



## **Procedures for Requesting Approval of an Emotional Support Animal (ESA) in University Housing**

**An ESA may not be kept in University housing without the prior express approval of the University as described below:**

A. DSS and Housing and Residential Education (HRE) work in collaboration on all ESA requests and require a 30-day notice period in order to complete the required due diligence that includes receipt, review and verification of documentation regarding the ESA request. A request for an ESA will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis as described below. **An ESA will not be permitted in a residence hall until DSS and HRE have completed their review process and have approved the student's request for an ESA.**

An individual requesting to have an (ESA) on campus must have a diagnosed disability and **must first submit documentation (described in section B below) to the Disability Support Services (DSS) office in order to begin the process.** After submitting the required documentation, DSS will determine if the documentation is sufficient for the student to move forward in the process. With sufficient documentation, the individual must schedule an appointment where a DSS staff member will assist with the initial intake for the request. During this appointment, the requesting individual will engage in the following process with DSS:

- (1) Intake for the request including self-reported information,
- (2) Submission of a release of information (not including any disability-related information) on a form to be provided by DSS to allow DSS to notify HRE staff about the approval or denial of the ESA request. The release of information also authorizes the ESA Committee to discuss all details of the ESA request relevant to the decision regarding the request.
- (3) Review of documentation of disability as described below.

(B) A DSS staff member will review the documentation to determine eligibility for the ESA request. During the initial intake and/or review process, additional documentation may be requested by the Committee prior to the decision regarding the request. In addition, a DSS staff member may need to speak directly to the requesting individual's healthcare provider or therapist, in which case the student will need to sign a release to allow that contact. Documentation in support of a request for an ESA must be from a qualified and licensed physician, psychiatrist, social worker or other mental health professional who is unrelated to the student. The documentation must clearly describe the relationship between the student's

disability and the assistance of the ESA. The documentation must include a signed statement, on the mental health care professional's letterhead, that describes clearly and in detail the relationship between the student's disability and the assistance that is and will be provided by the ESA. The documentation must include the following current information (including any events/developments within the preceding six (6) months):

- (1) The health care professional's credentials/experience in evaluation of disabilities of the type with which the student has been diagnosed,
- (2) A summary of the health care professional's treatment history with the individual,
- (3) A clear statement of the diagnosis of disability that includes the rationale for the diagnosis, the manner in which the disability manifests itself and the functional limitations of the disability on major life activities,
- (4) The individual's history of using an ESA and if/how the ESA has been an effective accommodation for the individual,
- (5) How the requested ESA is a reasonable accommodation that will provide a benefit to the individual with the disability,
- (6) The specific manner(s) in which the ESA will help to alleviate or mitigate the symptoms of the disability including how the ESA relates to the ability of the individual to use and enjoy the living space provided by the University and
- (7) A description of other strategies or accommodations the individual has used or may benefit from as part of a treatment plan.

C. After the individual has submitted to DSS the documentation described above and completed the initial intake at DSS, the request will be reviewed at an ESA Committee meeting that occurs in the second week of each month. The Committee will only review ESA requests after all of the requirements described above have been completed by the requesting individual. Any request for which both initial interview and submission of documentation have not been completed will not be reviewed until the next monthly meeting following such completion.

D. The requesting individual will be notified of the decision of the ESA Committee via email within 7 to 10 business days following the ESA Committee meeting.

**E. If the ESA Committee approves the request, the individual whose request has been approved must do the following:**

(1) Meet with a DSS Staff member to review the provisions of the ESA Policy. To schedule an appointment, you can contact the DSS main office at (970) 351-2289 or go to the office in the lower level of Michener Library room L-80. If needed, please see the UNC Campus map for details of the location (<http://www.unco.edu/uncmap/index.aspx>). This office is open Monday – Friday, 8 AM – 5 PM, when the university is open. At this time, the individual must also

provide a copy of a current Greeley Pet License and an up-to-date vaccination record from a licensed veterinarian. The individual whose request has been approved may be required to submit additional information from the veterinarian. (After the follow-up appointment and submission of the animal's documentation, DSS will notify HRE that the ESA request has been approved and provide HRE copies of the signed ESA policy, the vaccine records, and proof of the Greeley Pet License.) **Note:** Proof of vaccinations and a City of Greeley license for dogs and cats must be current and submitted to HRE each academic year in order for continued approval of the ESA request.

(2) Meet with an HRE staff member to discuss and sign the HRE roommate approval and discuss housing policies related to animals. You can contact the HRE main office at (970) 351-1984 or go to the office in Tobey-Kendel Hall 187 at 1901 9th Avenue. If needed, please see the UNC Campus map for details of the location (<http://www.unco.edu/uncmap/index.aspx>). This office is typically open Monday-Friday 8 AM – 5 PM, when the university is open. If you have suitemates, each of them will have to go to the HRE main office and sign the form indicating their approval of the ESA in the residence.

**F. 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.**