

NOTE: ESAs may not be brought to the residence halls/apartments until official approval has been given from the Office of University Housing. Please submit all necessary information with enough lead time to allow the office to fully consider your request.

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION Re: Emotional Support Animal

(The mental health care provider need not use this specific form, but all the information requested here is necessary for the institution to have in order to consider the request for an ESA; the form is provided as a convenience; however, we urge you to use this form.)

Student's Name: _____ ULID: _____

The above-named student has indicated that you are the **licensed mental health care provider** who has suggested that having an Emotional Support Animal (ESA) in the residence halls/apartments will have therapeutic benefit in alleviating one or more of the identified symptoms or effects of the student's mental health disability. Generally, we prefer documentation from providers in the State of Louisiana or the student's home state who have **personal knowledge of the student**, consistent with their professional obligations.

Some websites sell certificates, registrations, and licensing documents for assistance animals to anyone who answers certain questions or participates in a short interview and pays a fee. Under the Fair Housing Act, a housing provider may request reliable documentation when an individual requesting a reasonable accommodation has a disability and disability-related need for an accommodation that are not obvious or otherwise known. **In HUD's experience, such documentation from the internet is not, by itself, sufficient to reliably establish that an individual has a non-observable disability or disability-related need for an assistance animal.** *(Excerpt from 2020 HUD Guidance)*

So that we may better evaluate the request for this accommodation, please answer the following questions:

Information About the Student's Disability

1. Federal law defines a person with a disability as someone who has a physical or mental impairment that **substantially limits** one or more major life activities. That suggests that a diagnosis (label) does not necessarily equate with a disability (substantial limitation). What is the nature of the student's mental health impairment (that is, how is the student **substantially limited**?)

Documentation of disability must come from a source with sufficient direct personal knowledge of the individual to clarify the need for the ESA and the nexus between the disability and the presence of the animal in housing.

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

3. What is the nature of your meetings (i.e., face-to-face meetings or virtual interaction)?

4. When did you last interact with the student regarding this mental health diagnosis?

5. How often have you seen the student (or plan to see the student) for further counseling/treatment?

6. What other therapeutic methods **you utilized with the student** for treatment purposes prior to the recommendation of the ESA?

7. What specific symptoms is this student experiencing, and how will those symptoms be mitigated by the presence of the ESA? **General assessments are typically insufficient. For example, a statement that “The animal alleviates anxiety” is too general and does not explain HOW the animal may alleviate the symptoms of this student’s disability.**

Information About the Proposed ESA

(Note: there are some restrictions on the kind of animal that can be approved for the residence hall; it is possible the student may be approved for an ESA, based on the information you provide here, but may not be allowed to bring the specific animal named.)

Proposed ESA (if identified):

Name of Animal: _____

Type of animal: _____

Age of animal: _____ Size of the cage/crate needed for containment: _____

8. Dogs and cats are most often requested as ESAs and seem best suited to adapting to the communal living setting of the college residence hall/apartments. If another type of animal is being suggested for this student, please explain why you believe that animal is a better choice.

9. Is there evidence that an ESA has helped this student in the past or currently? If not, why do you believe this may be an effective support for the student now?

Importance of ESA to Student's Well-Being

10. Please address the likely impact on the student should the following scenario occur: once the student is living with the animal in the student housing unit, the animal is permanently removed from the unit because of a violation of policy (e.g. the animal injures someone or destroys property) and balance this impact, if any, against the benefit that you expect the animal to provide to the student.

11. This student was provided with a copy of the rules and restrictions surrounding the presence of an animal in residence in university housing. Has the student shared those restrictions with you? Yes_____ No_____

12. Have you discussed the responsibilities associated with properly caring for an animal while engaged in typical college activities and residing in campus housing? Do you believe those responsibilities might exacerbate the student's symptoms in any way? (If you have not had this conversation with the student, we will discuss it with the student at a later date.)

Thank you for taking the time to complete this form. If we need additional information, we may contact you at a later date. The named student has signed this form (below) indicating written permission to share additional information with us in support of the request. We recognize that having an ESA in the residence hall can be a real benefit for someone with a significant mental health disorder, but the practical limitations of our housing arrangements make it necessary to carefully consider the impact of the request for an ESA on both the student and the campus community.

Please sign and date this questionnaire below and return it to oncampusliving@louisiana.edu

Professional Name Printed: _____ Professional Signature: _____

Type of License: _____ License #: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

STUDENT (please sign this form before providing it to your mental health provider to complete):

By signing below, I consent to allowing my healthcare provider to share any information relevant to my need for an ESA as an accommodation, as shown on this form, with The University of Louisiana at Lafayette for the next 60 days.

Student Signature

Date