



# SOUTHWESTERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY

## Emotional Support Animal Policy

The Disabilities Services evaluates requests for Emotional Support Animals (ESA) in the Residence Halls at Southwestern Adventist University. Approval requires that a student must have an impairment that rises to the level of a disability in that it substantially limits one or more major life activities, and have documentation stating the presence of an ESA will have a therapeutic benefit in alleviating one or more of the identified effects of the disability.

The documentation will need to be from a qualified provider who has personal knowledge of the student through a professional relationship involving the provision of disability related services and who are practicing within their ethical, legal, and professional obligations.

To consider requests for ESAs, the documentation provided should include the following specific components. The absence of one or more of these components should not be considered an automatic reason to disqualify the supporting documentation:

- **Format**– Typed/printed on official letterhead, dated, and signed by a licensed and qualified professional (e.g. psychologists, neuropsychologists, psychiatrists, clinical social workers, licensed counselors, psychiatric nurse practitioners, and other relevantly trained healthcare professionals).It is also recommended that the provider provide contact information and any professional licensing information. The documentation should include the student’s name.
- **Contact Dates** - the date when the provider first met with the student regarding the condition and date of the last professional interaction with the student regarding the disabling condition.
- **Substantial Limitations** – a statement that the student has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities and describes the nature of the impairment (that is, how the student is substantially limited).
- **Type of Animal** – the type of animal that is requested and that is necessary for university housing.
- **The necessity of ESA** – a statement that the student needs the ESA because it provides therapeutic emotional support to alleviate a symptom or effect of the disability of the student and not merely as a pet. Please include specifically how the ESA mitigates the symptoms or effects of a disability. Documentation should be specifically written to provide support for an ESA in Southwestern Adventist University Residence Hall.

### **Please also note the following:**

- Approved Emotional Support Animals must be under the control of their handler, at all times. The ESA should not be left alone for more than 12 hours. Dogs must be in an animal crate when the handler leaves the residence hall.
- Emotional Support Animals that are not under the control of their owner/guardian or who disrupt other guests may be considered a nuisance and will be asked to leave. Nuisance behavior that disrupts other guests, patrons, students, or employees. Examples: consistent non-stop barking, growling, making noise, giving off offensive odors, chewing

- The Emotional Support Animal handler must maintain **sanitary** conditions in the residence hall and clean up any animal waste in public.
- An approval for an Emotional Support Animal only applies to housing and does not permit the owner to bring the animal to other areas on campus where pets are normally prohibited.
- The handler is responsible for all damage to Residence Hall or University property associated with the Emotional Support Animal.