



THE OFFICE OF ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES

COMPASS: Sweet Success Center, Thomas Library

P.O. Box 720 | Springfield, Ohio 45501

Phone: (937) 327-7870 | Fax: (937) 327-6170

Wittenberg University Policy on Pets, Service Animals, and Assistance Animals for Resident Students

Animals, including pets, are not permitted in Wittenberg University housing with the exception of Service Animals or approved Assistance Animals for individuals with disabilities. The only other exception allowed is for Service Dogs being trained through 4 Paws for Ability, Inc. of Xenia, Ohio. All 4Paws Service Dogs must be approved through the Wittenberg University 4Paws student coordinators.

Wittenberg University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to qualified students with health concerns. Students with health concerns and/or disabilities who require the use of Assistance Animals as a reasonable accommodation may be permitted to bring such animals on campus provided that they comply with the University's policies regarding such animals. Students who seek to bring an Assistance Animal to campus should contact Accessibility Services in the COMPASS: Sweet Success Center (via [scheduling a meeting](#) or email at accessibilityservices@wittenberg.edu). Accessibility Services staff will determine, on a case-by-case basis and in collaboration with other relevant offices on campus, whether or not to approve the student's request for an Assistance Animal. In making this determination, the Accessibility Services staff will consider the needs of the student, as well as the impact of the animal on the campus community. The approval of a request is animal-specific and is not transferable to another animal or type of animal; however, if there are changes to a student's situation the student should notify the Office of Accessibility Services. Students requiring Service Animals are encouraged to inform Accessibility Services staff so that appropriate campus offices, such as Campus Police and Physical Plant, can be notified of the presence of the animal.

Section I: Definitions

Service Animal

"Service Animals" are dogs trained to do work or perform specific tasks directly related to an individual's disability such as guiding an individual with impaired vision, pulling a wheelchair, or fetching dropped items. Service Animals are working animals, not pets. The work or task a Service Animal has been trained to provide must be directly related to the functional limitations of the person's disability. Animals whose sole function is to provide comfort or emotional support do not qualify as Service Animals. Service Animals, including those in the process of training through a recognized training facility, may accompany a person with a disability or a person training the animal in public facilities and accommodations or places to which the general public is invited (e.g., academic buildings, administrative offices, residence halls), as long as the animal is under handler control. In some cases, a miniature horse may be permitted as a Service



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Animal, however, pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act, no other animals qualify as Service Animals.

Assistance Animal

“Assistance Animals” or “Emotional Support Animals” are animals that provide assistance or emotional support which alleviates one or more identified symptom(s) or effect(s) of an individual’s disability. Unlike Service Animals, ESAs require no specific training and do not perform specific tasks; rather their mere presence mitigates effects of the disability. ESAs are permitted in University residence hall rooms, apartments, and houses once the resident has been approved through the ESA process. Certifications obtained online do not automatically qualify an animal as an Assistance Animal, as these certificates can often be purchased without documentation of a disability. Unlike Service Animals, ESAs are specifically linked to housing-related accommodations and are generally prohibited in indoor areas considered public spaces including, but not limited to, community bathrooms, lounges, dining centers, computer labs, classrooms, office workspaces, and nonresidential facilities on campus.

Companion Animals (Pet)

A “Companion Animal” or a “pet” is an animal living with individuals for purpose of pleasure, leisure time activity and companionship. Generally, Companion Animals are prohibited from enter campus facilities. Exceptions are provided for: a) the University President’s residence; b) Residence Life Professional staff apartments; c) approved University programs involving animals; and d) University-owned housing (as specified in Residence Life policies in the [Student Handbook](#)). In these instances, the applicable Division Vice President will determine if and when Companion Animals are permitted, and the type of Companion Animals permitted.

Approved Animal

An “Approved Animal” is a Service Animal, or an Assistance Animal that has been permitted in Wittenberg University housing as a reasonable accommodation under this policy.

Owner

The “Owner” is the resident student who has been permitted to keep an approved animal in housing under this policy.

