

# 1 Assistance Animals on Campus

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4 Contact: [Student Accessibility Services](#)

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## 12 Introduction

13 Iowa State University is committed to assuring that its programs are free from discrimination and  
14 harassment based upon protected classes, including physical or mental disability. Discrimination and  
15 harassment impede the realization of the university's mission of distinction in education, scholarship,  
16 and service, and diminish the whole community. For more information see the Discrimination and  
17 Harassment policy (see [Resources](#) below).

18 This policy explains Iowa State University's (ISU) general guidelines and permitted uses of  
19 assistance animals, as defined and described below, in providing disability accommodations to  
20 students, faculty, staff, and visitors in university buildings and on university property.

21 This policy does not pertain to pets, animals being used for teaching or research, or animals  
22 receiving treatment at the Veterinary Medical Center or College of Veterinary Medicine. For  
23 information about such animals on campus, see the Animals on Campus policy  
24 (see [Resources](#) below). [top](#)

## 25 Definitions

26 Pursuant to applicable state and federal law, the following definitions have been adopted and apply  
27 to this policy:

28 **Assistance Animal:** A general term referring to any animal providing accommodations to individuals  
29 with disabilities. As used within this policy, an assistance animal may be either a service animal or  
30 an emotional support animal. For purposes of this policy, assistance animals are not considered  
31 pets.

32 **Service Animal:** A service animal is individually trained, or in the process of being trained to do  
33 specific work or perform specific tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability, including but not  
34 limited to physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disabilities. The specific work or  
35 tasks performed by the service animal must be directly related to the person's disability. Animals  
36 whose sole function is to provide emotional support, well-being, or comfort do not qualify as service  
37 animals. Under applicable law, dogs and in limited cases miniature horses, are permitted service  
38 animals. Other animals do not qualify as service animals.

39 **Emotional Support Animal:** Animals providing emotional support, well-being, or comfort that  
40 mitigates one or more functional impacts or effects of a person's disability. Emotional support  
41 animals may also be referred to as a comfort or therapy animals. Unlike service animals, emotional  
42 support animals are not individually trained to perform specific work or tasks.

43 **Individual with a Disability:** An individual with a documented physical or mental impairment that  
44 substantially limits one or more major life activities; an individual who has a history or record of such  
45 an impairment; or an individual who is perceived by others as having such an impairment.

46 **Resident:** ISU students residing in university housing and/or paying guests registered for university  
47 guest or conference housing operated by the Department of Residence (DOR).

48 **Pet:** Any animal kept for ordinary use and companionship. For purposes of this policy, service  
49 animals and emotional support animals (collectively termed “assistance animals”) are not considered  
50 pets. [top](#)

## 51 **Policy Statement**

52 Assistance animals are generally permitted on campus subject to the conditions and restrictions  
53 outlined within this policy.

54 Assistance animal accommodation requests made by students and overnight visitors will be  
55 reviewed and assessed by Student Accessibility Services (SAS) consistent with applicable laws and  
56 policies. All assistance animal accommodation requests made by employees will be reviewed by  
57 University Human Resources Employee Relations/Labor Relations (UHR ER/LR). ISU reserves the  
58 ability to make special modifications, within the confines of applicable law, to its policies to  
59 reasonably accommodate the person requesting the accommodation.

### 60 **Emotional Support Animals on Campus**

61 Only residents who have complied with this policy are permitted to have emotional support animals  
62 in their assigned university housing units. Residents wanting emotional support animals to reside in  
63 university housing must seek and receive approval pursuant to the Procedures and Guidance -  
64 Assistance Animals on Campus (see [Resources](#) below) prior to the emotional support animal  
65 entering university housing. Only one emotional support animal will be permitted per resident and  
66 generally only one emotional support animal will be assigned per university housing unit. Emotional  
67 support animals are restricted to residential areas and are not otherwise permitted inside other  
68 university buildings, including, but not limited to classrooms, dining facilities, recreational buildings,  
69 employment areas, libraries, sporting events, and research laboratories. Because emotional support  
70 animals are not trained to provide specific work or tasks, visitors and students not residing in  
71 university housing, faculty, and staff are generally not permitted to have emotional support animals  
72 on campus as a part of any disability accommodation. [top](#)

### 73 **Service Animals on Campus**

74 Service animals are permitted to accompany people with disabilities on all university properties  
75 where students, faculty, staff, and visitors are generally allowed to go. A service animal's access to  
76 certain areas on campus may need to be limited where the service animal's presence may cause a  
77 fundamental alteration or undue hardship. See the section on Exceptions and Exclusions below. Any  
78 such circumstances will be reviewed by SDR (for students and visitors) or UHR ER/LR (for  
79 employees) on a case-by-case basis.

80 All service animals must be housebroken (i.e., trained so that it controls its waste elimination, absent  
81 illness or accident) and must be kept under control by a harness, leash, or other tether unless the  
82 person is unable to hold those, or such use would interfere with the service animal's performance of  
83 work or tasks. In such instances, the service animal must be kept under control by voice, signals, or  
84 other effective means.

85 Students needing a service animal are encouraged to work with Student Accessibility Services  
86 (SAS) prior to bringing the service animal to campus to ensure reasonable accommodations are  
87 appropriately provided to the student. Students wishing to have their service animal reside with them

88 in university housing will need to comply with this policy and the 'Procedures and Guidance'  
89 reference (see [Resources](#) below).

90 Faculty and staff (or applicants for employment positions) needing a service animal are encouraged  
91 to contact UHR ER/LR prior to bringing the service animal to campus to ensure the disability  
92 accommodation request process is followed and reasonable accommodations are appropriately  
93 provided to the employee or applicant.

