

Service & Assistance Animals

Approved by: Northeastern State University Executive Cabinet
Responsible Official: Student Disability Services
(918) 444-2120

Form(s):
Housing Roommate/Suitemate Agreement
Housing Accommodation Request

History: Adopted – (in review process)

Related Policies:
University Housing Assistance Animal Policy

Additional References:

[City of Tahlequah](#)

[City of Broken Arrow](#)

[DOJ Service Animals FAQ](#)

POLICY

PURPOSE

Northeastern State University (NSU) is committed to compliance with state and federal laws regarding individuals with disabilities. All inquiries regarding service or assistance animals on campus should be directed to Student Disability Services:

(Tahlequah Campus)

(Broken Arrow/Muskogee Campuses)

600 N Grand Ave

3100 E New Orleans

Leoser Complex 99

BAAS 130

Tahlequah, OK 74464

Broken Arrow, OK 74014

(918) 444-2042

(918) 449-6139

NSU will determine, on a case by case basis, and in accordance with applicable laws and regulations, whether the animal is a reasonable accommodation on campus. In doing so, NSU must balance the needs of the individual with the impact of animals on the campus patrons. Where it is not readily apparent that an animal is a service or assistance animal, NSU may require documentation on the letterhead of a treating physician or mental health provider which the student has an established, ongoing therapeutic relationship. The Student will also need to provide documentation to Disability Services that confirms compliance with vaccinations, licensure, animal health and leash laws which permits NSU to determine:

1. If the animal is required because of a disability
2. What work or task the animal is trained to perform

Service & Assistance Animals

DEFINITIONS

A Service animal is any guide dog, signal dog, or other animal individually trained provide assistance to an individual with a disability.

An Assistance animal is an animal that works, provides assistance, or performs tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability, or provides emotional support that alleviates one or more identified symptoms or effects of a person's disability.

SERVICE AND ASSISTANCE ANIMALS PERMITTED ON CAMPUS

Individuals with disabilities may be accompanied by their service animal on all parts of the NSU campus where members of the public or participants in services, programs or activities are allowed to go. Assistance animals or other species of animals, whether domestic, trained or untrained, are not service animals. In some cases, NSU may permit miniature horses on campus on a case by case basis, consistent with applicable law.

The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the individual's disability. Examples of such tasks include, but are not limited to:

- Assisting an individual with low vision with navigation
- Alerting individuals who are hearing impaired to the presence of people or objects
- Pulling wheelchairs, carrying or picking things up for persons with mobility impairments
- Assisting persons' with mobility impairments with balance

Federal law does not require the individual to provide documentation that an animal has been trained as a service animal. NSU may, however, ask if the animal is required because of a disability, as well as what work or task the animal has been trained to perform. If the animal does not meet the requirements above to be considered a service animal, it is then considered to be an assistance animal. NSU reserves the right to prohibit assistance animals on parts of campus. All assistance animals, approved for students in residential housing, must adhere to University Housing policy concerning the student's responsibility and care of the assistance animal.

EXCEPTIONS

NSU may exclude a service or assistance animal from campus if its behavior poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others or when its presence fundamentally alters the nature of a program or activity. Furthermore, NSU may ask an individual with a disability to remove a service or assistance animal from campus if the animal is out of control and the individual does not take effective action to control it; or if the animal is not housebroken.

Service & Assistance Animals

RESPONSIBILITIES of INDIVIDUALS with SERVICE or ASSISTANCE ANIMALS

NSU is not responsible for the care or supervision of a service or assistance animal. Individuals with disabilities are responsible for the control of their service or assistance animal at all times and must comply with all applicable laws and regulations, including vaccinations, licensure, animal health and leash laws. A service or assistance animal shall be restrained with a harness, leash, or other tether, unless an individual's disability precludes the use of a restraint or if the restraint would interfere with the service animal's safe, effective performance of work or tasks. If a service animal is not tethered, it must be otherwise under the individual's control, whether by voice control, signals or other effective means.

Individuals are responsible for ensuring the immediate clean up and proper disposal of all animal waste. Although Northeastern may not charge an individual with a disability a service or assistance animal surcharge, it may impose charges for damages caused by a service or assistance animal in the same manner it imposes charges for damages by other individuals who use the campus.

PROCESS

Students requiring the use of a service and or assistance animal they must apply for accommodation services through Student Disability Services. All students must complete intake forms and provide documentation to support their disability(ies) before any accommodation can be considered.

Once approved through Student Disability Services, residence hall students will be referred to Assistant Director of Residence Life:

Housing & Residence Life

622 N Lewis Ave, Tahlequah, OK 74464

(918) 444-4700

housing@nsuok.edu