

Disability Support Services Student Service and Assistance Animal Policy

A. Introduction

Gonzaga University is committed to reasonably accommodating qualified students with disabilities. Students who seek to bring a service animal or assistance animal to campus should contact the Disability Resource, Education and Access Management (DREAM) office to discuss their request. DREAM will determine, on a case-by-case basis, whether bringing the animal to campus is a reasonable accommodation for the student. In making this determination, DREAM will consider the needs of the student with a disability as well as the impact of the animal on the campus community.

B. Definitions

1. Service Animal: A dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for a person with a disability.
2. Companion/Emotional Support Animal: These are various terms for assistance animals that do not meet the definition of service animal. They are animals prescribed for a person with a disability by a health or mental health provider because they alleviate one or more identified symptoms or effects of the person's disability.

C. General Provisions

1. Notice to Campus Community: If the animal resides with the student on campus, Student Development and/or DREAM may need to provide notice to certain members of the campus community living or working in close proximity to the animal. This information will be limited to notice about the animal's presence as an accommodation to student with a disability, and should not include information about the student's disability or the specific reason the animal is required. The number of individuals that notice will be provided to will depend on the type animal and on the type of housing the student is living in each academic year.
2. Conflicting Disabilities: It is possible that persons at the University may have a disability that precipitates an allergic reaction to animals. Allergies and fear of dogs are not valid reasons for excluding a service or assistance animal from the entire campus. Persons who expect to come into contact with the animal regularly and who experience reactions to the animal due to their disability should contact the DREAM office. The person making the complaint must provide verifiable medical documentation to support his or her claim. Action will be taken to consider the needs of all parties to resolve the problem as efficiently and effectively as possible.

If there is an allergy/animal conflict within a residence hall that cannot be resolved agreeably, then the Office of Student Development and the DREAM office will collaborate on a solution, taking into consideration the needs of both students.

3. Areas of Safety: There may be areas of the Gonzaga University campus where it is considered unsafe for a service or assistance animal to be present, such as medical facilities, laboratories, mechanical rooms or any other place where the safety of the animal or its handler may be threatened. Individuals such as laboratory directors, faculty, and the Director of Environmental Health and Safety may be consulted in making this determination. If an area is determined unsafe for the student and animal, reasonable accommodations should be provided to assure the student has equal access to the activity taking place there.

D. Approval Process

When it is not readily apparent that an animal is a service animal and the student is requesting to have the animal reside with him or her on campus, the student must provide documentation of the need for the animal in the DREAM office. The documentation must be from a licensed healthcare or mental health provider and must be no more than one year old. The documentation must establish the connection between the student's disability and the assistance the animal provides.

The student must provide this documentation to the DREAM office at least two weeks before the housing selection deadline. If the need for the service or assistance animal arises after a student is already placed in housing for the year, he or she must provide the documentation to the DREAM office at least thirty days prior to the date the student would like to bring the animal to the residence hall. Students making requests after housing has already been selected may be required to wait until the following semester to bring the animal to campus, depending on his or her current housing arrangements.

If a student is approved to bring an assistance animal to campus, that animal may be limited to staying in the student's residence and certain designated areas of campus (such as designated relief areas).

Commuter students who bring a service animal to campus should not be required to present the documentation outlined above. However, DREAM staff and or other university employees may ask whether the animal is needed due to a disability and inquire into what work or tasks the animal has been trained to perform.

E. Student Responsibility

1. Health and Licensing Requirements: A student requesting to have a service or assistance animal reside with him or her on campus must show proof that the animal has met the following requirements:
 - a. Licensing: The animal must meet the licensing requirements set by the Spokane City Health Department. For students who are not residents of the City of Spokane, a pet license from their home state or county may be accepted in lieu of the City of Spokane's license as long as similar requirements are met. Students should submit the records to the DREAM office, and update them as needed. The Spokane City Health Department currently requires animal licenses be updated yearly.
 - b. Health Records: The student must submit a statement regarding the animal's health from a licensed veterinarian dated within the past year. The statement

should include proof that the animal has received all required vaccinations. Proof of good health and vaccination must be provided on an annual basis. Students should submit the records to the DREAM office.

2. Control and Behavior Requirements: A student with a service or assistance animal must be in full control of his or her animal at all times, including taking measures to ensure that the animal does not exhibit disruptive or aggressive behavior or block an aisle or passageway. If the student resides on campus, a service or assistance animal may be off-leash or off-harness in the student's bedroom when it is not working. A service or assistance animal must be clean and well groomed, and measures should be taken at all times for flea and odor control. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of the animal's needs to relieve itself and respond accordingly. In the event that the student does not get the animal to the designated relief area, it is the student's responsibility to remove and properly dispose of any waste. The student will be oriented to these areas upon receiving approval to bring the animal to campus.
3. Consequences for Behavior: If a service or assistance animal is determined to be in violation of any of the above behaviors, the infraction will be handled on an individual basis through the DREAM Office, Student Development and/or the Dean of Students. If the animal's behavior poses a threat to the safety of others, the Department of Campus Public Safety and Security may also be part of the team responding to the behavior. Consequences may include, but are not limited to, mandating a refresher training for the student and his or her animal, or excluding the animal from the university.
4. Exclusion for Behavior: A service or assistance animal may be excluded from the campus when that animal's behavior poses a direct threat to the health and safety of others. Although the institution may exclude any service or assistance animal that is a direct threat, it should generally give the student with a disability the option of staying without the animal.
5. The owner of the service or assistance animal is solely responsible for any damage to persons or University property caused by the animal. Gonzaga University is not responsible for loss, damage to, or death of the animal.

References:

This policy has been adapted, with permission, from Loyola University Maryland.

ADA 2012 Revised Requirements http://www.ada.gov/service_animals_2010.htm

Accommodating Service and Assistance Animals on Campus: Making Heads or Tails of the ADA, FHA, and Section 504. <http://counsel.cua.edu/fedlaw/nacuanoteserviceanimals.cfm>

Service and Therapy/Emotional Support Animal Policy, Brigham Young University
http://www.byu.edu/oncampushousing/fam_policies.shtml#animals