94 Visitors with inquiries pertaining to service animals may contact either SDR or UHR ER/LR. Visitors  
95 may consult the SDR and/or UHR ER/LR websites for additional details relating to process steps. [top](#)

## 96 **Exceptions and Exclusions to General Rules Applying to Assistance Animals on** 97 **Campus**

98 ISU may impose some restrictions on, and may even exclude or ban, an assistance animal in certain  
99 instances. Restrictions or exclusions will be considered on a case-by-case basis in accordance with  
100 applicable laws. Student Accessibility Services and/or University Human Resources will investigate  
101 and address violations of this policy in cooperation with relevant departments and personnel across  
102 campus that may include University Counsel, ISU Police, faculty and instructors, Facilities Planning  
103 and Management, academic advisors, the Office of Equal Opportunity, etc. Access to university  
104 property may be restricted or revoked under the following circumstances.

### 105 **Assistance Animal Creates a Direct Threat**

106 The assistance animal may be denied access to or banned from campus if it poses a direct threat to  
107 the health or safety of others that cannot be reduced or eliminated by reasonable modifications. An  
108 example of this would be an assistance animal that exhibits aggression or has injured a person or  
109 another animal. In considering whether an assistance animal poses a direct threat to the health or  
110 safety of others, ISU will make an individualized assessment based on reasonable judgment, current  
111 medical knowledge, or the best available objective evidence to determine 1) the nature, duration,  
112 and severity of the risk; 2) the probability that the potential injury will actually occur; and 3) whether  
113 reasonable modifications of policies, practices, or procedures will mitigate the risk.

### 114 **Assistance Animal is Uncontrolled**

115 An assistance animal may have its access to university property restricted or revoked if the  
116 assistance animal is out of control and the owner does not take effective action to gain and maintain  
117 control. An example of this may be an assistance animal that repeatedly gets loose and runs at  
118 large, even if it does not physically injure a person or another assistance animal.

### 119 **Property Damage or Injury Caused by Assistance Animal**

120 The owner of an assistance animal is responsible for any damage to Iowa State University's or  
121 personal property and any injuries to individuals caused by their animal. [top](#)

### 122 **Improper/Inadequate Care for Assistance Animal**

123 Failure to properly care for an assistance animal may result in the animal's access to university  
124 property being restricted or revoked. Additionally, if it appears that anyone has abused or neglected  
125 an assistance animal, the university may report the animal abuse or neglect to the appropriate  
126 authorities, in addition to any other campus remedies (i.e., Student Code of Conduct if the  
127 perpetrator is a student; discipline if the perpetrator is an employee).

### 128 **Assistance Animal is Not Housebroken or Maintained in a Healthy, Clean Manner**

129 Any individual utilizing an assistance animal on campus must ensure the animal is properly  
130 housebroken and/or trained. They must also ensure that the animal, and its environment, are  
131 maintained in a healthy, clean manner.

## 132 **Service Animal Fundamentally Alters the Nature of an Educational Program**

133 Students may be denied the accommodation of a service animal in an academic setting if the  
134 animal's presence fundamentally alters the nature of the educational program. An example of this  
135 may be a lab course that requires a sterile/clean working environment and the service animal's  
136 presence would compromise the sanitation/operational standards for the lab. Another example may  
137 be a lab course involving the use of lab animals and the service animal's presence will be disruptive  
138 to the lab animals. Clarifying note: This exception applies only to service animals, since emotional  
139 support animals are generally not permitted to accompany students to class (or to on-campus jobs).

## 140 **Service Animal Creates Undue Hardship**

141 Students and employees may be denied the accommodation of having a service animal if the  
142 service animal creates an undue hardship on the department or in the area where the student or  
143 employee works. An example of an undue hardship may be a student or employee working in a lab  
144 or area that requires a sterile/clean working environment and the service animal's presence  
145 compromises the sanitation/operational standards for the lab. Another example of an undue  
146 hardship may be if the service animal's behavior disrupts the learning or working  
147 environment. Clarifying note: This exception applies only to service animals, since emotional support  
148 animals are generally not deemed a reasonable disability accommodation in a classroom, lab, or  
149 workspace. [top](#)

## 150 **Legal References**

- 151 • [Americans with Disabilities Act, Title I, Employment](#)
- 152 • [Americans with Disabilities Act, Title II, State and Local Governments](#)
- 153 • [Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504](#)
- 154 • [Civil Rights Act of 1968, Title VIII, Fair Housing Act](#)
- 155 • [Iowa Code Section 216.8A](#)
- 156 • [Iowa Administrative Code, 681 IAC 13.18, Animals on Campus](#)
- 157 • [Ames Municipal Code, Sections 3.107 \(Rabies Vaccination\) and 3.110 \(Rabies Tags\)](#)

## 158 **Resources**

### 159 **Links**

- 160 • [Procedures and Guidance - Assistance Animals on Campus](#)
- 161 • [Assistance Animals website](#)
- 162 • [Animals at Events](#)
- 163 • [Animals on Campus policy](#)
- 164 • [Discrimination and Harassment policy](#)
- 165 • [Student Accessibility Services \(SAS\)](#)
- 166 • [Office of Equal Opportunity](#)
- 167 • [Employee Management, University Human Resources](#)
- 168 • [Environmental Health and Safety](#)
- 169 • [Department of Residence](#)

### 170 **Files**

- 171 • [Assistance Animals on Campus \[version August 29, 2016\]](#)

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