



SERVICE ANIMALS

West Chester University may provide reasonable accommodations for a student with a disability who has a verifiable need of having a service animal or service animal in training while attending the university. A reasonable accommodation is an exception to the University's rules, policies, practices, or services that a student with a disability may need to have an equal opportunity to use and enjoy WCU campus housing. One of these accommodations may be for the student with a disability to use a service animal.

Service Animals are defined as animals (dogs and occasionally, miniature horses) that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities. These tasks can include things like pulling a wheelchair, guiding a person who is visually impaired, or alerting a person who is having a seizure. The tasks a service dog can perform are not limited to this list. However, the work or task a service dog does must be directly related to the person's disability. Service dogs may accompany persons with disabilities into places that the public normally goes.

Service Animals are generally allowed to accompany their handlers anywhere their handlers are permitted on campus (exceptions may exist in areas requiring protective equipment or clothing for access).

Students with a disability who utilize Service Animals/Service Animals in training must contact and meet with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities (OSSD) prior to the animal arriving on campus BEFORE each academic calendar school year. *All documentation should be submitted no later than 7 days before classes begin. For students living on-campus, documentation must be submitted 30 days before occupancy is to commence in on-campus housing.*

OSSD will ask for the following:

- A completed Notification of Service Animal form
- Veterinary verification that the service animal is healthy, and its vaccinations are current
- If student lives on-campus, a signed Service Animal in Residence Agreement
- Documentation of the disability to the college (e.g., medical records, IEP from high school)

Students who misrepresent a pet or emotional support animal as a service animal or service animal in training will be investigated for fraud and dishonesty and will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct for violations including, but not limited to, Student Conduct Policies 16 and 18.

A person commits the offense of misrepresentation of an animal as an assistance animal or service animal if the person intentionally: (1) creates a document misrepresenting an animal as an assistance animal or service animal for use in housing; (2) provides a document to another falsely stating that an animal is an assistance animal or service animal for use in housing; or (3) fits an animal that is not an assistance animal or service animal with a harness, collar, vest or sign that the animal is an assistance animal or service animal for use in housing. A person who violates this provision commits a summary offense and shall, upon conviction, be sentenced to pay a fine not to exceed \$1,000.

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Under the ADA, State and local governments, businesses, and nonprofit organizations that serve the public generally must allow service animals to accompany people with disabilities in all areas of the facility where the public is normally allowed to go. However, facility may ask an individual with a disability to remove a service animal from the premises if either: (1) the animal is out of control and the individual does not take effective action to bring it under control; or (2) the animal is not housebroken.

Under the ADA, service animals must be harnessed, leashed, or tethered, unless these devices interfere with the service animal's work or the individual's disability prevents using these devices. In that case, the individual must maintain control of the animal through voice, signal, or other effective controls.

- Service animals must meet all local ordinances regarding vaccinations and proper licensure.
- The handler is responsible for the actions of the service animal. These actions include bodily injury and property damage and may require financial compensation.
- The handler is responsible for caring for and supervising the animal, which includes toileting, feeding, grooming, flea and tick prevention, and veterinary care.
- The handler is responsible for waste cleanup. If the handler is not able to physically pick up the animal waste, they must hire or establish someone who is able to complete the task. The waste must be properly disposed of in a trash receptacle.
- The handler is responsible for instructing others on appropriate interactions with the animal and setting clear and respectful expectations.
- The handler should ensure that the service animal does not approach and sniff others, dining tables, or personal belongings of others.
- The handler must assure that the service animal does not block emergency exits or aisles.
- The animal must display good behavior and not disrupt others unless alerting the handler as appropriately trained.
- The animal can be asked to leave campus if the animal is out of control, a threat to others, or the animal is ill.