



Procedures for requesting to have an Emotional Support Animal (ESA) in University Housing

An ESA may not reside in University Housing without the prior approval of the University. Disability Support Services (DSS) and Housing & Residential Education (HRE) work in collaboration on all ESA requests. Students planning to have their ESA reside in University housing are required to follow the steps outlined below **before** bringing the animal to campus:

All required information for an ESA accommodation request must be submitted for consideration by:

- **June 1 for the Fall semester**
- **October 1 for the Spring semester**

Every effort will be made to accommodate approved requests received by the deadline dates. After the above dates, ESA applications will be considered based upon housing availability. UNC cannot guarantee that it will be able to meet late applicant's accommodation request. All housing requests are evaluated on a case by case basis. Incomplete applications or those without disability documentation will not be considered.

1. **Before completing any of the steps below, [please click here to fill out your initial request for accommodations and services with our office.](#)**
 - a. Please note that step 2 can be completed via this link as well if you have your materials ready to be uploaded. If you do not have documentation ready for upload at this time, other methods for submission will be listed within the above request form.
2. Submit documentation of disability (guidelines below), a photo of the ESA, and a history of vaccine records (if applicable) to the DSS office. After submitting the required documentation, a DSS staff member will notify the student if the documentation and other paperwork is sufficient to move forward in the process.

Documentation from your medical or mental health professional should be on letterhead, typed, dated, and signed. This information must come from a qualified/licensed professional (e.g., physician, psychiatrist, psychologist, mental health counselor, etc.), who is unrelated to the student, and whose credentials permit the evaluation of the disability.

- a. Provide a clear statement of the medical and/or psychiatric diagnosis (i.e., ICD-10, DSM-5), with a description of the student's current symptoms and date of initial diagnosis, if known;
- b. Explain the functional impact or limitations of the disability on major life activities, particularly, as it relates to the student's ability to enjoy their campus housing;
- c. Document the level of severity and frequency of the symptoms of the disability;

- d. Include the length of time for which the student has been seeing the professional for this diagnosis;
 - e. Describe how the student's disability necessitates the need for an emotional support animal in campus housing;
 - f. Describe the student's history of using an emotional support animal and its effectiveness as an accommodation in the past. If the student has not used an ESA as an accommodation in the past, describe what has initiated this recommendation as part of their treatment plan at this time;
 - g. List other strategies that the individual has used or has benefitted from as part of their treatment plan;
 - h. Define the specific ways in which the emotional support animal has helped to alleviate or mitigate the student's disability-related symptoms. This information must be symptom specific.
3. With sufficient documentation, a DSS staff member will instruct the student, via email, to schedule an appointment with a DSS staff member. During this appointment, the student will engage in the following process with a DSS staff member:
 - a. Provide self-reported information about their disability and the need for their ESA in University housing;
 - b. Review of documentation of disability and animal records (described in step 1). Additional documentation may be needed from the student's provider and/or their ESA's veterinarian. This may involve a DSS staff member directly contacting the student's provider and/or requesting that the provider complete a "Provider Questionnaire" to obtain more information about the impact of the student's disability and their ESA.
 - c. Complete a release of information to allow DSS to notify Housing & Residential (HRE) staff about the status of the ESA request (not including any disability-related information). The release also authorizes the DSS staff member to present the ESA request to the ESA Committee. Additionally, the release allows the student to grant permission to DSS to make contact with their provider.
4. After the student has submitted sufficient documentation and completed the initial meeting at DSS, an ESA Committee will review the request at a meeting, which occurs during the second week of each month. The Committee will only review ESA requests after all of the requirements described above are completed by the student and/or their provider.
5. The student will be notified of the ESA Committee's decision via email within 7 to 10 business days, following the ESA Committee meeting. In some cases, the Committee may request more information, if this situation arises, a DSS staff member will contact the student.
6. Students whose request for an Emotional Support Animal is not granted will have the opportunity to have that decision reconsidered. Students will receive information about the reconsideration process upon receiving a denial notification. Students should be advised that there is only one reconsideration opportunity which is the final decision regarding the request.

7. If the Committee authorizes that the ESA can reside in University housing, a DSS staff member will notify the individual of their provisional approval, pending the completion of the steps outlined below. This means that the ESA cannot reside on campus until the steps below are completed. Unapproved animals found on campus will be removed from University Housing. UNC has a partnership with Sheep Draw Veterinary Hospital in Greeley to assist a student in boarding an animal for a discounted rate. All expenses for care/boarding of the animal are the responsibility of the owner and may be charged to the student's account if left unpaid. All vaccines and shots must be current for boarding.
- a. The student is instructed to schedule a follow-up appointment with DSS to review the Housing & Residential ESA Policy, which outlines responsibilities for maintaining an animal in the student's residence.
 - b. Once the follow-up appointment has occurred, a DSS staff member will notify HRE of the pending ESA approval and provide copies of the signed ESA policy, the vaccine records, and a color photo of the animal.
 - c. A HRE staff member will contact the individual by email to arrange a time to conduct a room inspection to finalize this process.
 - d. If the individual has not done so already, they must provide proof to HRE that a valid Greeley Pet License has been obtained.
 - e. If the individual has suitemates/roommates, HRE will contact them by email to inform them that the ESA will be residing in the shared living space and to inquire whether there are conflicting health/medical or other concerns for roommates with the animal in the shared living spaces. If concerns arise, DSS and HRE will collaborate to resolve any concerns. HRE will notify the individual when their ESA can reside in University housing.

Note: You are REQUIRED to ensure that HRE always has a current copy of your ESA's vaccine records and proof of a Greeley Pet License. **Failure to keep vaccinations and records current may result in the removal of the animal from University housing.**

It is a violation of the University's Student Code of Conduct for any student to provide knowingly false information about whether they have a disability for any purpose including, but not limited to, a request to be allowed to keep an animal on campus. Such violations subject the person doing so to disciplinary sanctions under the Student Code of Conduct. Among other things, to provide false information regarding one's disability status adversely affects the ability of the University to respond to the legitimate needs of persons with disabilities.