



Service Animal and Emotional Support Animal Policy – 2024-2025

Pacifica Graduate Institute recognizes the importance of Service Animals and Emotional Support Animals to individuals with disabilities and has established the following policy. This policy ensures that people with disabilities, who require the use of Service Animals or Emotional Support Animals as a reasonable accommodation, receive the benefit of the work or tasks performed by such animals or the therapeutic support they provide. Pacifica is committed to allowing people with disabilities the use of a Service Animal on campus to facilitate their full participation and equal access to the Institute's programs and activities. Set forth below are specific requirements and guidelines concerning the appropriate use of and protocols associated with Service Animals and Emotional Support Animals. Pacifica reserves the right to amend this policy as circumstances require.

Mandates

This Policy is guided by the Americans with Disabilities Act (Service Animals) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Fair Housing Act (Emotional Support Animals). This Policy is also guided by California Penal Code section 365.5, which governs accessibility for service animals and provides penalties for the misdemeanor offense of service animal fraud.

Definitions

Service Animal

A "Service Animal" is a dog¹ that has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability. In some cases, a miniature horse may be permitted as a Service Animal. Other animals, whether wild or domestic, do not qualify as Service Animals. Examples of such work or tasks include guiding people who are blind, alerting people who are deaf, pulling a wheelchair, alerting and protecting a person who is having a seizure, reminding a person with mental illness to take prescribed medications, or performing other duties. 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 person's disability. Dogs whose sole function is to provide comfort or emotional support do not qualify as Service Animals.

Emotional Support Animal

"Emotional Support Animals" are animals that provide emotional support which alleviates one or more identified symptoms or effects of a person's psychiatric or mental condition. Unlike a Service Animal, an Emotional Support Animal does not assist a person with a disability with activities of daily living, nor does it accompany a person with a disability at all times. Emotional Support Animals may be considered for access to campus housing; however, they are not

¹ "Service Animal" as defined under the ADA: https://www.ada.gov/service_animals_2010.htm

permitted in other areas of the institute (e.g. libraries, academic buildings, classrooms, dining halls, meeting spaces, etc.).

Approved ESA (Emotional Support Animal)

An “Approved ESA” is an Emotional Support Animal (ESA) that has been granted as a reasonable accommodation supported by documentation for inclusion in campus housing under this policy.

Handler

The “Handler” is the student or other covered person who has a disability and requires use of a Service Animal, or a student who has requested the accommodation for an Emotional Support Animal and has received approval to bring the “approved ESA” on campus.

Emotional Support Animals in Campus Housing

Emotional Support Animals may not be brought into campus housing without prior approval. A person requesting permission to keep an Emotional Support Animal in campus housing must make a formal request to the Disability Services Office. To do so, the person should submit an Accommodations Request Form as well as documentation from a licensed mental health provider. This documentation should include verification of the individual’s need for an Emotional Support Animal and confirmation that the student has been under their care for a minimum of thirty days.

Handler’s Responsibilities in Campus Housing

1. Service Animals may travel freely with their Handler throughout campus housing (and other areas of the institute). Approved ESAs must be contained within the privately assigned residential area at all times, except when transported outside the private residential area in an animal carrier or controlled by leash or harness.
2. Service Animals and Approved ESAs must be taken with the Handler if they leave campus for a prolonged period.
3. The Handler is responsible for assuring that their Service Animal or Approved ESA does not unduly interfere with the routine activities of the residence or cause difficulties for students who reside there.
4. The Handler is financially responsible for the actions of their Service Dog or Approved ESA including bodily injury or property damage. The Handler’s responsibility covers, but is not limited to, replacement of furniture, carpet, window, wall covering, and the like. The Handler is expected to cover these costs at the time of repair.
5. The Handler is responsible for any expenses incurred for cleaning above and beyond a standard cleaning or for repairs to campus premises that are assessed after the Handler and animal vacate the residence. The institute shall have the right to bill the Handler or the account of the Handler for unmet obligations.
6. The Handler must notify Disability Services in writing if the Approved ESA is no longer needed as an Approved ESA or will no longer accompany the Handler to campus. To replace an Approved ESA the Handler must file a new Accommodations Request Form.

7. The Handler agrees to continue to abide by all other residential policies.

Guidelines for Maintaining a Service Animal or Approved ESA

1. Service Animals must be harnessed, leashed, or tethered, unless these devices interfere with the service animal's work or the individual's disability prevents using these devices. In that case, the individual must maintain control of the animal through voice, signal, or other effective controls. Approved ESAs must be harnessed, leashed or tethered at all times when walking outside of assigned student housing.
2. Care and supervision of the animal are the sole responsibility of the Handler. The Handler is required to maintain control of the animal at all times and is responsible for the proper disposal of animal waste.

Requirements for Faculty, Staff, Students, and Other Members of the Community

Members of the community are required to abide by the following practices:

1. They are to allow a Service Animal to accompany its owner at all times and in all places on campus, except where animals are specifically prohibited by law.
2. They are not to touch or pet a Service Animal unless invited to do so.
3. They are not to feed a Service Animal.
4. They are not to deliberately startle a Service Animal.
5. They are not to separate or to attempt to separate a Handler from their Service Animal.
6. They are not to inquire for details about the Handler's disabilities. The nature of a person's disability is a private matter.
7. They are to report any safety concerns to the designated campus Safety Officer, and the Disability Services Office.

Removal of Service Animal or Approved ESA

The institute may exclude/remove a Service Animal only if: (1) the dog is disruptive or out of control and the Handler does not take effective action to control it, or (2) the dog is not housebroken.

The institute may exclude/remove an Approved ESA when (1) the animal poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others, (2) the Handler does not comply with Handler's Responsibilities in Campus Housing section of this policy, or (3) the animal or its presence creates an unmanageable disturbance or interference with the Pacifica community.

Areas Off Limits to Emotional Support Animals

All areas except for privately assigned living space in campus housing are off limits to Approved ESAs, with the exception of outdoor spaces only as needed to walk/toilet the animal.