

Northampton Community College
EMOTIONAL SUPPORT ANIMAL REQUEST PACKET

Northampton Community College (NCC or College) complies with Federal and State regulations in providing reasonable and appropriate accommodations to students with disabilities.

Northampton Community College will authorize an Emotional Support Animal (ESA) in College-affiliated residence hall or apartment once approved to be a reasonable and appropriate accommodation for the individual with disabilities. Under the Fair Housing Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, “individuals with a disability may be entitled to keep an assistance animal as a reasonable accommodation in housing facilities that otherwise impose restrictions or prohibitions on animals. The assistance animal may be necessary to afford the individual an equal opportunity to use and enjoy a dwelling or to participate in the housing service or program. Further, there must be a relationship, or nexus, between the individual’s disability and the assistance the animal provides.”

Definitions:

An Emotional Support Animal (ESA), as defined in The Fair Housing Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, is an animal that “provides emotional support which alleviates one or more identified symptoms or effects of a person’s disability.” ESA is not limited to dogs and can be other species of animals. ESA is not permitted in other College facilities outside the assigned residential area, including academic buildings, administrative buildings, athletic/activity facilities, or at any College- sponsored events.

An Emotional Support Animal is not a service animal. As defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act, a service animal is a dog, and in some cases, a 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.”

An Emotional Support Animal is not a pet. A pet is a domesticated animal kept for companionship, enjoyment and ordinary, not commercial, use. A pet is not an Emotional Support Animal and does not meet the definition of an assistance animal. Students are not permitted to keep pets, with the exception of fish, in less than ten gallon tank, in any College-affiliated residence hall or apartment.

“Owner” is the individual student resident requesting an Emotional Support Animal as an accommodation to NCC Housing and Residence Life Program.

Expectations and Owner's Responsibilities of an approved Emotional Support Animal:

1. The owner must first complete the accommodation eligibility process through Disability Services. The owner is not permitted to bring the animal to campus before prior approval is determined by Disability Services.
2. The owner will need to meet with the Director of Housing and Residence Life or his/her designee to discuss responsibilities and expectations prior to bringing the animal in the residence hall or apartment. The Emotional Support Animal Agreement will be signed at that time.
3. The owner must abide by current local and state ordinances, laws, and/or regulations regarding licensing, vaccinations, and other requirements pertaining to the type of animal. It is the owner's responsibility to know and understand these ordinances, regulations, and laws. The College reserves the right to request documentation of vaccinations and licensing. The owner is financially responsible for compliance with licensing, vaccinations, and other compliance regulations. Annual health updates, including vaccinations and licensing, must be provided to the Office of Housing and Residence Life for the duration that the animal is in the residence hall or apartment. Housing and Residence Life reserves the right to contact the animal's veterinarian to request additional medical documentation if needed.
4. Roommates will be notified that an emotional support animal will be living in the room or apartment. Roommates may request a room change if they desire.
5. All roommates of the owner will sign an agreement acknowledging the approved Emotional Support Animal to be in residence with them. In the event that one or more roommates do not approve, either the owner of the animal in residence, or any of the non-approving roommates, may be moved to a different residence, if available. If roommates were assigned in housing before the owner requested the accommodation of an Emotional Support Animal, the original roommate(s) will have first refusal of a residence move. If the request for an Emotional Support Animal is submitted during the current academic semester and there is a non-approving roommate, and no alternative living options available, the request for an Emotional Support Animal may be denied for the remainder of that current semester.
6. Dogs must be housebroken, i.e., trained so that it controls its waste elimination, absent illness or accident. Puppy pads are not considered acceptable. Therefore, animals that dispose of waste outside need to be taken outside directly from the owner's room to the outside. Felines must use a litter box. Litter boxes should be placed on a mat so that waste is not tracked onto any College carpeted areas in the living environment (Residence Hall or Apartment). Other animals that dispose of waste inside, but do not use a

litter box, must have proper waste receptacles for this purpose. The owner is responsible for proper disposal of animal waste, in a sealed bag or container, and placed in a trash receptacle outside.

7. Small animals (rabbits, gerbils, etc.) are not permitted to be left running loose in a room or Apartment. Animals must be housed in acceptable conditions within the resident's room.
8. The Emotional Support Animal may not be left overnight in College housing without the owner present. The animal must be taken with the owner if the owner leaves campus for a prolonged period, other than College classes, activities, reasonable work schedule. The owner cannot delegate, nor expect, other students/NCC personnel to be responsible for the animal at any time. It is the owner's responsibility to ensure the safe containment of the animal when the owner is not present.
9. The Emotional Support Animal must be kept within the privately assigned residential area, except when transported outside by carrier, leash, or harness. The owner must be in full control of the animal at all times.
10. The Emotional Support Animal is not allowed in any other College facilities (includes academic buildings, administrative buildings, athletic/activity facilities) other than the owner's residence.
11. The owner is solely responsible for the well-being, daily care (grooming, odor control), and supervision of the animal. This includes being kept clean, free from fleas or ticks, and deworming. Cutting an animal's hair cannot take place in the Residence Hall or Apartments.
12. The College is not responsible for removing the animal during any emergency evacuation, including fire alarm. Emergency personnel will determine whether to remove the animal and may not be held responsible for the care, damage to, or loss of the animal.
13. The owner, not Northampton Community College, will be held personally liable for any bodily injury to self or others from the animal.
14. The owner will be financially responsible for any damage caused by the animal, including repairs and/or additional cleaning above and beyond a standard cleaning to the residence.
15. Any time maintenance or work is needed in the owner's room or apartment, the owner will be requested to contact our Facilities Department to arrange a time when the owner is present to ensure the animal is controlled while work is being done. In addition, the owner's residence hall or apartment room number will be

provided to the Facilities Department to notify them of the presence of an animal in the event they need to enter the residence.

