

UMKC Student Disability Services
Emotional Support Animals in Residential Life Policy

Definition

An emotional support animal is any animal that provides emotional support that alleviates one or more identified symptoms or effects of a person's disability.

Procedure

Individuals residing in campus housing that wish to have an emotional support animal in their housing must establish an Accommodation Plan, complete an application form, and provide documentation of their disability from qualified evaluator that describes the disability and its current impact. In addition the letter needs to states the disability related need for the emotional support animal.

Qualified evaluator

A qualified evaluator is a medical or mental health professional licensed in the state of the student's residence who has meet with and observed the student with a disability and their interaction with the emotional support animal in question and has followed the current standards of practice in the field.

Limitations and Responsibilities

If the emotional support animal in question poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others that cannot be reduced or eliminated by another reasonable accommodation or if the emotional support animal in question would cause substantial physical damage to the property of others that cannot be reduced or eliminated by another reasonable accommodation then the requested emotional support animal may be denied.

Emotional support animals are limited to the residence and common areas of the residence facility that the student with the disability is entitled to access. Emotional support animals, unless they also qualify as a service animal are not permitted in other areas of the UMKC campus.

The emotional support animal must be under the control of the person with a disability, it must be housebroken and must not pose a direct threat to the health or safety of others. The animal must meet all state and local, health, vaccination and licensing requirements. At a minimum, animals must be immunized against diseases common to that type of animal. All vaccinations must be current. Dogs must wear a rabies vaccination tag. The person with the disability is responsible for any damage the specific assistance animal causes and is responsible for cleaning up of all animal waste.

Animals to be housed in University housing must have an annual clean bill of health from a licensed veterinarian including a statement that the animal is up to date on all vaccinations. This must be provided to Residential Life annually.

Questions related to the use of emotional support animals on the campus should be directed to Scott Laurent, Student Disability Services at (816) 235-5696.