



## **Emotional Support Animal Policies and Procedures**

### **Approval Process**

1. An Emotional Support Animal (ESA) is an animal that provides comfort and companionship to a disabled person. They are not trained to perform specific tasks. A student will only be allowed one ESA, unless exceptional circumstances can be proven. Animals must be at least 6 months old in order to ensure they are fully vaccinated.
2. A student must have approval before an ESA can live in campus housing. The student must be established with Accessibility Services and submit all required documents at least 60 days prior to bringing the animal to campus. After submitting the ESA Request Form, the student will be contacted for an intake meeting. Before a request will be formally reviewed, the following documents must be provided to Accessibility Services:
  - a. An up-to-date veterinary record stating the age of the animal and certifying that it has received all recommended vaccinations. Rabies vaccination is required for all dogs and cats.
  - b. A picture of the animal
  - c. A completed Medical Verification Form and Letter
  - d. A completed ESA Success Plan
  - e. Signed Roommate Agreement within the first full week of classes (if applicable)
  - f. Signed ESA Policies and Procedures
3. Once all documents are submitted to Accessibility Services, they will be reviewed. The 60-day window does not begin until the file is complete. The student will be notified when a determination has been made.
4. ESA requests may be denied if adequate information has not been provided or where approval could constitute an undue financial burden or threaten the health and safety of other students.
5. If a student wishes to appeal a denial, they may do so in writing within 5 business days of receiving their determination notice. Written appeals must be submitted to the Director of Accessibility Services by emailing [accessibility@marietta.edu](mailto:accessibility@marietta.edu).
  - a. Appeals must state one of the following specific reasons for reconsideration:
    - i. New information that was not available at the time of the initial review; or
    - ii. A procedural error that unfairly affected the process
6. Once an ESA is approved, the student does not need to reapply. However, current proof of vaccinations is required each year prior to the animal's arrival on campus, in addition to an updated emergency contact and roommate agreement when applicable.
7. An ESA should not be in campus housing unless an approval has been issued. Each approval is specific to the animal listed on the application and may not be transferred to another animal. Unapproved animals will be removed and the owner will be subject to a \$500 fine.

### **Request to Acknowledge a Service Dog**

1. A service dog is trained to do a job or task for a disabled person.
2. If a residential student owns a service dog, they must submit the following information to Accessibility Services:
  - a. An up-to-date veterinary record stating the age of the animal and certifying that it has received all recommended vaccinations. Rabies vaccination is required for all dogs.
  - b. A picture of the dog
  - c. A completed Medical Verification Form
  - d. Signed Roommate Agreement (if applicable)
  - e. Signed ESA Policies and Procedures

### **Guidelines for Maintaining an Animal in Campus Housing**

The following guidelines apply to all approved Emotional Support Animals (ESAs) and Acknowledged Service Dogs who live in the residential community, unless the nature of the disability of the resident precludes adherence to these guidelines, and permission for a variance from the guidelines has been granted pursuant to College policy.

1. Animal behavior, noise, odor, and waste may not exceed reasonable standards and/or create unreasonable disruptions for residents or staff.
2. Animals must be contained within the private residential area (room, suite, apartment) at all times, except when taken outside. In shared living, the animal must be kept in the owner's bedroom when the owner is not home, unless otherwise stated in the roommate agreement. In residence halls, animals are not permitted in common spaces, which includes bathrooms, kitchens, lounge areas, or other resident's rooms.
  - a. Animals must be leashed or in carriers when leaving the residential area.
  - b. If leashing interferes with a Service Dog's ability to perform essential tasks, this should be noted during the acknowledgement process. The owner will be responsible for controlling the dog.
3. Animals must have all veterinarian-recommended vaccinations to maintain their health and to prevent contagious diseases. Annual documentation is required.
4. Dogs and cats must be at least six months old and be fully vaccinated, including rabies.
  - a. Rabies tags, including animal ID tags with the owner's phone number, are required.
5. Animals must not be pregnant and should be neutered or spayed.
6. Owners are responsible for properly containing and disposing of all animal waste, including but not limited to:
  - a. Indoor animal waste, such as cat litter, must be placed in a bag and tied securely before being disposed of in dumpsters. Litter boxes should be placed on mats to protect flooring. In a shared residence, litter boxes should be kept in the owner's bedroom.
  - b. Outdoor waste must be immediately picked up with a plastic bag and properly disposed of.
  - c. Marietta College reserves the right to designate specific sites for animal elimination of waste and to prohibit animal waste in any other common area.
7. Bathing an animal on campus is prohibited. Owners must take animals to appropriate facilities off campus.