Handler

The “Handler” is the student who requires a Service Dog as a result of his/her disability, or a third party designated to accompany the student with the disability if the disability warrants such an individual. The ADA requires that service animals be under the control



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of the handler at all times. Handlers are solely responsible for the care and control of the animal.

Section II: Service Animals

We encourage a resident student seeking to keep a Service Animal in University housing contact Accessibility Services staff to arrange a meeting. To set-up a meeting, students can schedule via the [Bookings link](#) or e-mail accessibilityservices@wittenberg.edu. We recommend that the student meet with Accessibility Services staff prior to the Housing Lottery deadline, so that appropriate offices (such as Campus Police and Physical Plant) and student residents can be notified regarding approved animals in residence. This notice will be limited to information about the animal's presence as an approved animal: there will be no disclosure of the student's specific health concerns. Other students residing in close proximity with medical condition(s) that may be affected by animals (e.g. respiratory diseases, asthma, severe allergies) are asked to contact the Office of Accessibility Services if they have a health or safety related concern about exposure to a Service Animal. Such affected students may be eligible for a disability accommodation when living in proximity to a Service Animal. They may also be relocated away from the Service Animal if necessary and if alternative housing is available. If the need for the Service Animal arises after the student is already placed in housing, the student can contact Accessibility Services staff at that time.

At this meeting, Accessibility Services staff and student can also discuss University policies/procedures, as well as ADA requirements, for approved animals on campus. The University may make the following inquiries for the purpose of determining whether an animal qualifies as a service animal:

1. Is the Service Animal required due to the functional limitations of the requesting student's disability?
2. What work or tasks has the Service Animal been trained to perform for the benefit of the requesting student?

Failure to abide by ADA regulations regarding Services Animals will result in contact with the student and may be addressed through the Student Conduct process. Continued failure to abide by ADA requirements regarding Service Animals will result in charges through Student Conduct, and may result in the removal of the animal and/or student from campus.

Accessibility Services staff, Residence Life staff, Campus Police, and Physical Plant will collaborate, as necessary, to resolve conflicts related to Service Animals. Staff members will consider the needs of all students involved. All roommates or housemates of the handler should engage in a conversation about the presence of the animal, boundaries with the animals, and the comfort of all individuals related to the animal.



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Students may consult with Residence Life staff for assistance with these conversations. In the event that one or more roommates or housemates does not approve of or wish to live with the animal, either the handler and the Service Animal or the non-approving roommates or housemates, as determined by the Residence Life staff, may be moved to a different location.

Students who intend to utilize Service Animals on campus may find it beneficial to be aware of University expectations for approved animals on campus, as well as federal, state, and local legislation related to the Service Animals.

The following pertains to the health and well-being of the Service Animal for consideration by the owner:

- **Training:** Service Animals must be trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of the individual with a disability.
- **Vaccination/Licensing:** In accordance with local ordinances and regulations, Service Animals must receive all required and/or recommended immunizations against diseases. Additionally, we require that dogs have current vaccination against rabies. Local licensing requirements must be followed.
- **Health:** Approved animals should be in good health and should be seen regularly (at minimum yearly) by a licensed veterinarian. The University may inquire about the health of the animal upon receiving reports of concern for the animal. The University has authority to request that the Service Animal receive veterinary attention in appropriate circumstances.
- **Control:** The ADA requires that Service Animals be under the control of the handler at all times. In most instances, the handler will be the individual with a disability or a third party who accompanies the individual with a disability. The Service Animal must be harnessed, leashed, or tethered while in public places unless these devices interfere with the service animal's work or the person's disability prevents use of these devices. In that case, the person must use voice, signal, or other effective means to maintain control of the animal. Under control also means that a Service Animal should not be allowed to bark repeatedly in a lecture hall, theater, library, or other quiet place. However, if a dog barks just once, or barks because someone has provoked it, this would not mean that the dog is out of control. https://www.ada.gov/regs2010/service_animal_qa.html
- **Cleanliness:** The handler is responsible for caring for and supervising the Service Animal, which includes toileting, feeding, and grooming and veterinary care. It is the handler's responsibility to remove and properly dispose of any



