



**Number:** 6-033  
**Title:** Animals on Campus  
**Responsible Office:** Administrative Services

**Date of Origin:** 3-20-13

**Date Last Amended:** 1-23-24

**Date Last Reviewed:** 1-23-24

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**I. PURPOSE & INTENT**

This policy is designed to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the University of South Florida (USF) students, faculty, staff, and the general public.

**II. STATEMENT OF POLICY**

- A.** All animals brought on to any USF campus property must be under physical restraint. The animals must be under the complete control of and physically restrained by the owner/responsible party who is also responsible for ensuring the animal is safe and healthy.
  
- B.** Pet animals are to remain only on public places and are not permitted in University patio areas adjacent to swim facilities, in or on the spectator areas or recreational fields or facilities, such as racquetball and tennis courts, in dining or residence halls, inside USF buildings, or at special events, except as provided in Section V, Exceptions.
  
- C.** USF will follow all federal and state laws with regard to accommodations.

**III. DEFINITION OF TERMS**

- **Approved Animal** - Student Accessibility Services or Human Resources has determined the person with a disability has established their eligibility for reasonable accommodation and the animal's qualifications as a "Service or Assistance" Animal. The animal is an **Approved Accommodation** for the Eligible Person under the applicable laws.

- **Assistance Animals** - As defined by The Fair Housing Act, *Assistance Animals* are animals that work, provide assistance, or perform tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability, or animals that provide emotional support that alleviates one or more identified symptoms or effects of a person's disability. Assistance Animals perform many disability-related functions, including but not limited to guiding individuals who are blind or have low vision, alerting individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to sounds, providing minimal protection or rescue assistance, pulling a wheelchair, fetching items, alerting persons to impending seizures, or providing emotional support to persons with disabilities who have a disability-related need for such support. Some, but not all, animals that assist persons with disabilities are professionally trained. Other assistance animals are trained by the owners themselves and, in some cases, no special training is required. The question is whether or not the animal performs the assistance or provides the benefit needed as a reasonable accommodation by the person with the disability. Assistance Animals are not considered Service Animals and are not permitted in public spaces, classroom, or workplaces.
- **Eligible Person** - A person with a disability who because of a functional limitation of his/her disabling condition requires a Service Animal to perform a task or function.
- **Emotional Support Animal** - An animal whose sole function is to provide *emotional support*. *Emotional support animals* do not qualify as service animals under ADAAA and are not permitted on campus except to the extent the animals are considered Assistance Animals under the FHA as provided in Section (B) above.
- **Public Place** - Areas on the University campus that have no restricted access and are open to the general public. Employee office areas and residence halls require contractual arrangements with access permitted only within the terms of the contracts. Students with a disability may bring Service Animals to classrooms, labs, or other academic areas necessary for the student to meet the terms of their academic program as an Academic Accommodation without seeking formal approval through the University process described in Section III. A.
- **Responsible Party** - Any person who owns the animal, brings the animal to campus, is training a service animal or is an Eligible Person as defined in section (C) above (there may be more than one Responsible Party and each or all may be held fully responsible for the animal). For SAIT the Responsible Party is the animal's trainer and for Service Animals the Responsible Party is the Eligible Person as defined by this Policy.

- **Service Animal in Training** - (SAIT) – A dog undergoing training by an approved trainer.
- **Service Animal** - As defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendment Act (ADAAA), Service Animals are dogs or miniature horses that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities. Examples of such work or tasks include guiding people who are blind, alerting people who are deaf, pulling a wheelchair, alerting, and protecting a person who is having a seizure, reminding a person with mental illness to take prescribed medications, calming a person with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) during an anxiety attack, or performing other duties. Service Animals are working animals, not pets. The work or task an animal has been trained to provide must be directly related to the person's disability and must always be with and under the control of the Eligible Person. The Service Animal may not be left unattended. Animals whose sole function is to provide comfort or emotional support do not qualify as service animals under the ADAAA.
- **Therapy Animal** - Therapy Animals are trained and registered by qualified Handlers/Responsible Parties who use the dogs for comfort and companionship and may be permitted on campus if (1) a dog is registered through Therapy Dogs International, Therapy Dogs Incorporated or Pet Partners and/or; (2) a dog is prescribed by a licensed Mental Health Professional, as a part of an ongoing psychotherapeutic treatment or therapy program, and the individual provides the required specific documentation. Therapy Animals do not assist individuals with a disability to perform the activities of daily living and are not covered by statutes protecting and giving rights to Service Animals.
- **University Official** - USF employees with responsibility for the administrative operations or maintenance of any area classroom or any USF properties.
- **Work or Tasks** - Examples of Work or Tasks include guiding people who are blind, alerting people who are deaf, pulling a wheelchair, alerting, and protecting a person who is having a seizure, reminding a person with mental illness to take prescribed medications, calming a person with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) during an anxiety attack, or performing other duties. Service Animals are working animals, not pets. The Work or Task an animal has been trained to provide must be directly related to the person's disability.

