

## Center for Disability and Access

### Guidelines for Requesting an Assistance Animal

The University of Utah engages in an interactive process with students to determine a reasonable accommodation for requests. A student request for an Assistance Animal follows the interactive process. This interactive process is consistent with the University's obligations under the Fair Housing Act (FHA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). University housing consists of all housing options managed by the Office of Residential Life (ORL) and Sunnyside Apartments.

Students should submit their request for an Assistance Animal to the Center for Disability & Access (CDA) for review as far in advance as possible. It is recommended that students begin the process at least 3 weeks prior to the beginning of the semester and/or the animal's anticipated arrival. Requests for accommodations are processed as quickly as possible. Please note during peak semester times the process may require additional time.

Supporting documentation from the student's health care provider is required to validate the existence of a disability, consider the prescription of an Assistance Animal, the impact of the animal on the student's disability, and relief of the symptoms of the disability. CDA staff may also request information about the animal including the type of animal, maintenance and support required for the animal, and any other pertinent information. CDA staff will review the request and supporting documentation to make a decision about the request.

If it is readily apparent that an Assistance Animal such as a dog trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, supporting documentation is not required because the dog is a Service Animal. Additional information regarding Service Animals can be found here <https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/PA/documents/HUDAsstAnimalNC1-28-2020.pdf>

To begin the request for accommodation, please complete the following steps:

- 1) **Enter** intake information (name, contact information, etc.) through the [student portal](#).
- 2) **Upload** supporting documentation in the student portal.
  - Documentation should be provided from a third party on official letterhead including: the name, title, professional credentials, address, phone number, signature, and date of the letter
  - Documentation must also demonstrate that the animal has been individually prescribed to the student and how the assistance or support of the animal alleviates symptoms presented by the disability
  - Providers should also include any additional rationale or clarification the University may need to understand the intent and support of the Assistance Animal
- 3) **Review** with an Accessibility Consultant. Please note that a meeting is **NOT** required with an Accessibility Consultant. It may be helpful however in providing information to the Consultant. The Consultant will be able to review the request with or without a meeting to determine whether to approve the request, deny the request, or request more information from the student.

- 4) **Determination.** If the Assistance Animal request is approved, the Accessibility Consultant will provide notification through email to the Office of Residential Life (ORL) or Sunnyside Apartments. Students will be included in the approval email.

The approval for an Assistance Animal remains in place during the student's enrollment at the University of Utah. However, the student should notify CDA in writing of any updates. For example: a change in campus housing assignment outside of Office of Residential Life (ORL) to Sunnyside Apartments, changes in the type of animal, number of animal(s) required, and whether the animal is no longer required, etc.

- 5) **Appeal.** If a student's Assistance Animal request is denied, the student may continue to work with CDA, in consultation with Office of Residential Life (ORL), or Sunnyside Apartments to determine whether there are alternative accommodations that could be implemented.

When an Assistance Animal request is denied, a student may initiate a formal appeal by submitting a written statement and any other information to the Director of the Center for Disability & Access. If a request is denied at the Director level, the student may initiate an appeal with the Associate Vice President for Health and Wellness.

#### Additional Information

- Approved Assistance Animals are subject to University Policy 3-231 for Control of Animals on Campus as defined at <https://regulations.utah.edu/administration/3-231.php>
- Exotic or wild animals may not be allowed under the state, county and city laws. Additional information regarding Service and Assistance Animals can be found at <https://oeo.utah.edu/about-us/faq-support-animals.php>
- The Assistance Animal owner or custodian must maintain sanitary conditions and clean any animal excretions (or eliminate waste).
- An approval for an Assistance Animal only applies to housing and does not permit owner to bring animal to other areas on campus where pets are normally prohibited
- Student/Owner is responsible for any and all damage to apartments or University property associated with the Assistance Animal.