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waste, unless he/she is prevented from doing so due to his/her disability.

https://www.ada.gov/regs2010/service_animal_qa.html

- Please consider taking measures for flea and odor control, and to ensure that the Service Animal is clean and well groomed. If fleas, ticks, or other pests are detected through inspection, the student's housing will be treated using approved fumigation methods by University approved pest control service. The handler will be billed for the expense of any pest treatment above and beyond normal required pest management if such treatment is required due to the animal. The handler will be held responsible for any room damages including the excessive cleaning or replacement of 4 the carpet. This will be noted on the Room Condition Record and during health and safety inspections.
- **Other Conditions:** Accessibility Services staff and Residence Life staff are permitted to conduct animal welfare checks if there is a reasonable concern for the health and safety of the approved animal. Accessibility Services staff may also contact the owner if there are concerns regarding the Service Animal's performance of a trained task(s) and/or disruptive behavior.

Section III: Assistance Animals

A resident student seeking to keep an Assistance Animal in University housing must make a formal request to the Office of Accessibility Services. To do so, the student can submit a [Request for Services](#) or schedule with Accessibility Services staff via the [Bookings link](#) or e-mail accessibilityservices@wittenberg.edu. Students should make an effort to meet with Accessibility Services staff prior to the Housing Lottery deadline, so that appropriate offices and student residents can be notified regarding approved animals in residence. This notice will be limited to information about the animal's presence as an approved animal: there will be no disclosure of the student's specific health condition. Other students residing in close proximity with medical condition(s) that may be affected by animals (e.g. respiratory diseases, asthma, severe allergies) are asked to contact the Office of Accessibility Services if they have a health or safety related concern about exposure to an Assistance Animal. Such affected students may be eligible for a disability accommodation when living in proximity to an Assistance Animal. They may also be relocated away from the Assistance Animal if necessary and if alternative housing is available. If the need for the Assistance Animal arises after the student is already placed in housing, then the student should contact Accessibility Services staff at that time. The review process may take up to 14 days; accordingly, students should submit their requests to the Office of Accessibility Services at least 14 days prior to the date the student would like to bring the animal to University housing.



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In order to qualify for having an Assistance Animal in University housing, all of the following must be true:

1. The student has a disability and/or health concern. Students must provide documentation that verifies the disability and/or health concern. [Guidelines for documentation](#) can be found on the Wittenberg University Accessibility Services webpage – these guidelines are not used as a checklist; they simply provide insight into the type of information that is helpful for the decision-making process. Briefly, documentation should describe the diagnosis/presenting concerns, any functional limitations to the equal use and/or access to campus housing spaces caused by the diagnosis/presenting concerns, recommendations for minimizing limitations to equal use of/access to campus housing spaces, and why the recommendations would be helpful for promoting equal use/access (e.g. why is an assistance animal the proper treatment/support for your specific disability?).

Students should be aware that there are many scam websites that offer “pay for documentation” services for ESAs. The Office of Accessibility Services does not recommend connecting with one of these, typically web-based, services, as they often do not provide actual support or helpful information; commonly, the documentation provided from these services does not provide the Accessibility Services staff with helpful information regarding the student’s request.

2. The animal is necessary to afford the student with a disability an equal opportunity to use and enjoy their University housing.
3. There is an identifiable relationship or nexus between the disability and the assistance that the animal provides.

After receiving a completed request with documentation included, Accessibility Services staff will engage with the student requesting the Assistance Animal through the interactive process. The interactive process can vary with each case; however, students can generally expect to have a meeting with Accessibility Services staff to discuss their request. Upon review of information provided throughout the interactive process, the student will be provided a decision in writing. If the documentation is insufficient, or if more information is needed, Accessibility Services staff may ask the requesting student to provide additional documentation.

