EMOTIONAL SUPPORT ANIMAL (ESA) IN UNIVERSITY HOUSING VERIFICATION FORM

Towson University Accessibility & Disability Services and Housing & Residence Life make reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities, including having an Emotional Support Animal (ESA) in the student’s residential living space. According to the Fair Housing Act (FHA), emotional support animals “provide support to persons with disabilities who have a disability-related need for such support." Under the FHA, individuals with a disability may be entitled to have an emotional support animal as a "reasonable accommodation in housing facilities." In order to qualify for an ESA as an accommodation, the animal "must be necessary to afford the individual an equal opportunity to use and enjoy a dwelling or to participate in the housing service or program. Further, there must be a relationship, or nexus, between the individual’s disability and the assistance the animal provides."

Having an ESA can be a real benefit and support for a student with a mental health disability, but due to the nature of our housing arrangements it is necessary to carefully consider the impact of having an ESA on both the student and residential community. To help us evaluate the student’s request, we require documentation from a licensed and/or certified mental health care professional (e.g., psychiatrist, clinical psychologist, licensed clinical social worker or licensed certified professional counselor) who is currently treating the student and suggests an ESA to help alleviate one or more identified symptoms or effects of the student’s disability. We accept documentation from a provider in the state of Maryland or the student’s home state, and who is not a close friend or relative of the student. After completing this form, fax or mail it to Accessibility & Disability Services (ADS) at the address above. Please contact ADS if you would like further information.

Student’s name________________ DOB______________ Today’s date____________

Name of Proposed ESA ______________________ Type of animal ____________ Age of Animal____

Information About the Student’s Disability

(A person with a disability is defined as someone who has "a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.")

1. What is the student’s mental health impairment/qualifying disability, and how is the student substantially limited?

____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

2. When did you first meet with the student regarding this mental health diagnosis? ________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

3. Are you currently treating the student for this diagnosis or have you in the past year? 
YES_____ NO____

Updated
December 2019
4. When was the last time you met with the student regarding this mental health diagnosis?

________________________________________________________________________________

Information About the Proposed ESA

5. Is this an animal that you have specifically prescribed as part of treatment for the student? 
   YES_____ NO_____ 
   Or is it a pet that you believe will have a beneficial effect for the student while living in campus 
   housing? YES_____ NO_____ 

6. What symptoms will be reduced by having the ESA? 
   ____________________________________________________________________ 
   ____________________________________________________________________ 

7. What evidence is there that an ESA has helped this student in the past or currently? 
   ____________________________________________________________________ 

Importance of ESA to Student's Well Being and Access to Residential Life

8. In your opinion, how important is it for the student's well-being that the ESA be in their residence on 
   campus? What consequences in terms of disability symptomology may result if the accommodation was 
   not approved? 
   ____________________________________________________________________ 
   ____________________________________________________________________ 

9. Please note that the student is solely responsible for the control, care and supervision of the ESA at 
   all times. Have you discussed the responsibilities associated with properly caring for an animal while 
   engaged in typical college activities and living in a campus residential living space?

10. Do you believe the responsibilities above might exacerbate the student's symptoms in any way? 
   ____________________________________________________________________ 
   ____________________________________________________________________ 

Provider's Printed Name/Credentials/Field _____________________________

Signature_________________________________________________ Date________

License number____________________________________________________

Address_________________________________________________________

Phone_____________________________________ Fax_____________________