



SERVICE AND ASSISTANCE ANIMAL POLICY & PROCEDURES

Please visit the Accessibility and Disability Services [website](#) for more information, or contact accessibility@dominican.edu.

I. Purpose of the Policy

Dominican is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to qualified students with disabilities. Students with disabilities who require the use of Service or Assistance Animals as a reasonable accommodation may be permitted to bring such animals on campus provided that they comply with Dominican's policies regarding such animals. Students who seek to bring a Service or Assistance Animal to campus should first contact Accessibility & Disability Services (ADS). ADS will determine, on a case-by-case basis, and in collaboration with other offices on campus, whether to approve the student's request for a Service or Assistance Animal. In making this determination, ADS will consider the needs of the student, as well as the impact of the animal on the campus community. Students seeking to have a Service or Assistance Animal in housing should submit a request for review each academic year. A request for a Service or Assistance Animal should be submitted along with the student's application for housing. The animal should not be in residence prior to approval by ADS. The approval of a request is animal-specific and is not transferable to another animal.

II. Definitions

A. Service Animal - **FULL access to campus spaces and buildings**

A "Service Animal" is any dog that has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability. Other animals, whether wild or domestic, trained or untrained, do not qualify as Service Animals. (In some limited cases which generally are not applicable to Dominican's campus, a miniature horse may be permitted as a Service Animal.) Examples of work or tasks provided by a Service Animal include, but are not limited to, guiding a person with impaired vision, alerting a person with a hearing impairment, pulling a wheelchair, and alerting and protecting a person who is having a seizure. Service Animals are working animals, not pets. The work or task a Service Animal has been trained to provide must be directly related to the functional limitations of the person's disability.

- Service Animals have full access to all campus spaces and buildings.
- **IMPORTANT:** *Animals whose sole function is to provide comfort or emotional support do not qualify as Service Animals.*

B. Assistance Animal - LIMITED access to campus buildings

“Assistance Animals” (sometimes referred to as “emotional support animals (ESA),” “social or therapy animals,” “companion animals,” and/or “comfort animals”) are animals that perform tasks and/or provide service, assistance, or emotional support which alleviates one or more identified symptoms or effects of an individual’s disability. Assistance Animals may not assist with daily living tasks and are not required to have received special training. Assistance Animals stay only in residence; they do not accompany an individual with a disability at all times (i.e., Assistance Animals do not attend class, enter the library, or visit other residence halls or dining halls).

- Assistance Animals have limited access to select campus buildings;
 - Resident students may have the animal in their assigned room only; animals may not be in communal areas within the residence halls.
 - Employees may have the animal in their designated (and immediate) workspace on campus.
 - The animal may not be in classrooms and laboratories, library study spaces, or Caleruega Dining Hall at any time

C. Pet - LIMITED access to campus buildings

A “Pet” is an animal kept for ordinary use and companionship. A pet is not considered a Service or an Assistance Animal. Pets are not covered by this policy.

- Pets have limited access to select campus buildings;
 - The animal may not be in classrooms and laboratories, library study spaces, residence halls, or Caleruega Dining Hall at any time.
 - Pets are permitted in offices and workspaces if approved by the employee’s manager.
 - If at any time there is a complaint about the pet, the University reserves the right to mandate the owner remove it from campus.

D. Individual with a Disability

An Individual with a Disability is a person who (1) has a physical or mental impairment that limits one or more of a person’s major life activities or (2) has a record of having, or being perceived as having, a physical or mental impairment.

E. Approved Animal

An “Approved Animal” is a Service Animal or an Assistance Animal that has been approved to live in Dominican’s housing as a reasonable accommodation under this policy.

F. Owner

The “Owner” is the student who has requested the accommodation and has received approval to bring the “Approved Animal” on campus.

III. Procedures

A. Service Animals

A resident student seeking to keep a Service Animal in housing should make a formal request to Accessibility and Disability Services (ADS) by initiating the registration process as described on the office’s [website](#). Requests should be submitted as soon as possible before the semester the animal is requested and by the deadlines specified in the chart below. Requests submitted after the deadline or after the student is already placed in housing may take 30 days or more; accordingly, students should submit their requests to ADS at least 30 days prior to the date the student would like to bring the animal to housing.

SERVICE ANIMAL REQUEST DEADLINES:

<i>SEMESTER</i>	<i>DEADLINE</i>
Fall Semester	No later than July 1 (prior to the start of fall term)
Spring Semester	No later than November 15 of the prior term

When the need for a Service Animal is not readily apparent, Dominican may request additional documentation in support of the request for the purpose of determining whether an animal qualifies as a Service Animal, namely: (1) that the Service Animal is required due to the functional limitations of the requesting individual’s disability; and (2) what work or tasks the Service Animal has been trained to perform for the benefit of the owner. Any necessary documentation must be dated within the last 12 months.