Additionally, Accessibility Services staff may collaborate with other University offices as necessary – including the Dean of Students’ Office, the Office of Residence Life,



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Campus Police, and Physical Plant – to determine if there are any issues that may impact the request for an Assistance Animal.

When an Assistance Animal is approved, the requesting student will be required to sign an Assistance Animal Agreement/ESA Agreement that includes the provisions of this policy. This agreement is also signed by Accessibility Services staff and the Associate Dean for Residence Life.

Accessibility Services staff, Residence Life staff, Campus Police, and Physical Plant will collaborate, as necessary, to resolve conflicts related to an Assistance Animal. Staff members will consider the needs and/or accommodations of all students involved. All roommates or housemates of the handler should engage in a conversation about the presence of the animal, boundaries with the animals, and the comfort of all individuals related to the animal. Students may consult with Residence Life staff for assistance with these conversations. In the event that one or more roommates or housemates does not approve of or wish to live with the animal, either owner of the Assistance Animal or the non-approving roommates or housemates, as determined by the Residence Life staff, may be moved to a different location.

The owner must comply with the following provisions regarding behavior and care of an Assistance Animal:

1. The behavior, noise, odor, and waste of an Assistance Animal must not exceed reasonable standards and these factors must not create an unreasonable disruption for residents and Residential Life staff.
2. Animals that pose a direct threat to the health and safety of others, carry varying diseases, and/or animals that would cause substantial physical/property damage are not permitted. This is assessed on a case-by-case basis in conference with the student.
3. The Assistance Animal must be contained within the student room, suite, apartment or house at all times, except as required for transportation off-campus or to eliminate waste. Assistance Animals must be crated or otherwise contained when the owner is not in residence. While outside the owner's University housing, the animal must be in an animal carrier or controlled by leash or harness by the owner.
4. Assistance Animals are only permitted in the owner's room in University housing or in owner's individual apartment/house if living in a student rental property. Assistance Animals are not permitted in other Wittenberg University facilities, including dining areas, classrooms, and other common areas.

The following pertains to the health and well-being of an Assistance Animal:

- **Vaccination/Licensing:** In accordance with local ordinances and regulations, Assistance Animals must receive all required and/or recommended



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immunizations against diseases. Additionally, we require that dogs have current vaccination against rabies. Veterinary immunization records should be submitted to Accessibility Services staff along with disability-related documentation. Local licensing requirements must be followed.

- **Health:** Approved animals should be in good health and should be seen regularly (at minimum yearly) by a licensed veterinarian. The University may inquire about the health of the animal upon receiving reports of concern for the animal. The University has authority to request that the Assistance Animal receive veterinary attention in appropriate circumstances.
- **Control:** Assistance Animals must be under the control of the owner at all times. Animals must be harnessed, leashed, or tethered while outside of the owner's residence. Within the residence, animals should be contained in appropriate cages when the owner has left the residence. If the owner is living in a multi-room, shared residence, the animal may be limited to residing solely in the owner's personal room within that residence. If the owner leaves campus overnight, he/she must take his/her Assistance Animal with him/her.
- **Cleanliness:** The owner is responsible for caring for and supervising the Assistance Animal, which includes toileting, feeding, grooming, and veterinary care. It is the owner's responsibility to remove and properly dispose of any waste. Owners should take measures for flea and odor control, and ensure that the Assistance Animal is clean and well groomed. If fleas, ticks, or other pests are detected through inspection, the student's housing will be treated using approved fumigation methods by University approved pest control service. The owner will be billed for the expense of any pest treatment above and beyond normal required pest management if such treatment is required due to the animal. The owner will be held responsible for any room damages including the excessive cleaning or replacement of the carpet. This will be noted on the Room Condition Record and during health and safety inspections.
- **Other Conditions:** Accessibility Services staff and Residence Life staff are permitted to conduct animal welfare checks if there is a reasonable concern for the health and safety of the approved animal. Accessibility Services staff may also contact the owner if there are concerns regarding disruptive behavior.