### **Responsibilities of Animal Owners**

1. Owners are responsible for ensuring that their animal does not interfere with routine activities or cause unreasonable difficulties for other students. Community living requires respect for the needs of students with allergies and those who may fear animals.
2. Owners are financially responsible for all damages caused by their animal, including bodily injury or property damage which may necessitate replacement of furniture, flooring, etc. as determined at the College's discretion.
3. If an animal is left unattended for an extended period of time, they may be removed. OCL staff will attempt to reach the listed emergency contact first, but reserve the right to move the animal to a local shelter if needed. If a removal occurs, the animal owner will be fined \$500.
4. If an owner is leaving campus for an extended period (weekends, breaks) the animal must accompany them or have appropriate care arranged. This may not take place in the room of another student.
5. Residences with animals will be inspected by OCL staff at least once per semester. Evidence of flea or other infestation will result in fumigation at the cost of the animal owner. The animal must be removed from campus at that time.
6. Owners are responsible for any expenses incurred for cleaning, which is above and beyond the standard, after vacating the residence.
7. Owners must notify Accessibility Services and the Office of Community Living if the approved animal is no longer needed or is no longer in residence.
8. A student with an approved ESA must file a new request if they wish to replace an ESA. Animals who are not approved will be removed from campus and the student will waive their accommodation for the remainder of the academic year. The removal fine of \$500 will be applied.
9. The Office of Community Living reserves the right to relocate a student and their animal as necessary, provided that the new residence is consistent in terms of the current agreement.
10. Any violation of these guidelines will be reviewed through Student Conduct processes.

### **Grounds for Removal of Animal**

1. Violation of above-stated policies may warrant removal of the animal depending on the severity. Animal owners will be given probationary status and opportunity for correction, when appropriate.
  - a. First time violations will require corrective action. Second time violations will require 30-day suspension of the animal from campus housing. Third time violations will result in removal.
2. Immediate removal will apply to the following circumstances:
  - a. Any animal that is not approved for campus housing. A \$500 fine will be charged to the owner of said animal.
  - b. The animal poses a direct threat to the health and safety of others that cannot be alleviated by reasonable practices.
  - c. Evidence of aggressive behavior or causing injury to an animal or student
  - d. The owner is not properly caring for the animal. Any evidence of maltreatment, neglect, or abuse of the animal will be reviewed through the Student Conduct process.

If a determination is made to remove an animal, the owner will be notified in writing and be given 48 hours to comply. If the owner wishes to appeal the decision, they must do so in writing within 2 business days of receiving the notification. Appeals should be sent to [accessibility@marietta.edu](mailto:accessibility@marietta.edu) and must include specific reasons as to why the decision should be reconsidered and a plan for correcting the cited violations. The animal may not reside on campus during the appeals process. Appeals will be reviewed by a committee of relevant stakeholders and a decision will be provided to the student within 10 business days of receiving the appeal. All decisions at that point are final.

### **Guidelines for Notification**

When an animal is approved for campus housing, the Office of Community Living will make a reasonable attempt to notify the other residents in the housing unit where the animal will be located. This notice will be limited to information about the animal's presence and will not disclose the student's disability. Residents who have medical conditions which may be negatively impacted by the presence of the animal (allergies, asthma, etc.) have the opportunity to contact OCL and report their concerns. Such affected students may be eligible for an accommodation. Should conflicts arise related to the animals in residence, OCL and Accessibility Services will collaborate for resolution while considering the needs of all involved.

All roommates of the animal owner must agree to living with the animal, by completing the Roommate Agreement Form. If one or more roommate does not approve, alternative living arrangements may be made through discussions with Accessibility Services and OCL. Completed Agreements must be submitted by the end of the first full week of classes.

A paw print decal must be affixed in an easily visible location outside of the animal's residence as a notification to staff who may need to enter. The owner should be present during any scheduled maintenance visit or room check.