

Emotional Support (Assistance) Animals

King's College recognizes the importance of Emotional Support (Assistance) animals in serving students, whose healthcare providers or mental health professionals prescribe the use of animals as contributing to a student's health and wellbeing. An Assistance Animal is an animal that provides emotional support which alleviates one or more identified symptoms or effects of a person's disability.

A person using an Assistance Animal is called a Partner. An Assistance Animal does not assist a Partner with activities of daily living or accompany that person at all times. Assistance/Emotional Support Animals are not required to be trained or certified by any entity as an Assistance Animal. Federal law does not give Assistance Animals access to the College campus as a whole. The College will reasonably accommodate an Assistance Animal in a residence hall or campus apartment; the College does not allow students to bring Assistance Animals to other areas or buildings on campus unless the animal also qualifies as Service Animal. An Assistance Animal is permitted so that the student in question will be afforded an equal opportunity to use and enjoy College housing.

Each animal must be approved prior to arriving on campus. A student may not change an animal without prior approval through the Disability Services Coordinator. Dogs and cats must be house broken and at least 6 months old. Venomous and other life-threatening animals will not be permitted.

Procedures

A Partner requesting the use of an Assistance Animal will follow these steps:

1. Contact the Academic Skills Center, Disability Services Coordinator to set up a meeting and request an application.
2. Provide documentation meeting King's College guidelines from a qualified healthcare or mental health professional. These guidelines can be found at http://www.kings.edu/academics/support/skills_center/disabilities_program
3. If the College communicates in a determination letter that the Partner is permitted to have an Assistance Animal on campus, the Partner must meet with the Associate Dean of Students for Residence Life or Associate Director of Residence Life staff member to determine living arrangements.
4. Before the animal arrives on campus, the Partner must provide Associate Dean of Students or Associate Director of Residence Life a signed roommate agreement if currently living with a peer(s), emergency contact information, proof of vaccinations (as required for the specific animal), proof of yearly vet check (all animals), and licenses (as required for the specific animal)

King's College within 20 working days (starting the day documentation of the disability is received) will carry out its due diligence with review of the documentation and eligibility.

This documentation includes but is not limited to:

- a. demonstrating a relationship between a qualified professional and the Partner
- b. statement the Partner qualifies as a person with a disability and the substantial functional limitations of the Partner
- c. demonstration of a relationship btw the disability and the need for the animal
- d. demonstration that the animal will mitigate those limitations
- e. a professional opinion that care of the animal would most likely not add undue burden or stress for the Partner

Conflicting Disabilities/ Health issues

The College is aware that at times, other persons may have a condition that may cause an allergic reaction or other concern when an animal is in proximity. Persons who have a health issue with an Assistance Animal should direct the concern to the Disability Services Coordinator in the Academic Skills Center. Action will be discussed to consider the needs of both parties and resolve the problem as efficiently and effectively as possible.

Using an Assistance Animal in College Housing

Assistance Animals must be accompanied by the Partner, properly restrained on a leash or in an enclosure and remain under control in close proximity to the Partner, whenever the animal is outside the Partner's room. To the extent possible, the animal should be unobtrusive to other individuals and the learning, living, and working environments.

An Assistance Animal is only permitted in the Partner's residence (room or apartment), the residence hall lounge and other common areas which are a part of the residential facility excluding a dining facility. When the Partner is outside the Partner's residence, the Assistance Animal must at all times remain under the control of and in close proximity to the Partner. An Assistance Animal is not permitted in other areas of the College (e.g. libraries, academic buildings, classrooms, dining facilities, labs, campus center, etc.).

It is the responsibility of the Partner to make arrangements to promptly handle any cleaning that is necessary due to the presence of the Assistance Animal. Partners are responsible for providing their own cleaning supplies, and should not use common restrooms, living rooms or kitchens to clean the animal, or any equipment related to the animal. Arrangements should be made with Facilities, should access to a sink and water be required. All waste will be disposed of in outdoor bins.

When an Assistance Animal must exit the living quarters to address biological needs, it must be under the control of the Partner at all times. Feces must be cleaned immediately and disposed of properly in outdoor bins.

Animals may not be unattended for more than 8 consecutive hours and must be removed from campus during breaks or other extended periods if the Partner is not on

campus. Animals cannot be left overnight in the care of another student. In the event that the Partner is going to be absent overnight, they must be accompanied by the Animal, or arrangements must be made for the Animal to stay with someone off campus. Partners are required to select an emergency contact for the animal, someone who does not reside in King's College housing. In the event of an emergency involving the Partner, the College will notify the emergency contact, who will be required to come to campus to collect the Animal within an amount of time determined by the College based on the individual circumstance. The emergency contact's information will be stored with Residence Life, and any changes should be immediately updated. The student will be responsible for any costs incurred for care of an animal while the student is off campus.

