



Service and Assistive Animals on Campus Policy

Policy Statement

South Georgia State College recognizes the beneficial role that Service and Assistive Animals provide in the lives of people with disabilities. We are committed to complying with all state and federal laws that aim to promote equal access and full participation for individuals with documented disabilities who require the assistance and support that these animals provide to them.

To ensure that this commitment is upheld, we have established specific protocols and guidelines for the use of Service and Assistive Animals at the College. The details of this policy are outlined below.

Reason for Policy

This policy has been established to ensure that the College meets the necessary compliance requirements of federal and state laws.

Entities Affected by This Policy

The Service and Assistive Animals on Campus Policy applies to all individuals on College property or property for the use of the College, including employees, affiliates, volunteers, students, business representatives, contractors, and visitors.

Who Should Read This Policy

All individuals on College property or property for the use of the College, including employees, affiliates, volunteers, students, business representatives, contractors, and visitors.

Definitions

Assistive Animal – An animal that provides emotional support or alleviates one or more of the identified symptoms or effects of a person’s disability. In general, only domesticated animals of a type commonly kept in households are eligible to serve as assistive animals. Reptiles (other than turtles), barnyard animals, monkeys, kangaroos, and other non-domesticated animals are not considered household animals. Although it is possible that an “exotic species” could qualify as an assistive animal, the individual seeking accommodation has a substantial burden to demonstrate a disability-related need for the specific exotic animal or the specific type of exotic animal.

Handler - the individual with a disability, as defined under federal and state law, who uses a service animal to perform a work or task directly related to the individual's disability. A Handler may also be a personal care attendant who handles the animal for a person with a disability.

Partner - a person engaged in the training of a Service Animal for the purpose of accompanying a Handler.

Service Animal - any dog or miniature horse that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability. Other species of animals, whether wild or domestic, trained, or untrained, are not service animals for the purposes of this definition. The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the individual's disability. Examples of such work or tasks include, but are not limited to, assisting individuals who are blind or have low vision with navigation and other tasks, alerting individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to the presence of people or sounds, providing non-violent protection or rescue work, pulling a wheelchair, assisting an individual during a seizure, alerting individuals to the presence of allergens, retrieving items such as medicine or the telephone, providing physical support and assistance with balance and stability to individuals with mobility disabilities, and helping persons with psychiatric and neurological disabilities by preventing or interrupting impulsive or destructive behaviors. The crime deterrent effects of an animal's presence and the provision of emotional support, well-being, comfort, or companionship do not constitute work or tasks for the purposes of this definition.

Service Animals in Training – any dog or miniature horse that are being trained by a trainer identified as an agent or employee of an entity specialized in training dogs or miniature horses to become Service Animals.

Overview

Exclusions or Exceptions

In certain limited circumstances, animals not covered by this policy may be allowed on campus. However, their presence will be subject to review as part of the event verification process. Documentation must be submitted for approval or as specified in other contractual relationships.

Policy and Procedure

A. Access

Bringing animals into any buildings or controlled spaces on College property is generally prohibited for all individuals, including employees, affiliates, volunteers, students, business representatives, contractors, and visitors, unless otherwise specified. However, individuals with disabilities are permitted to bring Service or Assistive Animals onto College property, subject to the provisions outlined below.

1. ***Service Animals and Service Animals in Training:***

- i. Individuals are allowed to have their Service Animal accompany them in all areas where their official activities take place, as well as in areas where members of the public, participants in services, programs, or activities are permitted to go.

2. ***Assistive Animals:***

- i. Individuals are only allowed to have their Assistive Animal accompany them in their assigned residence hall room. They may be able to walk in designated area(s) around campus.

B. Registration

1. *Service Animals:*

- i. A student, employee, affiliate, volunteer, business representative, contractor, or visitor who intends to bring a Service Animal onto College property, is not required to obtain permission from the College for the presence of the Service Animal. However, the Handler is asked to inform the College in advance of bringing the Service Animal to campus. ***While both prior to arrival to campus and while on campus, the individual may only be asked, "Is the service animal required because of a disability?" and "What work or task has the service animal been trained to perform?"***

2. *Service Animals in Training:*

- i. A student, employee, affiliate, volunteer, business representative, contractor, or visitor who intends to bring a Service Animal in Training onto College property, is not required to obtain permission from the College for the presence of the Service Animal. However, the Handler is asked to inform the College in advance of bringing the Service Animal in Training to campus. ***The Service Animal in Training must be wearing a collar, leash, or other appropriate apparel or device that identifies the dog with an entity purposed to train dogs as service animals.***

3. *Assistive Animals:*

- i. ***Students who require the presence of an Assistive Animal in their campus residence hall must obtain annual approval from the Office of Disability Services and the Office of Residence Life and Housing prior to the animal arriving on campus.*** Registration forms and protocols for Assistive Animals can be found at the Office of Disability Services website. The registration form and protocols provide detailed information stating that students must provide reliable documentation showing that they have a disability, that the assistive animal is necessary, and that the specific animal requested is reasonable. This information will also include timeline of requests, opportunities for students to engage in the interactive process, if appropriate, and appeals.

C. Grounds for Removal

1. *Service Animals and Service Animals in Training:*

- i. **Out of Control Animal** - owners will be asked to remove any animal if it is out of control and the owner does not take effective and immediate action to control it. If the out-of-control behavior happens repeatedly, the owner may be prohibited from bringing the animal into College facilities until the owner can demonstrate that significant steps have been taken to correct and control the behavior.
- ii. **Non-Housebroken/Unsanitary Animal** - a Handler or Partner may be directed to remove an animal that is not housebroken or if the animal's environment is not maintained in a healthy, sanitary environment or the animal is not kept clean and well-groomed.
- iii. **Direct Threat** - an animal that poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others that cannot be reduced or eliminated by reasonable modifications is not permitted on campus. An example would be an animal that exhibits aggression or has injured another person or animal. A direct threat determination will consist of an individualized assessment based on reasonable judgment, current medical knowledge, or the best available objective evidence to determine
 - A. (1) the nature, duration and severity of the risk;
 - B. (2) the probability that the potential injury will actually occur; and

- C. (3) whether reasonable modifications of policies, practices, or procedures will mitigate the risk.
- iv. **Improper/Inadequate Care** - Failure to properly care for an animal will result in the animal being removed from College property. The College will report any animal abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities, in addition to applicable disciplinary actions under the Student Code of Conduct or employee discipline process.
- v. **General** – this section is not exhaustive and other provisions of this Policy may warrant removal of animals from College facilities. When an animal is removed pursuant to this Policy, the College will work with the owner to identify reasonable alternative opportunities to participate in College services, programs, or activities without the animal’s presence.

2. Assistive Animals

- i. The Residence Hall Handbook provides agreement terms that must be followed, and it can be found at the Office of Residence Life and Housing website.

D. Violations

- 1. **Students** - In the case of student Handlers or Partners, failure to comply with this Policy is a violation of the College Student Code of Conduct under the jurisdiction of the Office of Student Conduct.
- 2. **Employees** - In the case of employee Handlers or Partners, failure to comply with this Policy will be referred to the employee’s supervisor for handling under the College’s discipline policies.
- 3. **Visitors** - Any guests or visitors who fail to comply with this Policy may be removed from the College campus.

Responsibilities

The Responsibilities each party has in connection with this policy are:

Party	Responsibility
Dean of Students	Oversees the office of Residence Life and Housing, and Student Conduct Process
Disability Coordinator	Oversees the Office of Student Disabilities
Director of Human Resources	Oversees the Office of Human Resources