16. If there is suspicion of a policy violation, Housing and Residence Life and/or Security will access the room to address the violation. If there is concern with staff in the room with the animal, the owner will be contacted to come to the room or apartment at that time.
17. If any neglect or animal abuse is reported or suspected, Housing and Residence Life will investigate and contact necessary agencies or authorities, if needed.
18. All animals should have a collar or information near where the animal is housed identifying the owner and contact information in case of an emergency.
19. Should the owner become unable to care for the assistance animal (illness or accident), the student will identify two (2) off campus Emergency Contacts or remove the animal from housing. If the Emergency Contacts are unable to be reached, the local animal shelter will be contacted, at the owner's expense.
20. The owner must notify Disability Services, in writing, if the approved animal is no longer needed as an Emotional Support Animal or is no longer in residence.
21. Should the approved Emotional Support Animal be removed from the premises for any reason, the owner is expected to fulfill his/her housing obligations for the remainder of the Housing Contract.
22. The owner is still required to abide by Northampton Community College's Student Code of Conduct with the animal in residence. This includes any policy violations stated in the Student Code of Conduct or Residence Life Handbook that are associated with the animal. Reasonable accommodation which may constitute an exception to a policy that otherwise would prohibit having an animal does not constitute an exception to any other policy.
23. If the owner violates this Emotional Support Animal Agreement, the animal may be removed from the Residence Hall/Apartments.

Process and Procedures for Requesting an Emotional Support Animal (ESA) as an Accommodation in College Housing:

Under no circumstances are residents of Northampton Community College (NCC) affiliated residence hall or apartment are not permitted to bring any animal to campus without the prior written approval from the Office of Disability Services designating the Emotional Support Animal (ESA) as a reasonable and appropriate accommodation to the Housing program and the Emotional Support Agreement is completed through the Office of Housing and Residence Life.

The process for obtaining reasonable and appropriate accommodations through the Disability Services Office is an interactive process on a case- by- case basis. Accommodation requests are not considered application for NCC Housing. Students must first follow NCC's Housing Application procedures; accommodation requests are not considered application to NCC Housing.

- Complete and submit NCC's Emotional Support Animal (ESA) Request Form. Requests for ESA should be submitted as soon as possible, or by:

June 21 for the Fall Semester

December 1 for the Spring Semester

Due to the limited housing options available at NCC, requests after these dates will be accepted and considered on a case- by- case basis, however, NCC cannot guarantee it will be able to meet late requests, including any that develop during the current semester.

- Timely submission of documentation of disability
and
- Participate in a Pre-Service meeting with a Disability Services Specialist. This meeting may be completed by phone or video conferencing for non-local students. To schedule your Pre-Service meeting, please contact 610-861-5342.

Upon completion of the above process, any decision made will be communicated to the student, in writing, via their NCC issued email.

If the request is approved, the student will work with the Office of Housing and Residence Life to complete the ESA agreement for maintaining community standards and resident responsibilities while the animal is in residence. In addition, the following documents must be submitted to the Office of Housing and Residence Life before the approved animal is permitted in residence.

- Copy of Veterinarian's verification that all vaccinations are up to date. For animals, other than cats and dogs, must have Veterinarian's written statement regarding requested emotional support animal's health.
- For dogs only: Copy of Northampton County Animal License

Documentation of Disability for an Emotional Support Animal (ESA) as an Accommodation Request:

Documentation is to be provided by qualified professional, including psychiatrist, social worker, physician, or other mental health professional treating the individual with a disability. Documentation must be typed on letterhead or be in report format. Certifying professional cannot be a family member of the individual requesting an ESA as an accommodation in NCC's Housing and Residence Life Program.

Documentation of disability standards for students requesting a housing accommodation of an ESA based upon a psychological/psychiatric disability indicate:

1. There is an identifiable relationship, or nexus, between the individual's verified disability and the therapeutic value this animal will provide. The statement(s) will explain the connection the ESA provides to alleviate one or more identified symptoms or effects of a person's disability.
2. And verify the medical necessity of the ESA to afford the individual with the disability equal access to use and enjoy College housing.

All documentation of disability and the Emotional Support Animal Request form should be submitted by person, mailed, faxed, or emailed to:

Disability Services

Northampton Community College

3835 Green Pond Road

Bethlehem, PA 18020

FAX: 610-861-5351

disabilityservices@northampton.edu

In person: Disability Services is located in College Center 250

Disability Services: 610-861-5342 TTY: 800-654-5984

Office of Housing and Residence Life: 610-861-5324