If the request for a Service Animal is approved, the requesting student will be asked to acknowledge, in writing, receipt of, and their agreement to comply with, this policy.

If approved, Residence Life staff will also make a reasonable effort to notify the other residents that a Service Animal will be in the living area. This notice will be limited to information about the animal's presence; there will be no disclosure of the student's disability. Other resident students with medical conditions who are affected by animals (e.g., severe allergies, respiratory diseases), are asked to contact ADS if they have a health or safety related concern about exposure to a Service Animal. Such affected students may be eligible for disability accommodation when living in proximity to a Service Animal. ADS and Residence Life staff will collaborate as necessary to resolve conflicts related to a Service Animal. Staff members will consider the needs and/or accommodations of all resident students involved. Residence Life may relocate the Owner and Approved Animal if necessary to accommodate other students with medical condition(s) who are affected by animals or in other circumstances as deemed appropriate in the sole discretion of Dominican.

Service Animals may travel freely with their Owner throughout Dominican housing and other areas of the Dominican. A Service Animal shall have a harness, leash, or other tether, unless either the handler is unable because of a disability to use a harness, leash, or other tether, or the use of a harness, leash, or other tether would interfere with the Service Animal's safe, effective performance of work or tasks, in which case the Service Animal must be otherwise under the handler's control (e.g., voice control, signals, or other effective means).

B. Assistance Animals

A resident student seeking to keep an Assistance Animal in housing must make a formal request to ADS by initiating the registration process as described on the office's [website](#). Requests should be submitted as soon as possible before the semester the animal is requested and by the deadlines specified by Dominican in the chart below. Requests submitted after the deadline or after the student is already placed in housing may take 30 days or more; accordingly, students should submit their requests to ADS at least 30 days prior to the date the student would like to bring the animal to housing.

Please note that students are required to renew their request each academic year for documentation and logistical purposes.

ASSISTANCE ANIMAL REQUEST DEADLINES:

SEMESTER	DEADLINE
Fall Semester	No later than July 1 (prior to start of term)
Spring Semester	No later than November 15 of the prior term

When the need for an Assistance Animal is not readily apparent, Dominican may request additional official written documentation from a physician, psychiatrist, or other mental health professional, including (1) verification of the student's disability, (2) a statement on how the animal serves as an accommodation for the documented disability, and (3) a statement on how the need for the Assistance Animal relates to the ability of the student to use and gain benefit from Dominican housing. Any necessary documentation must be dated within the last 12 months.

Dominican may consider the following factors, among others, in determining whether the presence of the animal is reasonable and/or in the making of housing assignments for individuals with Assistance Animals:

- The size of the animal is too large for available assigned housing space;
- The length of time a student has known the animal to reasonably determine if the animal has the temperament to live on a college campus;
- The animal's presence otherwise violates individuals' right to enjoy peace and quiet;
- The animal is not permitted in the state of California by applicable law or regulation;
- The animal is not housebroken or is unable to live with others in a reasonable manner;
- The animal's licensing and/or vaccinations are not up-to-date;
- The animal poses or has posed in the past a direct threat to the individual or others such as aggressive behavior towards or injuring the individual or others; or
- The animal causes or has caused damage to property beyond reasonable wear and tear.

A request for an Assistance Animal may be denied, and determined to be unreasonable, if the presence of the animal: (1) imposes an undue financial and/or administrative burden on the University; (2) fundamentally alters University housing policies or fundamentally alters the nature of the University's programs, activities or operations; and/or (3) poses a direct threat to the health and safety of others or would cause substantial property damage to the property of others, including University property. Please note that the "reasonable status" of a Support Animal can change at any time if any of the above guidelines are not followed and met. This may result in the removal of the animal from campus property.

If the request for an Assistance Animal is approved, the requesting student will be asked to acknowledge, in writing, receipt of, and their agreement to comply with, this policy.

If approved, Residence Life staff will also make a reasonable effort to notify the other residents that an Assistance Animal will be in the living area. This notice will be limited to information about the animal's presence; there will be no disclosure of the student's disability. Other resident students with medical condition(s) who are affected by animals (e.g., severe allergies, respiratory diseases) are asked to contact ADS if they have a health or safety related concern about exposure to an Assistance Animal. Such affected students may be eligible for a disability accommodation when living in proximity to an Assistance Animal. ADS and Residence Life staff will collaborate, as necessary to resolve conflicts related to an Assistance Animal. Staff members will consider the needs and/or accommodations of all resident students involved. Residence Life may relocate the Owner and Approved Animal if necessary to accommodate other students with medical condition(s) who are affected by animals or in other circumstances as deemed appropriate in the sole discretion of Dominican.

Assistance Animals must be contained within the privately assigned residential area (room, suite, apartment) at all times, except as otherwise expressly provided. When transported outside the private residential area, assistance animals must be in an animal carrier or controlled by leash or harness. When outside the residence, the Owner of an Assistance Animal shall carry the letter provided by ADS identifying the animal as an Approved Animal.