#### **IV. PROCESS STEPS/GENERAL GUIDELINES**

- A.** In parts of the campuses where animals may be permitted, such animals must be kept securely controlled by a harness or leash not to exceed ten (10) feet in length (unless there is an exception granted based on disability). Animals are not permitted to run at-large on any streets, unimproved lots, or premises within the boundaries of USF properties. Animals should not be tethered and left unattended.
- B.** Animals must be registered, vaccinated and/or must comply with legal requirements set by the local, state, or federal government.
- C.** An animal left unattended in a vehicle, or any other area is to be reported to the Police Department for appropriate response. A person who leaves an animal unattended may be prosecuted.
- D.** The Responsible Party who wishes to bring an animal on campus for a one-time display or special circumstance approved by or at the request of the USF, must comply with USF regulations or policies. This approval may require a certificate of insurance and animal health certificates.
- E.** If an animal disrupts the University educational process, administrative processes, or other campus function, the Responsible Party must remove the animal immediately. In addition, the owner or responsible party will be held liable for any damage to person or property caused by the animal's presence on the property.
- F.** The Responsible Party must clean up all animal waste and dispose of that waste in outdoor trash receptacles. Individuals unable to do so may request specific accommodations. Animal waste is not to be disposed of in indoor trash receptacles.
- G.** Removal of dead or injured animals is the responsibility of the Responsible Party; however, in the event immediate action is necessary, the facilities manager may take appropriate action to remove the animal. Any and all costs associated with such removal will, when possible, be at the Responsible Party's expense.
- H.** Wild or feral animals are to be left alone. In the event the wild or feral animals appear to be a threat to human safety or property, the facilities manager may take appropriate action.

## V. EXCEPTIONS

Types of Animals with Exceptions: The following animals and specific instances are an exception to [III. B.] above as they are permitted on USF properties so long as they are under the complete control of and physically restrained by the Responsible Party and/or maintained as provided below:

- **Assistance Animals** are permitted on campus with approval from the Office of Housing and Residential Education and must be contained within the private residential area (room, suite, and/or apartment) at all times except when transported outside the private residential area in an animal carrier or controlled by leash or harness. Assistance Animals are not permitted in public spaces, classrooms, or workplaces unless they also meet the definition of Service Animal as provided by law and as permitted as part of an accommodation as provided in this Policy.
- **Law Enforcement Animals:** Animals used for law enforcement or investigations on campus.
- **Research Animals:** Animals identified and approved for designated research-related activity.
- **Service Animals:** Animals will be permitted in public spaces and in classrooms as noted in this Policy (see Section (V)(I.)). Service Animals must be accompanied by the Eligible Person at all times and must not be left unattended either on campus, in a residence hall or place of employment. Service Animals in Training (SAIT) are permitted in or on public places pursuant to §413.08, Florida Statute and must be with the Responsible Party (for SAIT the Responsible Party must be the person training the animal). The USF St. Petersburg campus has a designated program for SAITs to facilitate the SAITs to be in private areas including Residence Halls and all places accessible to Service Animals provided the SAITs meet the USF Facilities requirements including insurance and provisions for access and emergency planning. A SAIT may not be left unattended and must be accompanied by the Responsible Party (or the approved person identified and referenced in the facilities agreements) at all times while on any USF property. This is to be distinguished from an Assistance Animals which may be left alone in a residential hall.
- **Therapy Animals:** Therapy Animals used as a therapy tool may be permitted on campus for a therapy session if the therapy is an integral part of a treatment process as prescribed by a licensed mental health professional with specific documentation required. Therapy Animals do not assist individuals with a disability to perform the activities of daily living. They are not covered by statutes protecting and giving

rights to service animals. Approval of the presence of a therapy animal falls within the authority of USF regarding accommodations to a disability or the counseling center. Therapy Animals are defined as animals with a good temperament and reliable, predictable behavior. Therapy Animals used as an accommodation normally will be permitted within campus housing areas for their periodic visits. This is in addition to other areas where USF programs are offered, as identified by the requestor, and will need to meet all requirements of a Service Animal.

- **Special Events:** As specific special events or limited programs approved by the University may require animals on campus, individuals may request approval for a special event or exception to this Policy using the Event Request process or contacting Human Resources or Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to request exceptions or permission to bring animals on to campus for the purposes of limited programs including those for stress relief, educational programs or limited special presentations.