Section IV. Owner's Responsibilities for Approved Animals in University Housing

1. The owner is responsible for assuring that the approved animal does not unduly interfere with or adversely affect the routine activities of the University or other students. In addition, the approved animal must not pose a threat to



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- the health, safety, or property of anyone in the Wittenberg University community. If the University determines that the approved animal threatens the health, safety, or property of anyone in the Wittenberg community, or that the approved animal is adversely affecting Wittenberg's programs and activities, Wittenberg will take appropriate measures, up to and including a determination that the approved animal may no longer be permitted on campus.
2. The care and supervision of the approved animal is solely the responsibility of the owner. Students may not provide other students with access to the residence in order to care for the approved animal. Additionally, students may not request that other students care for the animal within other residences. Students are asked to provide an off-campus emergency contact for approved animals should any issues arise.
 3. The owner is responsible for ensuring the safety of the approved animal and the Wittenberg community. The owner must not have a history of abuse or irresponsible behavior related to the approved animal or others that negatively impacts the owner's ability to ensure the safety of the approved animal or the Wittenberg community. If Wittenberg University determines that such conduct issues are negatively impacting the safety of the approved animal or the Wittenberg community, Wittenberg University will take appropriate measures, up to and including a determination that the approved animal may no longer be permitted on campus.
 4. The owner is responsible for ensuring the cleanup of the approved animal's waste (e.g. urine, excrement, fur, cage shavings, etc.). Indoor animal waste must be placed in a sturdy plastic bag before disposal, and should be disposed of outside of the residence.
 5. The owner is financially and legally responsible for the approved animal, including for any bodily injury or property damage caused by the approved animal. The owner's financial responsibility may include replacement of furniture, carpet, windows, wall coverings, and costs of damage to other University owned property. The owner is expected to cover these costs at the time of repair and/or move-out.
 6. The owner is responsible for any expenses incurred due to the approved animal for required cleaning above and beyond a standard cleaning or for repairs to University premises. Any such damages will be assessed after the owner and approved animal vacate University housing. The University shall bill the student account for unmet obligations.
 7. The owner must notify Accessibility Services in writing if the approved animal is no longer needed or is no longer in residence. To replace an approved animal, the owner must have a new meeting with Accessibility Services staff, pursuant to Section II or Section III of this policy, as appropriate.



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8. The owner's residence may be inspected for pests as needed. Residence Life staff will schedule any such inspection. If pests are detected upon inspection, the residence room or hall will be treated using fumigation or other methods by a University-approved pest control service. The owner will be billed for the expense of any pest treatment above and beyond routine pest management in the residence halls if such treatment is required due to the animal.
9. From time to time, the University may use pesticides, pest control devices, de-icing materials, cleaning supplies, and other materials for the maintenance and operation of University housing. The University is not responsible for any harm to approved animal caused by such materials.
10. Approved animals may not be left overnight in University housing without the owner. Approved animals must be taken with the owner if the owner leaves campus overnight.

Residence Life may relocate the owner and approved animal as necessary according to the Wittenberg University housing contract. The owner agrees to continue to abide by all other University policies, including University housing policies. Any violation of this policy may result in immediate removal of the approved animal from the University. Reported violations will be reviewed in accordance with Student Conduct Policy. Should the approved animal be removed from the premises for any reason, the owner is expected to fulfill his/her housing obligations for the remainder of the Wittenberg University housing contract term.

Section V: Student Conduct

All students are expected to follow all campus policies related to animals on campus. Per the [Student Handbook](#), students who do not follow campus policies will be referred to the Conduct Process. Students who wish to have an approved animal on campus may not bring the animal onto campus until Accessibility Services staff has provided the approval determination to the Office of Residence Life. If a student does not follow the policies within the Conduct Process, in most cases there will not be a retroactive approval of animals; therefore, students will not be exempt from sanctions regardless of the Accessibility Services process or outcome. Students should take necessary measures to ensure they are following University policies and procedures. The Office of Accessibility Services is not involved with the Conduct Process and does not determine sanctions for violation of policies. More information regarding the Conduct Process can be found within the [Student Handbook](#).