IV. Responsibilities of the Owner of Service or Assistance Animal

- A.** The Owner is responsible for assuring that the Approved Animal does not unduly interfere with the routine activities of the residence or cause difficulties for students who reside there. In addition, the Approved Animal must not pose a threat to the health, safety, or property of anyone in the Dominican community. If Dominican determines that the Approved Animal threatens the health, safety, or property of anyone in the Dominican community, or that the Approved Animal is adversely affecting Dominican's programs and activities, Dominican will take appropriate measures, up to and including a determination that the Approved Animal may no longer be permitted on campus.
- B.** The Owner must always be in control of the Approved Animal. The care and supervision of the Approved Animal is solely the responsibility of the Owner. The Owner is responsible for ensuring the safety of the Approved Animal and the Dominican community. The Owner must not have any past or current student conduct issues that may impact the Owner's ability to care for and effectively control an animal. If Dominican determines that such conduct issues are negatively impacting the safety of the Approved Animal or the Dominican community, Dominican will take appropriate measures, up to and including a determination that the Approved Animal may no longer be permitted on campus.
- C.** The Owner is financially responsible for the actions of the Approved Animal, including bodily injury or property damage. The Owner's responsibility covers but is not limited to replacement of furniture, carpet, windows, wall coverings, and the like. The Owner is expected to cover these costs at the time of repair.
- D.** The Owner is responsible for any expenses incurred for cleaning above and beyond a standard cleaning or for repairs to Dominican premises that are assessed after the student and animal vacate the residence. The Dominican shall have the right to bill the Owner's account for unmet obligations.
- E.** The Owner is responsible for ensuring the cleanup of the Approved Animal's waste and, when appropriate, must toilet the Approved Animal in areas designated by the Dominican consistent with the reasonable capacity of the Owner. Indoor animal waste, such as cat litter, must be placed in a sturdy plastic bag and securely tied up before being disposed of in outdoor trash dumpsters. Litter boxes should be placed on mats so that waste is not tracked onto carpeted surfaces.

- F.** The Owner is financially responsible for any expense of pest treatment that is beyond routine pest control. The Owner's residence may be inspected for pests as needed and the Residence Life staff will schedule any such inspection. If pests are detected upon inspection, the residence or residence hall will be treated using Dominican-approved pest control methods and the Owner is expected to cover these costs at the time they are incurred.
- G.** The Owner understands that Dominican may use pesticides, pest-control devices, de-icing materials, cleaning supplies and other materials for the maintenance and operation of housing and the Owner acknowledges and agrees that Dominican is not responsible for any harm to Approved Animals caused by such materials.
- H.** The Owner is responsible for the overall health and well-being of the Approved Animal. This includes but is not limited to:
 - 1. Vaccinations: In accordance with local ordinances and regulations, the Approved Animal must be immunized against diseases common to that type of animal. Dogs must have current vaccination against rabies and wear a rabies vaccination tag. Cats should have the normal shots required for a healthy animal. Local licensing requirements must be followed.
 - 2. Approved Animals to be housed in Dominican housing must have an annual clean bill of health from a licensed veterinarian. Documentation can be a vaccination certificate for the animal or a veterinarian's statement regarding the Approved Animal's health. The Dominican has authority to direct that the Approved Animal receive timely veterinary attention (e.g., if fleas, ticks, or other pests are detected through inspection (as per Section IV.F. above)), and to require documentation demonstrating the Approved Animal has been treated.
 - 3. Owners are responsible for the routine care of the Approved Animal, and must provide the Approved Animal with appropriate food, clean water, exercise and mental stimulation, and grooming where necessary. Physical abuse of an Approved Animal is a violation of this policy and may be a violation of local and state law. Dominican reserves the right to intervene on behalf of an Approved Animal in situations of perceived abuse, neglect, a visible need for veterinary intervention, or for other concerns about the animal's well being.
 - 4. Dominican reserves the right to request documentation showing that the Approved Animal has been licensed pursuant to local and state law.

- I. Approved Animals must be taken with the student if they leave campus for a prolonged period of time. Approved Animals may not be left overnight in Dominican housing unattended.
- J. The Owner must notify ADS in writing if the Approved Animal is no longer needed or is no longer in residence.
- K. The Owner agrees to continue to abide by all other residential policies. A reasonable accommodation which may constitute an exception to a policy that otherwise would prohibit having an animal does not constitute an exception to any other policy.
- L. The Owner shall indemnify and hold harmless Dominican from all expenses, injuries, or claims arising out of the Owner's control and/or use of the Approved Animal.

V. Notice and Education to Dominican Community

Where appropriate, in the sole discretion of Dominican, ADS staff may provide notice of or offer targeted training to members of the Dominican community most likely to come in contact with a Service or Assistance Animal.

(revised August 2024)