Guidelines for Animals with Exceptions: The following guidelines are provided as referenced in [V.] above:

- **Accommodation Requests:** USF is committed to compliance with state and federal laws regarding individuals with disabilities. Members of the University community who seek reasonable accommodation for disabilities should contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS), Human Resources (employees) or as detailed in USF Policy 0-108 Disability and Accommodations.
- **Approved Accommodations on Campus:** USF officials will determine, on a case-by-case basis, and in accordance with applicable laws and regulations, whether an animal meets the definition of Service or Assistance Animal and the terms of any reasonable accommodation on campus. In doing so, USF must balance the needs of the individual with the impact of animals on other campus patrons. Where it is not readily apparent that an animal is a Service Animal as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendment Act (ADAAA), or an Assistance Animal under the Fair Housing Act (FHA), USF may require sufficient information and documentation to enable Student Accessibility Services (SAS) (student requests) or Human Resources (employee requests) to establish eligibility for reasonable accommodations and the animal's qualification as a Service or Assistance animal under the applicable laws.

- **Registration:** The University encourages persons with Service Animals that will be on campus more than five (5) consecutive or non-consecutive days (within an academic year) to register with USF as follows: Students register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS); employees register with Human Resources; and as provided in USF Policy 0-108 Disability and Accommodations . In the event the Service Animal is needed in residence halls or office areas not open to the general public the Service Animal must be registered as an accommodation with the appropriate office\*. All Service Animals must meet the criteria set by those offices which may include documentation of current applicable immunizations and vaccinations; documentation of a clean bill of health from a licensed veterinarian; and requirements that the animal display valid rabies vaccination tag and state and/or county license or registration. Registration must be complete 30 days prior to occupancy for residential student requests. [\* Students with a disability may bring Service Animals to classrooms, labs, or other academic areas necessary to facilitate their academic program as an Academic Accommodation without seeking formal approval through the University Student Disability or other registration processes].

The University requires SAITS that may be part of the USFSP SAIT program to be Registered before coming into any non-public space to meet the same Registration requirements as listed above and to register with USFSP Office of Facilities to provide:

Insurance: Agreement and terms of use of private space including plans for emergency housing for the SAITS in the event of evacuations.

The definition of Responsible Person (as it appears that the Responsible Person's may be delegating the responsibility to "sitters" and this should be captured in the terms and insurance)

- **Verification of Service Animal Status:** To determine if an animal meets the Service Animal exception of this Policy, a USF official may ask two questions:
  1. Is the animal a Service Animal required because of a disability; and
  2. What work or task has the animal been trained to perform?

USF officials cannot ask about a person's disability, require medical documentation, require a special identification card or training documentation for the animal, or ask that the animal demonstrate ability to perform the work or task described. However, if a person is requesting a specific accommodation that includes a service animal, the University may request appropriate documentation and medical verification to process the accommodation request.

- **Behavior and Supervision:** All animals including any of the animals falling in the Exceptions section of this Policy must not be unruly or disruptive, be in ill health or unclean. An animal may be removed from USF property if the animal is a direct threat to the health and safety of others, or if the animal is disruptive or out of control. USF may temporarily or permanently exclude any animal including any of those listed as Exceptions at the discretion of the facilities manager, EH&S or emergency personnel.
- **Responsible Party Duties:** The Responsible Party shall bear the full costs associated with any injury to persons, or damage to property, caused by a service animal and bear full liability for any action of the service animal.

#### VI. EMERGENCY ACTION

If an animal on campus is exhibiting dangerous or destructive behavior, or if an animal appears to be stray or abandoned, please notify the appropriate USF Law Enforcement Officer (LEO). The LEO will notify the appropriate Agency (Hillsborough County Animal Services, Florida Wildlife Control, or other appropriate party). If the animal is deemed a threat, the LEO will take appropriate emergency action.

#### VII. COMPLAINTS

Any complaints regarding the application of this policy with regard to the ADA or other equitable application of this process may be made to the offices designated in USF Policy 0-108 Disability and Accommodations

#### VIII. CONSEQUENCES

The consequences for violation of this policy include but are not limited to:

- Students in violation of this policy may be referred to Student Conduct and Ethical Development for disciplinary action in accordance with the University's student disciplinary procedure.
- Staff violators may be referred to their supervisor. Faculty violators may be referred to their chair or appropriate unit head. In addition, all other Human Resources policies will apply.
- Non-University violators or any University person may be referred to the USF Police and restricted from University property.



**HISTORY**

**Date Approved:** Mar. 20, 2013

**Substantively Amended:** (none)

**Technically Amended:** Jan. 23, 2024, Nov. 18, 2022, Sept. 28, 2021, Sept. 6, 2018, July 13, 2017, Aug. 18, 2015

**Biennial Review:** Jan. 30, 2023

**Other:** Jul. 1, 2020 (Consolidation)