



Responsible College Official: Assistant Vice President for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and Title IX/504 Coordinator

Responsible Offices: Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, Office of Student Affairs, and Office of Human Resources Services

Policy Implementation Date: August 19, 2019

Emotional Support Animal Policy

Policy Statement

North Central College recognizes the importance of “Emotional Support Animals” as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and under the Office of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and Fair Housing Act (FHA) in providing equal access to and participation in the College for qualified individuals with disabilities. The College is committed to allowing Emotional Support Animals that are necessary to provide individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to use and enjoy campus housing.

Students with disabilities who utilize Emotional Support Animals as an accommodation to use campus housing are requested to meet with Disability Services. For an appointment contact the Student Disability Services via email at sds@noctrl.edu or by phone at **630-637-5264**.

If you believe your rights under disability law are not being provided appropriately by the College, grievance procedures can be found in the *Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Misconduct and Retaliation* policy. Individuals with disabilities who have a complaint or grievance regarding how this policy has been implemented or who feel that they have been wrongfully denied access, services, or accommodations related to an Emotional Support Animal can contact:

Dr. Rebecca Gordon
Assistant Vice President for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and Title IX/504 Coordinator
524 Old Main
30 N. Brainard
(630) 637-5340
rgordon@noctrl.edu

External Inquiries may also be made to:

Office for Civil Rights (OCR); Chicago Office
U.S. Department of Education
Citigroup Center
500 W. Madison Street, Suite 1475
Chicago, IL 60661-4544
Telephone: 312-730-1560
FAX: 312-730-1576; TDD: 800-877-8339
Email: OCR.Chicago@ed.gov

Emotional Support Animals

Emotional Support Animals are defined as untrained animals that provide emotional support, comfort and/or therapy required for individuals with disabilities to be able to utilize and enjoy living in the residence halls. Emotional Support Animals are not pets and must alleviate symptoms or effects of a disability.

Requests for Emotional Support Animals are determined on a case-by-case basis through an interactive process with Disability Services in consultation with the Office of Residence Life. The interactive process must establish that the individual seeking to live with the emotional support animal has a disability and a disability-related need for the emotional support animal. There may be occasions in which the individual with a disability is requested to provide supporting documentation of their disability and/or specific recommendations for an emotional support animal as an accommodation by a licensed service provider with expertise in the individual's specific condition.

In determining if a particular Emotional Support Animal is appropriate, the College may consider:

- the type, size and weight of the emotional support animal for the assigned housing space
- if the animal poses an undue financial or administrative burden
- if the presence of the animal fundamentally alters the nature of the program or services offered in housing
- whether the animal is house broken
- if the animal is under the owner's control
- if the animal would cause substantial physical damage to the property of others that cannot be reduced or eliminated through another reasonable accommodation, and
- whether the animal poses a direct threat to the health and safety of others that cannot be mitigated through other reasonable accommodations

Approved Emotional Support Animals are allowed in the residence halls but not in classrooms, other buildings, or the workplace.

The College may determine that an Emotional Support Animal is not permitted if the Emotional Support Animal's presence interferes with the reasonable use and enjoyment of others living in the same dwelling. This may include making housing assignments based on separating residents with Emotional Support Animals from residents with allergies, phobias or religious preferences. If the College determines that the individual with the Emotional Support Animal would be better served in an individual room or different residence hall, the student will not be charged the difference in price of a single room or the cost of relocating.

The College is not responsible for the supervision or care of the Emotional Support Animal. Emotional Support Animals must be under the handler's/owner's control at all times. The animal must be harnessed, leashed, tethered or in a pet carrier when being transported or exiting the room. The individual is also responsible for:

- The health, well-being, and cleanliness of the animal
- The cost of any damages incurred as a result of the animal
- The immediate clean-up after and proper disposal of the animal's waste
- Adhering to all State and local ordinances for dog licensing, registration, and vaccination requirements

Students with Emotional Support Animals may be asked to remove the animal from the premises when the animal causes a substantial disruption, unreasonably interferes with the College's study, learning or work environment, or creates health and safety concerns. For example,

- The animal's behavior or actions show aggression towards their handler or other members of the campus community
- The animal is out of control or disruptive (e.g. repeated barking, meows, screeches) and the handler does not take effective action to control it
- The presence of the animal causes danger to the safety of the handler or other students/campus members
- The animal would fundamentally alter the nature of a job, service, or activity
- The animal is not housebroken
- The animal is physically ill or unreasonably dirty

A specific Emotional Support Animal can be determined to be inappropriate for providing the accommodation if, over time, the individual with the disability allows the animal to substantially disrupt or unreasonably interfere with the College's study, learning, or work environment or if the emotional support animal is not house-broken, physically ill, or jeopardizes the safety or well-being of the handler or campus community. These matters will be referred to Student Conduct or Human Resources.