

Procedure 6.2401

Animals on Campus

Policy 6.24 governs animals on campus. The following procedure addresses the use of Service Animals and Emotional Support Animals on College grounds by individuals with a qualifying disability.

I. Animal Categories

Service Animal: Service animals are limited to dogs and in some cases, miniature horses. These animals are trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual or other mental disability. Service Animals may, or may not, have been licensed by a state or local government or a private agency.

Service Animal-in-Training: An animal that is brought to campus by a trainer for the purpose of training the animal to become a service animal for individuals with disabilities and is allowed in accordance with N.C.G.S. 168-4.2(b) and the provisions of this policy.

Emotional Support Animal: An animal selected or prescribed to an individual with a disability by a health care or mental health professional to play a significant part in a person's treatment process (e.g. alleviating that person's disability). An Emotional Support Animal does not assist a person with disabilities with daily living activities and does not accompany the person at all times. An Emotional Support Animal is not a "Service Animal".

Pet: Any animal that is not a Service Animal, Service Animal-in-Training or an Emotional Support Animal. Pets are generally not permitted within buildings and may not be left unattended in vehicles on college property.

II. Animal Registration

Service Animals and Service Animals-in-Training: Students and staff/faculty are not required to register Service Animals. Students are highly encouraged to notify the Office of Accessibility Services and Faculty/Staff are encouraged to notify the Office of Human Resources so that appropriate College officials are aware of the animal's presence and can facilitate ease of access to areas on the College campus. Logistical or physical accommodations within campus buildings or classrooms may be necessary to ensure adequate space for the animal and its handler. In addition, a student handler may be eligible for disability related

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academic accommodations to ensure full access to the learning experience. Visitors with Service Animals are not required to register their animals.

Emotional Support Animals: Students who wish to bring an Emotional Support Animal on College grounds **must** contact the Office of Accessibility Services, **in advance**, to complete the application process. That process includes submission of appropriate documentation (signed letter on professional letterhead) of the need for an Emotional Support Animal by a physical or mental health care provider or licensed therapist. The documentation should include at a minimum:

- a. The provider's diagnosis of the person's disability/condition
- b. A clear description of the current impact and functional limitations resulting from the disability/condition
- c. The provider's confirmation that the Emotional Support Animal has been prescribed for treatment purposes and is necessary to help alleviate symptoms associated with the person's disability/condition
- d. The provider's description of the service(s) the animal will provide any additional rationale or statement the College may reasonably need to understand the basis for the professional opinion.

Once the application and documentation have been submitted to the Office of Accessibility Services, all information will be reviewed. The Accessibility Services Coordinator will then schedule an interactive meeting with the student for eligibility determination.

Staff/faculty who wish to bring an Emotional Support Animal on College grounds are required to present that request to the Office of Human Resources for consideration and/or approval.

III. Responsibilities of the College Community

Service Animals: If the need for a Service Animal is obvious, College officials may not question the presence of the animal on College grounds. If the need for a Service Animal is not obvious, College officials may ask the owner/handler two questions ONLY:

- Is the animal required because of a disability?
- What work or task(s) has the animal been individually trained to perform?

At no time may a College official require a Service Animal to demonstrate the tasks for which it has been trained nor inquire as to the nature of the person's disability.

If another person on College grounds has a covered disability under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) which includes an allergic reaction to animals and that person had contact with a Service Animal, a request for accommodations should be made by that individual to the Office of Accessibility Services (student) or the Office of Human Resources (staff/faculty). All facts surrounding the concern will be

considered in an effort to resolve the concern and provide a reasonable accommodation for impacted individuals.

Emotional Support Animals: The determination as to whether a student or staff/faculty member with a disability is allowed to have an Emotional Support Animal shall be made on a case-by-case basis. Requests to have an Emotional Support Animal on College grounds as an accommodation due to a disability must be directed to the Office of Accessibility Services (student) and the Office of Human Resources (staff/faculty). The College is not required to grant reasonable accommodations that would result in a fundamental alteration of a program, create an unsafe environment or would constitute an undue burden (*as stated by ADA*).

IV. **Identification**

It is recommended but not required that animals for individuals with disabilities wear some type of commonly recognized symbol indicating the animal is a working animal.

A Service Animal-in-Training must wear a collar and leash, harness, or cape that identifies the animal as a Service Animal-in-Training.

V. **Responsibilities of the Owner/Handler**

Service Animals/Emotional Support Animals are allowed in any area on College grounds where students, faculty, and staff are permitted with a few exceptions for health and safety reasons.

Service Animals/Emotional Support Animals on College grounds must be under control of the owner/handler at all times and must be restrained by a leash or other appropriate device that does not exceed six feet in length. In situations where a leash or harness interferes with a Service Animal's ability to perform its task or service, the Service Animal should remain under control of the handler at all times.

Service Animals/Emotional Support Animals brought onto College grounds must be licensed and fully vaccinated in accordance with local regulations. Dogs must wear rabies tags at all times.

Service Animals/Emotional Support Animals on College grounds may not disrupt the operation of the College or any class. Those disruptions include but are not limited to: barking, growling, pacing/constant motion, foul odor, pawing, sniffing or jumping on others.

The owner/handler of the Service Animal/Emotional Support Animal is responsible for any damage of personal property or injuries to an individual caused by their animal.

The owner/handler must ensure their animal is housebroken and trained. Fecal matter deposited by an animal on campus (inside or outside) must be removed immediately and properly disposed of by the owner/handler.

VI. Removal of Service Animals/Service Animal-in-Training/Emotional Support Animals

The College has the authority to ask the owner/handler to remove the Service Animal/Service Animal-in-Training/Emotional Support Animal from facilities or property if:

- the animal becomes unruly or disruptive
- presents as being unclean or unhealthy
- the animal has a condition or exhibits behavior that poses a direct threat to the health and safety of others.

All cases for removal shall be decided on a case-by-case basis based on that specific situation. In appropriate situations, the College will use a progressive model beginning with a warning for the first offense, and removal (temporarily or permanently) for additional offenses. Dependent on the severity of the situation, the first offense could result in temporary or permanent removal.

It is a Class 3 misdemeanor “to disguise an animal as a service animal or service animal in training”. N.C.G.S. § 168-4.5. In other words, it is a crime under North Carolina law to attempt to obtain access for an animal under the false pretense that it is a Service Animal.

Any employee or student who violates any portion of this procedure is subject to disciplinary action.

References

Legal References: Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, N.C.G.S. § 168-4.2(b), N.C.G.S. § 168-4.5

SACSCOC References: *Enter SACSCOC references here*

Cross References: [Policy 6.24](#)

History

Leadership Council Review/Approval Dates: *Enter date(s) here*

Senior Staff Review/Approval Dates: 4/26/2022

Board of Trustees Review/Approval Dates: *Enter date(s) here*

Implementation Dates: *Enter date(s) here*