Owner Responsibilities

Control: it is the responsibility of the person with a disability to control their Assistance Animal, and the College is not responsible for the care or supervision of an animal. Furthermore, an animal may be excluded from the premises if the animal is (1) out of control and the animal's handler does not take effective action to control it; or (2) the animal is not housebroken. It is the owner's responsibility to ensure that the animal is contained while the partner is not present. Precautions should be made in case of room entry by Facilities, Security or Residence Life Staff. The College is not liable should the animal escape during these times of entry. If an animal accidentally escapes its cage or student's residence and cannot be accounted for, the student **MUST** inform Residence Life staff immediately.

Damages: The owner is financially responsible for the actions of their animal including, but not limited to: bodily injury, household/facilities damages, and campus property damages. This includes any cleaning or treatments related to the presence of fleas, ticks or other pests.

Leash and Clean-Up: The animal must be on a leash at all times. Animals are not permitted to be loose or run at large. If an animal is found without its partner, the animal is subject to capture and confinement, at the expense of the student. The handler must always carry equipment to clean up animal waste. Waste must be disposed of in a trash can located on the exterior of any campus buildings. Indoor trash cans are not to be used for the disposal of waste.

Dog/Cat County Tags: All Assistance Animals must meet tag requirements of Luzerne County or county of residence and wear those tags. Animal Records are maintained by the Residence Life Office and shared with Campus Security. It may be shared with other departments if necessary.

Health: All Assistance Animals must be clean and in good health. All Assistance Animals must have veterinarian recommended vaccinations and a yearly vet check. These records are maintained by the Residence Life Office. If the health or hygiene of an Assistance Animal is not maintained, the Assistance Animal may be excluded from campus.

Other-: The College may place other reasonable conditions or restrictions on Assistance Animals depending on the nature and characteristics of the animal.

Emergency Situations

In case of an emergency or evacuation, EMS/Security will determine if it is safe to remove an animal left inside a building. It may be necessary to leave the animal behind in certain emergency evacuation situations. If an animal accidentally escapes its cage or student's residence and cannot be accounted for, the student MUST inform Residence Life staff immediately.

Removal of an Assistance Animal from College Owned Housing or Campus

There are instances when an animal is not appropriate as an ESA. Animals that engage in aggressive or threatening behavior such as but not limited to growling/biting or other aggressive action will be required to leave the campus immediately. A review will follow to determine if return to campus is reasonable. The Partner of an Assistance Animal is expected to report such incidents to the Residence Life Staff. Other unruly or disruptive behavior, such as but not limited to excessive noises, wandering unrestrained, making unwanted contact with others, will go through a process of warning and review. An Assistance Animal that makes excessive noise in a dwelling can be very disruptive to other residents. The Partner will be required to remove the Assistance Animal from campus until the behavior is under control. An excessively unclean or unkempt Assistance Animal or cage may result in the Partner being asked to remove it from campus until acceptable hygiene is achieved.

Failure to uphold and abide by this policy may result in a Partner not being permitted to keep their Assistance Animal in College owned housing units.

Exclusion

If for any reason the animal is excluded from campus for a short-term or long-term period, the individual with a disability who uses the animal will be given the opportunity to continue to utilize or participate in college living without the animal on premises and request other accommodations as needed.

Appeals Procedure

King's College has established procedures to address student concerns when a student believes their rights are not being appropriately addressed see Student Handbook under SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Appendix for caged animals:

Caged animals such as rodents, guinea pigs, hamsters, rats, rabbits, and other:

- ✓ Always wash hands thoroughly after touching the animal or cleaning the cage.

- ✓ Do not allow others to kiss, nuzzle, or hold the animal near their face. This can startle your animal and lead to scratches or biting behaviors.
- ✓ Cages/enclosures must be properly secured shut and sitting on a sturdy surface.
- ✓ Keep animal supplies and cage out of the kitchen or other areas where food is prepared or open.
- ✓ The animal should not be permitted to walk on shared property, such as furniture.
- ✓ Clean and disinfect habitats and supplies outside the residence hall/apartment whenever possible. If cleaning indoors, it must be done in a private living area such as a bedroom and with windows open for ventilation when able. Never clean in a kitchen or area where food or food prep supplies are nearby.
- ✓ Disinfect the area immediately after a habitat cleaning.
- ✓ Habitat waste needs to be disposed of in an outdoor garbage bin or dumpster.
- ✓ Seek medical attention if any human is bit or scratched.

See the website written by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention under Pet Rodents for additional recommendations

ASPCA handouts

https://www.aspca.org/sites/default/files/rat_care.pdf

https://www.aspca.org/sites/default/files/upload/images/mouse_edu.pdf

https://www.aspca.org/sites/default/files/upload/images/gerbil_care_edu.pdf

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Student Handbook

<https://www.kings.edu/sites/default/files/Emotional-Support-Animals.pdf>