of animal(s) for which the reasonable accommodation is sought. Any student requesting the presence of an emotional support animal in a dorm room must make the request no later than 30 days before rooms are assigned before each semester. All documentation will be reviewed by the ADA Office, the Dean of Students, and the Auxiliary Director.

Once a determination is made, the student will be notified and will coordinate a plan with the Auxiliary Director for proper care and control of the animal. The student must complete an “Application to Utilize Service or Support Animal in Campus Housing” and sign a form acknowledging that he/she has read, understands, and agrees to the policies and

procedures established by Wallace State Community College for maintaining an animal in the dorm. If the student does not comply with the policies and procedures, the College has the right to remove the animal from campus housing at the student's expense.

Policies and Procedures for Utilizing a Service or Support Animal in Campus Housing

Students must adhere to the following policies and procedures to maintain an animal in campus housing. Failure to follow the policies and procedures will result in the animal being removed from campus property.

1. The owner is responsible for the behavior of the animal at all times. The animal shall be harnessed, leashed, or otherwise controlled when transported outside the dorm room where it is housed.
2. In shared living spaces, the animal should be in an appropriate container/kennel if the owner is not in the room with the animal.
3. The owner is responsible for following rules pertaining to the animal. Service animals may travel freely with the student throughout campus except where restrictions may apply due to health and safety reasons. Support animals are not allowed in common areas and/or other public areas while on campus unless granted as a reasonable accommodation by the ADA Office.
4. The owner is responsible for the cost of care necessary for the animal's well-being, including but not limited to veterinary care. The arrangements and responsibilities for the care of the animal are the sole responsibility of the owner at all times, including regular bathing and grooming, as needed.
5. The owner may not leave the animal for an unreasonable length of time. The animal cannot be left alone overnight or weekends. If the student leaves overnight or during campus breaks, the animal (regardless of species) cannot stay in the room.
6. The owner is responsible for removing the animal's waste. Waste must be disposed of in a sealed bag in the designated trash area outside of the dormitory. If the animal voids on the floor or carpet anywhere inside campus housing, the student is responsible for cleaning promptly as well as notifying the housing office for the area to be properly disinfected. The student must pay all costs associated with such clean up. All animals must be housebroken and/or have an approved waste management plan. The College reserves the right to withdraw approval of a waste management plan for health, safety, or environmental reasons. Such care shall be at the expense of the owner.
7. The animal must be immunized against diseases common to that type of animal. Animals, where appropriate, must have current vaccination against rabies and wear a rabies vaccination tag. Animals residing in campus housing must have an annual clean bill of health from a licensed veterinarian. Documentation can be a vaccination certificate for the animal or a veterinarian's statement regarding the animal's health. Also, service animals and support animals must be treated regularly for fleas and ticks. The College has the authority to direct that the animal receives veterinary attention.
8. The owner is responsible for paying for any damage to campus property, including but not limited to the replacement of furniture, carpet, windows, wall coverings, etc. In addition, the owner is responsible for any pest control that may be needed due to the animal's hygiene, including but not limited to fleas, ticks, or other insects, parasites, or vermin. The owner will pay for expenses at the time of repair or pest control and/or move out. The College has the right to bill the student's account for repairs or pest control; failure to pay will result in the student's account having a hold placed on it.
9. Roommate assignments may be changed if necessary.
10. The owner is responsible for notifying the Auxiliary Office in writing if the animal is no longer needed.

Guidelines for Requesting Service or Support Animals in Campus Housing

Please complete these steps before bringing, except in extreme circumstances, a service or support animal to campus housing. The process must be completed at least 30 days before the beginning of the semester that the student intends for the animal to accompany him/her in the dorm.

1. Students requesting to have a service or support animal residing in the dorms must register the animal with the ADA Office. Proper documentation must be submitted and approved. Merely providing documentation does not register a student with the ADA Office. Students must complete an ADA application, provide documentation, and meet the Director before accommodations are approved. Please refer to the College Catalog or the ADA Student Handbook for more detailed information about how to register and receive accommodations on campus.
2. Once the student has registered with the ADA Office, the student must complete an “Application to Utilize Service or Support Animal in Campus Housing.” Veterinarian documentation must be attached to the application stating that the animal has been immunized against diseases common to that type of animal and that the animal does not pose any obvious threat to other campus residents living in a group environment. Obtaining this documentation will be at the expense of the student.
3. The student will also receive a list of policies and procedures for an animal to live in campus housing. The student must sign a form acknowledging that he/she has read, understands, and agrees with the policies and procedures established by Wallace State Community College for maintaining an animal in the dorm and the consequences for noncompliance with such policies and procedures.
4. The ADA Office, Auxiliary Office, and Vice-President of Students will evaluate the application. The Auxiliary Department will notify the student of the application’s status, or if additional information is needed.
5. Please be aware that if the animal is removed from campus, it will not be allowed to return to campus without the approval of the Vice-President of Students. Any cost for the removal of the animal will be charged to the student’s account.

Access the Application to Utilize Service or Support Animal in Campus Housing application at <https://www.wallacestate.edu/non-discrimination/ada-forms>, or contact Director of Special Populations at 256.352.8052.