

Emotional Support Animal (ESA) Policy

Alverno College permits the presence of an emotional support animal (ESA) in the residence hall room of qualified students with disabilities.

Definition

An emotional support animal is an animal that:

- Is prescribed by a healthcare or mental health professional to an individual with a disability, and
- Is necessary to afford a person with a disability an equal opportunity to use and enjoy the residence halls.

Determination

- As required by the Fair Housing Act, Alverno College provides reasonable accommodation for persons requesting an ESA in the residence halls. The determination of whether an animal will be permitted for this purpose is made on a case-by-case basis through an interactive process involving the individual requesting the accommodation and relevant campus personnel. In all cases, the needs of the individual are balanced with the impact of an animal on other residence hall students, patrons, or programs.
- In order for an ESA to be considered a reasonable accommodation, there must be current verification of need from a physician, psychiatrist, social worker, or other mental health professional provided to the Student Accessibility Coordinator. A form is provided to the student requesting accommodation so they can obtain the appropriate documentation from their care provider. The provider must practice and be licensed either in Wisconsin or the state where the student has permanent residence.

Process

- The student requesting an ESA in the residence halls will begin by contacting the Department of Residence Life or the Student Accessibility Coordinator to obtain a copy of the paperwork that must be completed by their health care provider.
- Once paperwork is submitted, the Accessibility Coordinator will confer with the Director of Residence Life to determine outcome.
- If approved, a meeting will be arranged between the student and the Director of Residence Life, or designee, to discuss how to best accommodate the student, the ESA and the residence hall community.

- The Student Accessibility Coordinator serves as the campus authority for ESA approval. Approval is required before an animal can be brought to campus or reside in campus housing.
- If the accommodation is granted, it is in effect for the semester. Re-registration is required each semester.
- If approved, Campus Safety will be notified of the approved ESA and maintain a list of all approved ESAs on campus.

Exclusions

- ESAs are only allowed within a person's residence hall room, or other areas on campus where domesticated animals are permitted.
- ESAs may be excluded from all campus areas including the residence halls:
 - Where its presence fundamentally alters the nature of the program or activity;
 - If the animal is disruptive;
 - If its presence would result in substantial physical damage to the property of others; or
 - If it substantially interferes with the reasonable enjoyment of the area by others.

Requirements for Emotional Support Animals

All Alverno College resident students who are permitted an ESA accommodation must comply with all state laws and local animal ordinances, as well as all Residence Hall policies and guidelines including, but not limited to, the following:

- Resident must provide appropriate food, water, and shelter for the ESA;
- Resident must not allow ESA to be neglected or abused;
- Residents are solely responsible for cleaning up and disposing of all animal waste (both indoors and outdoors) in a timely, effective fashion;
- Residents must not leave ESAs alone in a room for an extended period of time; in the event that an ESA is left alone in a room for an extended period of time and is not being properly cared for, Residence Life will attempt to contact the resident or the emergency contact to remove the animal. If this is not successful, Residence Life may notify Alverno College Safety and Security and seek to have the animal removed. All costs associated with removing the animal shall be the responsibility of the resident;
- When the resident is not in the room, the ESA must be properly caged or contained;

- Residents must comply with all required state and municipal license requirements, including current identification and vaccination tags when applicable. ESA dogs must wear a current rabies vaccination tag. Residents must provide requested verification of all veterinarian recommended vaccinations as well as proof of absence of communicable diseases, fleas and parasites (annually or as needed, thereafter);
- Residents must not allow ESAs to disturb, annoy, or cause any nuisance to other members of the campus community;
- ESAs are not permitted in any public, common spaces, including community bathrooms, lounges, indoor recreational rooms, computer labs and study rooms;
- Residents are responsible for any odors, noise, damage, or other conduct of their ESA that disturbs or damages the premises;
- Residents are solely responsible for the care and supervision of their ESA. Residence Life assumes no responsibility for the care of a resident's ESA.
- The student must complete the following forms included in these guidelines:
 - Request for Emotional Support Animal
 - Medical/Health Care Provider Form
 - Student Statement for Emotional Support Animal
 - Animal Registration Form for Emotional Support Animals

The student must have a plan, outlined and on file with the Student Accessibility Coordinator, to care for the animal and minimize danger to facilities and impact on other members of the residence community.

The animal must be immunized against diseases common to their species and appropriately documented. The student is responsible for the health of the animal and must provide verification from a qualified veterinarian that all vaccinations appropriate for that type of animal are current.

Visitors:

ESAs accompanying campus visitors are only allowed in areas of campus where domesticated animals are permitted.

Removal of Animal:

The student may be required to remove the animal from College facilities if the animal fails to comply with this addendum or existing College Housing policies. The following describes behaviors that may result in the removal of the animal:

- **Disruptive Behavior:** Unruly or disruptive behavior (e.g., biting, barking, howling, growling, aggression) is prohibited.
- **Uncleanliness:** Failure to properly clean up and dispose of the animal's waste is prohibited.
- **Emergencies:** In the case of the owner suffering an emergency, an emergency contact person must be available to pick up and care for the animal off-campus.

In cases where the animal has been removed, permission to bring the animal back is at the discretion of the Residence Hall Director and the Student Accessibility Coordinator.