

Request for Disability Accommodation: Appendix C

Documentation Requirements for Emotional Support Animals

The student is responsible for providing all diagnostic information to sufficiently support the existence of disability and the need for an emotional support animal (ESA). An ESA accommodation is not needed if the student would still have meaningful access to the University housing program without it. The Office of Learning Support Services is responsible for deciding whether a disability or need for accommodation has been adequately documented. Information regarding a student's disability must be in writing and provided by a qualified professional, most often a physician, educational diagnostician, learning disability specialist, or mental health professional who is not a blood relative.

STUDENT: Give this appendix to your qualified professional when requesting documentation to support a request for housing accommodations other than emotional support animals.

QUALIFIED PROFESSIONAL: Prepare and provide documentation of the student's disability as outlined below. Please include student's name and date of birth on all documentation.

Documentation can be provided to the student for submission, or can be submitted directly by mail, fax, or email:

Kelly Hojnacki
Delaware Valley University
700 East Butler Avenue
Doylestown, PA 18901

FAX: 215-489-2344
kelly.hojnacki@delval.edu

This appendix is to be used only for emotional support animal accommodations in housing.

**A qualified professional must be a health care provider qualified to diagnose and treat mental health conditions and familiar with the mental health history of the student and the functional limitations that result from their disability.*

Your patient has indicated that having an emotional support animal in University housing is part of a therapeutic plan to alleviate one or more effects of a disability and that having an ESA is medically necessary for your patient to realize full enjoyment of the residential and housing experience as compared to a student without a disability.

To support this request for an emotional support animal in housing, submit the following:

A letter on letterhead from the qualified professional from the student's home state or within the location of Delaware Valley University that includes:

- Statement of whether the student has a disability according to the definition of disability from FHA:
"The Fair Housing Act defines disability as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. Under this definition, an impairment is a disability if it substantially limits the ability of the person to perform a major life activity as compared to the average person in the general population without a disability."
- Date of first visit for the disability, and date of last contact with the student.
- Description of the student's impairment(s).
- Identification of the major life function(s) that are limited by the student's impairment(s), and description of how the impairment(s) substantially limits these major life functions, including the frequency and severity of the limitations occurrences.
- Description of the student's current treatment plan, including therapies, medications, previously used accommodations, or any other treatment(s).

- Description of the requested accommodation and how you expect it to mitigate the effects of the limitations described previously. Please note that the University will make the determination as to what modifications to programs, policies, or services are appropriate to ensure meaningful access to University programs.
- Description of the symptoms that will be reduced by this student having the requested ESA in residence.
- Description of any evidence that an ESA has helped this student in the past or currently.
- Identification of any other accommodations that may be equally effective in allowing participation in the housing program. If applicable, indicate any mitigating measures that have been tried or are currently being used, and how they alleviate or eliminate limitations.
- Explanation as to why the accommodation of an ESA is necessary for the student to fully participate in the housing program as compared to a student without a disability.
- Description of your discussion with the student on the responsibilities associated with properly caring for an animal while engaged in typical college activities and residing in campus housing. Include an explanation of whether you believe those responsibilities might exacerbate the student's symptoms, and if so, what exacerbations would occur.
- Description of how ongoing treatment will be provided when the student is residing at the University and what role the ESA plays in that treatment plan.
- Qualifications of the professional, including:
 - Name of qualified professional
 - License number and the state the license is issued
 - Address and phone number

Delaware Valley University recognizes that ESA's can play a substantial role in therapy and treatment of students with documented mental health disabilities. The University is also a leader in the offering of academic programs in the animal sciences and as such, has heightened sensitivity to and expectations for the presence of animals on campus. Further, the practical limitations of our housing arrangements make it necessary to carefully consider the impact of the request for an ESA on both the student and the campus community. As part of our commitment to individualized assessment, we may contact you later for additional information.