



Emotional Support Animal Policy

Source: Student Affairs

Form to Complete: Application to Request an Emotional Support Animal

Updated: April 9, 2020

KCAI recognizes the importance of emotional support animals to students with disabilities, chronic conditions, and/or other related diagnoses. The following policy is intended to create an educational and campus environment that allows those students who depend on emotional support animals equal access to our campus housing.

Emotional support animals must be approved prior to occupancy (that is, before moving into the Residence Hall). If you receive approval for an emotional support animal after you have moved into the Residence Hall, you will be able to bring the approved animal at the beginning of the next semester.

Definitions

Emotional Support Animal – An emotional support animal has been defined as an animal that alleviates the symptoms of an identified disability, chronic condition, and/or diagnosis without meeting the ADA’s definition of a service animal.

KCAI Policy Regarding Emotional Support Animals

Access to a properly documented emotional support animal is protected under The Fair Housing Act, and will be allowed in campus housing, except in situations where the animal poses a substantial threat to public health and safety, or situations where the animal’s presence creates an undue financial or administrative burden for the school. Emotional support animals, unlike service animals, are not allowed to accompany the student to other events and facilities. **This includes studios, classrooms, and other campus buildings and services outside the Residence Hall.**

Responsibility for Damage, Injury, and Cost of Care

Students are responsible for any damage or injury caused by their animals and are expected to take appropriate precautions. Students are also responsible for the cost of care, and any arrangements involving the animal's well-being.

The animal should be kept on a leash at all times, except in circumstances where a leash would hinder the task that the animal is trained to provide. In such circumstances, the animal should be trained to respond to the voice commands of the student or the animal's handler. It's also recommended that the animal wear some type of commonly recognized identification that identifies the animal as a working animal.

Students are required to clean up and dispose of the waste created by their animals. If the student is incapable of fulfilling this responsibility, then the student is responsible for hiring someone to do so.

Failure to Meet Certain Obligations May Result in the Removal of the Animal

Any animal that proves disruptive within the living environment will be escorted from the premises, along with the student, until the student can regain control of the animal's behavior. If disruptive behavior continues to occur over an extended period of time, the student may be prohibited from bringing the animal into the Residence Hall until able to demonstrate that significant steps have been taken to address the cause of the disruption.

Any animal that is not house broken will also be removed from the premises, as will any animal that is determined to pose a direct threat to the health or safety of those around it. Any animal that is determined to be threatened by a basic lack of care will also be removed.

Shared Living Arrangements and Conflicting Disabilities

If students with emotional support animals are assigned to shared living arrangements, the roommates or suitemates of those students will be asked to sign an agreement allowing the animal to reside in the room or suite. In the event that a student refuses to sign the approval, then either the student-owner and animal, or the dissenting student, will be invited to move to a different location. Decisions of this type will be made on a case-by-case basis and will be determined by the availability of various living arrangements at the time of the decision.

There may also be students who have allergic reactions to the animal in question. If those reactions are severe enough to qualify as a disability, then the students involved, Housing Staff, and the Disabilities and Academic Support Coordinator will work toward a resolution of the problem.

Procedure and Application

Before you can begin the application to request an ESA, you will need the following documentation and information:

1. Documentation from a Healthcare Professional
2. Veterinary Records for Emotional Support Animal
3. Local Emergency Contact Information

All documentation should be submitted by online application through MyKCAI. Once the documentation is received, the Disabilities Coordinator will contact the student to review the documentation, and if the documentation is considered appropriate, the student and Coordinator will discuss the necessary arrangements involved in bringing the animal to campus.

Once on campus, the student will meet with the Assistant Director for Housing and Student Activities to review the policy agreement and complete the roommate and/or suitemate agreement for having an approved emotional support animal in the residence hall and on campus.

Documentation from a Healthcare Professional

Before you can begin the application to request an emotional support animal, you will need documentation from a licensed mental health professional (such as a licensed Social Worker, Psychologist, or Psychiatrist) on official letterhead, with the following information:

- Student's full name.
- Nature of student's mental health impairment.
- If the student requires ongoing treatment.
- Type of animal prescribed/approved for emotional support.
- If the animal is part of a specific treatment for the student.
- If the animal will have a beneficial effect for the student residing on campus.
- If symptoms of aforementioned mental health impairment will be reduced by having an emotional support animal.
- If evidence of having an emotional support animal has helped the student in the past.

The documentation/letterhead must include the following:

- Name of Healthcare Professional
- Physical and/or Mailing Address
- Telephone
- Email Address
- Healthcare License Number

- Professional Signature and Date

KCAI will contact your healthcare provider for confirmation. If any of the above information is not included in the official documentation, or cannot be retrieved from your healthcare provider, your emotional support animal will not be approved.

Veterinary Records for Emotional Support Animal

Before you can begin the application to request an emotional support animal, you must have documentation from a licensed veterinarian, on official letterhead, signed within six months of moving into the Residence Hall. The documentation must include the following:

- Student's full name
- Animal's name
- Animal's sex
- Animal type
- Animal breed
- Color/markings
- Animal age
- Animal weight
- Statement vouching for the animal's behavior and health
- List of necessary vaccinations and dates of vaccinations (If your animal does not require vaccinations, or if the breed/animal does not generally receive vaccinations, that information must be included in the statement)

The documentation or letterhead must include the following:

- Name of Veterinarian
- Name of Practice
- Physical and/or Mailing Address
- Telephone
- Email Address
- Veterinarian License Number
- Professional Signature and Date

KCAI may contact your animal's veterinarian for confirmation. If any of the above information is not included in the official documentation, or cannot be retrieved from your veterinarian, your emotional support animal will not be approved.

Local Emergency Contact Information

Emotional support animals should not be left by their owner for extended periods of time. If travel involving an overnight stay is required, and if the animal is not to accompany the student, then the student is responsible for arranging for the animal's care (that is not on campus).

In the event a student experiences an emergency which takes them off campus or away from their animal, the student must provide a local emergency contact who will collect and care for the animal at such time.

Emotional Support animals may only be on KCAI's campus with the student they are registered to assist. As such, roommates, suitemates, or other KCAI students living on campus may **not** be considered a local emergency contact.

The local emergency contact should be prepared to collect and care for the animal when they are contacted by KCAI staff. If you do not have a local emergency contact, local veterinary offices or animal hospitals may be available to assist. KCAI does not provide a list of local options, nor do we transport animals.

Applicants must identify an individual or business that may be contacted as a local emergency contact for the emotional support animal in the event of an emergency that separates you from your animal. Applicants will need to provide the following in the application:

- Local Emergency Contact Name
- Local Emergency Contact Phone
- Local Emergency Contact Address