Service and Assistance Animal Guidelines

I. Purpose of the Guidelines

These guidelines address animals utilized for disability purposes. It is the purpose of these guidelines to articulate the conditions under which animals may or must be permitted access to University grounds and facilities.

II. Definitions

Service Animal

Service animal means any dog or miniature horse that is individually 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. Other species of animals, whether wild or domestic, trained or untrained, are not service animals for the purposes of this definition. The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the individual's disability. Examples of work or tasks include, but are not limited to, assisting individuals who are blind or have low vision with navigation and other tasks, alerting individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to the presence of people or sounds, providing non-violent protection or rescue work, pulling a wheelchair, assisting an individual during a seizure, alerting individuals to the presence of allergens, retrieving items such as medicine or the telephone, providing physical support and assistance with balance and stability to individuals with mobility disabilities, and helping persons with psychiatric and neurological disabilities by preventing or interrupting impulsive or destructive behaviors.

Assistance Animal

Animals utilized by individuals with disabilities for emotional support, well-being, or comfort. Because they are not individually trained to perform work or tasks, support animals are not service animals. Unlike a service animal, assistance animals do not assist with daily living tasks. Therefore, assistance animals stay only in residence: they do not accompany the individual with a disability at all times (i.e. assistance animals do not attend class, enter the library or visit other residence halls or dining halls).

Individual with a Disability

An individual with a disability is a person who 1) has a physical or mental impairment that limits one or more of a person’s major life activities or 2) has a record of having, or being perceived as having, a physical or mental impairment.
III. Guidelines

In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 ("ADA"), and state and local law, New York University will accommodate persons with disabilities who require the assistance of a qualified service animal or an assistance animal. All requests for service animals or comfort animals must be processed by the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD).

Requesting a Service Animal:

A request for a service animal must include:

- Affirmation that the service animal is required due to disability
- A description of the specific tasks or work the animal has been trained to perform
- Documentation that the service animal is in compliance with all required New York State and New York City requirements associated with licensing, vaccinations, and other health regulations

Requesting an Assistance Animal:

A request for an assistance animal must include:

- Students who are requesting an assistance animal must submit a completed Request for Reasonable Housing Accommodation(s) to CSD to be reviewed by the Housing Accommodations Committee (www.nyu.edu/life/safety-health-wellness/students-with-disabilities/reasonable-accommodations).
- A new Request for Reasonable Housing Accommodation(s) must be completed for each new academic year
- Documentation accompanying the Request for Reasonable Housing Accommodation(s) must be current and state how the animal will impact the ability of the student to participate in University housing
- Documentation that the service animal is in compliance with all required New York State and New York City requirements associated with licensing, vaccinations, and other health regulations

When a service animal is confirmed, the owner will be supplied with a letter from the Director of CSD stating his/her right to be accompanied by the service animal on campus and the Office of Residential Life and Housing Services will be notified. The Office of Residential Life and Housing Services will notify other residents within the housing assignment (as well as maintenance and security staff, as needed) that the approved animal will be residing in a shared assigned living space.

Important Note Regarding Service Animals: The University may prohibit the use of Service Animals in certain locations because of health and safety restrictions (e.g. where the animals may be in danger, or where their use may compromise the integrity of research). Restricted areas may include, but are not limited to, the following areas: custodial closets, boiler rooms, facility equipment rooms, research laboratories, classrooms with research/demonstration animals, areas where protective clothing is necessary, wood and metal shops, motor pools, rooms with heavy machinery, and areas outlined in state law as being inaccessible to animals.
Should the Housing Accommodations Committee approve the request for an assistance animal, the owner will be supplied with a letter from the Director of CSD stating his/her right to maintain the animal in the owner’s housing assignment. CSD will notify the Office of Residential Life and Housing Services that the animal will be allowed to be brought into the owner’s housing assignment. The Office of Residential Life and Housing Services will notify other residents within the housing assignment (as well as maintenance and security staff, as needed) that the approved animal will be residing in a shared assigned living space.

IV. Responsibilities of the Owner of Service or Assistance Animal:

1. The owner is responsible for assuring that the animal does not unduly interfere with the routine activities of the residence or cause difficulties for students who reside there. The owner must always be in control of the animal.

2. The owner is financially responsible for the actions of the animal, including bodily injury or property damage. The owner’s responsibility covers but is not limited to replacement of furniture, carpet, window, wall covering, and the like. The owner is expected to cover these costs at the time of repair.

3. The owner is responsible for any expenses incurred for cleaning above and beyond a standard cleaning or for repairs to University premises that are assessed after the student and animal vacate the residence. The University shall have the right to bill the student owner’s account for unmet obligations.

4. The person is responsible for ensuring the cleanup of the animal's waste and, when appropriate, must toilet the animal in areas designated by the University consistent with the reasonable capacity of the owner. Indoor animal waste, such as cat litter, must be placed in a sturdy plastic bag and securely tied up before being disposed of in outside trash dumpsters. Litter boxes should be placed on mats so that waste is not tracked onto carpeted surfaces.

5. The owner is responsible for the overall health and well-being of the animal. This includes but is not limited to:
   - Vaccinations: In accordance with local ordinances and regulations the animal must be immunized against diseases common to that type of animal. Dogs must have current vaccination against rabies and wear a rabies vaccination tag. Cats should have the normal shots required for a healthy animal. Local licensing requirements are followed.
   - Animals to be housed in university housing must have an annual clean bill of health from a licensed veterinarian. Documentation can be a vaccination certificate for the animal or a veterinarian's statement regarding the animal's health. The university has authority to direct that the animal receive veterinary attention
   - The university reserves the right to request documentation showing that the animal has been licensed (e.g., New York law requires that every dog be licensed and provides that service dogs are exempt from the license fee).

6. Service Animals may travel freely with their owner throughout University Housing and other areas of the University. A service animal shall have a harness, leash, or other tether, unless either the handler is unable because of a disability to use a harness, leash, or other tether, or the use of a harness, leash, or other tether would interfere with the service animal’s safe, effective performance of work or tasks, in which case the service animal must be otherwise under the handler’s control (e.g., voice control, signals, or other effective means)
7. Assistance animals must be contained within the privately assigned residential area (room, suite, apartment) at all times, except when transported outside the private residential area in an animal carrier or controlled by leash or harness. When outside the residence, the owner of an assistance animal shall carry the letter provided by CSD identifying the animal as an approved animal.

8. Approved animals may not be left overnight in University Housing to be cared for by another student. Animals must be taken with the student if they leave campus for a prolonged period of time.

9. The owner agrees to continue to abide by all other residential policies. Reasonable accommodation which may constitute an exception to a policy that otherwise would prohibit having an animal does not constitute an exception to any other policy.

The Office of Residential Life and Housing Services has the ability to relocate owner and approved animal as necessary according to current contractual agreements. Any violation of the above rules or incidence of other violations may result in immediate removal of the animal from the University and may be reviewed through the Residential Judicial Process. Should the approved animal be removed from the premises for any reason, the owner is expected to fulfill his/her housing obligations for the remainder of the housing contract.