

## OSU-Oklahoma City (OSU-OKC) Service Animal and Emotional Support Animal Policy for Students

OSU-OKC is committed to compliance with state and federal laws regarding individuals with disabilities. All inquiries regarding service animals for students on campus should be directed to the OSU-OKC Disability Services and Diversity Office at 900 N. Portland Ave, Student Center Room 136; (405) 945-3385, or by emailing [okc.accessibility@okstate.edu](mailto:okc.accessibility@okstate.edu). The University will determine, on a case by case basis, and in accordance with applicable laws and regulations, whether the animal is a reasonable accommodation for students on campus. In doing so, the University must balance the needs of the individual with the impact of animals on other campus patrons. This policy applies to students enrolled at OSU-OKC.

### **What is a service animal and what does it do?**

A service animal is any dog that has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability. The University may also permit miniature horses on campus as service animals on a case-by-case basis.

The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the individual's disability. Examples of such tasks include, but are not limited to: assisting an individual with low vision with navigation; alerting individuals who are hard of hearing to the presence of people or objects; pulling a person's wheelchair; or providing assistance with stability or balance to an individual with a mobility disability.

### **Where are service animals allowed to go on campus?**

Individuals with disabilities may be accompanied by their service animals on all parts of the OSU-OKC campus where members of the public or participants in services, programs or activities are allowed to go.

### **What documentation or procedure is required to bring a service animal on campus?**

Students with service animals are not required to contact or register with the Disability Services and Diversity Office or present a Disability Accommodation Letter before bringing their animal on campus; however, they are encouraged to do so on a voluntary basis. Documentation that an animal has been trained as a service animal is not required.

### **What types of questions may the University ask about a service animal?**

The University may ask what work or tasks the animal has been trained to perform, and if the animal is required because of a disability.

### **When can the University ask a service animal to leave campus?**

The University may ask that a service animal be removed from campus when its presence fundamentally alters the nature of a program or activity. Additionally, a service animal may be asked to leave an area and its owner may be subject to disciplinary action if:

- It displays aggressive or disruptive behavior or noises and the owner is unable or unwilling to control the animal; unless said noise/behavior(s) are part of the required disability service to the owner
- It is not housebroken
- It poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others
- Has visible fleas or ticks
- The animal infringes inappropriately and repeatedly into others' personal space and the owner's attempts to control or distance the animal are unsuccessful
- The service animal is blocking identified fire/emergency exits and the owner refuses to move the animal

The determination of a service animal's removal from campus as being temporary or permanent will be made on a case-by-case basis by the Disability Services and Diversity Office in consultation with other campus officials or departments as needed. The following factors will be considered in making this decision:

- The level of direct threat to the health or safety of the campus community based on the service animal's behavior or health status
- The service animal's previous history of behavior
- The owner's attempts and ability to effectively control the service animal

### **What are the responsibilities of individuals with service animals?**

Service animal owners/handlers are responsible for the care and control of their animals at all times and must:

- Comply with all applicable laws and regulations, including vaccination, licensure, animal health and leash laws
- Restrain their service animal with a harness, leash, or other tether, unless an individual's disability prevents the use of a restraint or if the restraint would interfere with the service animal's safe, effective performance of work or tasks. If a service animal is not tethered, it must be otherwise under the individual's control, whether by voice control, signals, or other effective means
- Ensure the immediate cleanup and proper disposal of all animal waste. Although the University will not place a surcharge on an individual with a disability for their service animal, it may impose charges for any damages caused by a service animal.

### **What is an emotional support animal and how is it different from a service animal?**

Emotional support animals are those whose sole function is to provide comfort and therapeutic benefits by their mere presence, and have not been trained to perform a specific job or task. Service animals are those who have been trained to perform to work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability, and who are trained to take specific action during the course of that work or task.

### **Are emotional support animals allowed at OSU-OKC?**

Because OSU-OKC does not have housing or residential facilities, emotional support animals are permitted on outside/exterior areas of campus such as sidewalks and green space, but are not allowed inside any campus buildings, facilities, classrooms, or offices. Owners of emotional support animals still have the same responsibilities as owners/handlers of service animals.

*Revised 6/2/2020*