



## **Policy: Service, Assistance, Emotional Support or Therapy Animals at Ashland University**

Ashland University has a general “no pets” policy in all of its buildings. Pets are permitted on the grounds when leashed and under control. Service Animals are generally permitted to accompany their handlers in any building or public space where their handlers are permitted. Emotional Support and Visiting Therapy animals may be permitted in specified areas of the University with advanced approval, such as dorm rooms and the Library.

All animals are the responsibility of their handlers. Animals must be house broken and be under their handler’s control (in proximity to the handler and responsive to commands, in harness, leashed or in a carrier). An animal’s behavior is considered the handler’s behavior; the animal will be held to the same basic standard of conduct as their handler. If they are disruptive to university business or behavioral expectations for educational and residential environments, handlers may be asked to correct the animal’s behavior or remove it from the environment.

**Service Animals** are generally permitted to accompany their handlers anywhere their handlers are on campus (exceptions may exist in sterile environments and areas requiring protective equipment or clothing for access). If a Service Animal’s role is not apparent by observation, a handler may be asked “Is that a service animal for a disability?” and “What service does it perform for you?”

If you have questions, would like assistance planning for a Service Animal at Ashland University, or have a concern about your treatment and access when accompanied by your Service Animal contact the Student Accessibility Center at: [au-sac@ashland.edu](mailto:au-sac@ashland.edu), (419) 289-5904.

**Service Animals in Training** are not recognized by federal law but are recognized by Ohio Revised Code 955.43. Service Animals in Training must have a liability insurance policy provided by the nonprofit agency sponsoring the training. Typically, puppy rearing (under six months of age) focused on socialization and general obedience training is not considered Service Animal training.

If you have questions or need assistance with a Service Animal in Training at Ashland University, please contact the Student Accessibility Center at: [au-sac@ashland.edu](mailto:au-sac@ashland.edu), (419) 289-5904.

**Emotional Support Animals (ESA)** can be a reasonable accommodation to “no pets” policies in some circumstances. To establish reasonable accommodations please contact the Student Accessibility Center at: [au-sac@ashland.edu](mailto:au-sac@ashland.edu), (419) 289-5904.

Students requesting an ESA will need to complete the Housing Accommodation Request and ESA Policy Agreement documentation. In general, students should be prepared to provide information from an appropriate professional that:

- Identifies the student and states that they have a disability;
- Describes the animal; and
- Affirms that having the ESA alleviates identified impacts of the disability or serves a defined role in treatment;
- Affirms having the animal is necessary to effectively benefit from university services, programs or facilities’

Denial of a request for an ESA may be based on insufficient documentation of disability or of the need for an emotional support animal as an accommodation in the context requested; issues related to zoonosis; maintaining a sterile field; or demonstrated behavioral concerns.

**Visiting Therapy Animals:** Therapy animals on campus are coordinated through the Library.

## **Definitions:**

**Service Animal:** As defined by the ADA ([http://www.ada.gov/service\\_animals\\_2010.htm](http://www.ada.gov/service_animals_2010.htm)), a service animal is a dog that has been trained to perform an **active** task that mitigates or partially mitigates the impact of the handler's disability. The ADA also recognizes similarly trained miniature horses as an alternative to dogs. Ashland University's facilities are not suited as housing for miniature horses.

**Assistance Animals:** Under Housing and Urban Development's Rules (Fair Housing Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act), assistance animals include animals other than dogs, that provide active support like a Service Animal as well as animals that provide passive support that alleviates or at least partially mitigates an impact of a person's disability allowing them to benefit from AU's programs and services. Animals providing these passive services are generally referred to as Emotional Support Animals (ESAs).

**Emotional Support Animals:** Assistance animals that provide **passive** support that partially ameliorates the impact of a disability are referred to as Emotional Support Animals (ESAs). Use of an ESA on campus is a potentially reasonable accommodation. Like all accommodations the university may ask that you document the need for the accommodation by an appropriate professional that states that you have a disability then confirms a history of past use of an ESA as an accommodation; identifies the basis for providing passive support (e.g. the ongoing relationship with the animal) or that it serves a defined role in the person's treatment plan, and states that it is necessary for full participation in or to benefit from particular programs or environments.

**Service Animals in Training** are recognized by [Ohio Revised Code 955.43](#). They must have a liability insurance policy provided by the nonprofit agency sponsoring the training and be engaged in learning service tasks (i.e. guiding or alerting). Typically, puppy rearing (for dogs under six months of age) focused on socialization and general obedience training is not considered Service Animal training.

**Visiting Therapy Animals:** Animals in the company of their handlers that have been trained to make wellness, stress reduction or therapeutic short-term visits and are made available to members of the university community on a transient basis in a specific location.

**Pets:** All other privately-owned animals.

**Handler:** An individual with a disability who utilizes a Service or Assistance Animal or the owner of a Visiting Therapy Animal.

If you have questions or concerns related to these policies please contact the Student Accessibility Center at: (419) 289-5904, or Human Resources at: (419) 289-5033.