

## **Providence College Division of Student Affairs Service and Support Animals Policy**

This Policy governs the presence of Service Animals and Support Animals in College housing. The College will reasonably accommodate persons with disabilities who require the assistance of Service or Support Animals, as appropriate. The Office of the Dean of Students is responsible for implementing this Policy and for guiding students with disabilities in documenting their specific request for a necessary accommodation. Each request will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, considering the needs of the individual and the reasonable concerns of the College community. When animals are permitted in College housing, this Policy also governs the owner's responsibilities, including the care and control of the animal; areas on campus available to the animal; and grievance resolution procedures. The successful implementation of this policy requires the cooperation of all students, faculty, staff and visitors of the Providence community. Providence College reserves the right to amend this policy and associated procedures as circumstances require.

### **1. Definitions**

#### **2. Service Animals**

A "Service Animal" is an animal, usually a dog, that has been individually trained and certified by a recognized organization to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability. Examples of work or tasks provided by a Service Animal include, among others, 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. Animals whose sole function is to provide comfort or emotional support do not qualify as Service Animals under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

#### **3. Support Animals**

A "Support Animal" (sometimes called an emotional assistance or emotional support animal) is a dog or other domestic animal that is prescribed or otherwise documented by a healthcare or mental health professional as treatment for a disabled individual and that is beneficial in alleviating one or more identifiable symptoms or effects of that individual's disability.

#### **4. Approved Animal**

An "Approved Animal" is a Service or Support Animal that has been granted access to campus, or specific areas or locations on campus, as a reasonable accommodation under this Policy.

#### **5. Disability**

A disability is defined as a physical or mental condition or impairment that is medically recognizable and diagnosable, and substantially limits one or more of a person's major life activities. These limitations may include performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, working, and learning. A person is substantially limited in major life activities if the individual is unable to perform the activity, or is significantly restricted as to the manner in which he or she can perform that activity when compared to the average person. Acceptable documentation of a disability can be from either a licensed medical or mental health provider. It should verify the disability as well as describe the need for a Service or Support Animal.

#### **6. Owner**

The Owner is the student or person who is responsible for any type of Approved Animal on campus.

#### **7. Pet**

A pet is a domesticated animal that serves a role in providing leisure companionship to its Owner. Pets are

not the same as Service or Support Animals and are generally not permitted inside College facilities.

## **11. Procedures for Service and Support Animals in College Housing**

### **Service Animals**

Trained Service Animals are welcomed in College Housing. A person seeking to keep a Service Animal in College housing is asked to notify the Dean of Students Office. To do so, the person must begin the process by filling out our Accommodations Application so that the owner can be assigned to the most appropriate housing location with their service animal, considering the owner's needs and preferences. The Accommodations Application can be accessed at this link: <https://providence-accommodate.symplicity.com/> and can be found on the Dean of Students webpage.

Communication prior to bringing the animal on campus will help the student make a smooth transition to living on our campus in order to optimize the student's living experience. The student may be asked to provide information on what work or task the animal has been trained to perform.

### **Support Animals**

Support Animals may not be brought to housing without prior approval. Approved Support Animals are only permitted within the owner's on-campus housing assignment; they are not permitted in other residence halls or in other buildings on campus.

A person requesting permission to keep a Support Animal in college housing should make a formal request to the College. To do so, the person must submit an Accommodations Application, as well as documentation of their disability to be reviewed by the College. The Accommodations Application can be accessed at this link: <https://providence-accommodate.symplicity.com/> and can be found on the Dean of Students webpage.

Documentation of the need for a Support Animal should follow the College guidelines for documentation of disability, and should generally include the following information:

- a. Verification of the individual's disability from a physician, psychiatrist, social worker, or other mental health professional, who is not a family member or a Providence College employee;
- b. Statement on how the animal serves as an accommodation for the verified disability; and
- c. Statement on how the need for the animal relates to the ability of the resident/student or live-in staff member to use and enjoy the living arrangements provided by the College.
- d. Current documentation of items requested in a., b., and c. (dated within the last six months).

The College will review documentation and, if approved, it shall arrange a meeting with the person requesting that a Support Animal be housed in College housing. This policy will be carefully reviewed with the person at that time.

If the decision is made to deny a request for a Support Animal, the student may request an appeal of the decision, in writing, to the Associate Dean of Students. Appeal requests must state a specific reason for reconsideration. Appeals will be reviewed by a sub-committee of the College ADA committee.

### **Deadlines to Submit Requests for Service or Support Animals**

**Fall Semester:** Submit by March 1 (July 1 for new students)

**Spring Semester:** Submit by November 1

### **Summer Sessions: Submit by May 1**

While applications submitted after these dates will be accepted and considered, the College cannot guarantee that it will be able to meet late applicants' accommodation needs, including any needs that develop during the semester.

Upon approval of a Service or Support Animal, residential building staff will be notified as appropriate. The Owner's roommate(s), suitemate(s), or apartment-mate(s) will be notified that the Approved Animal may be residing in shared assigned living space.

### **IV. Conflicting Needs/Health Concerns**

Individuals who have medical issues and are affected by animals (e.g., asthma, allergies) should contact the Office of Residence Life as soon as possible. The person may be asked to provide medical documentation to support such claim. Reasonable accommodations may be made to consider the needs of both persons to adequately resolve the problem.

### **V. Personal Injury and Property Damage**

The Owner must take reasonable precautions to prevent, and is liable for, personal injury or property damage caused by the Service or Support animal. The College recommends that the Owner have appropriate liability insurance.

If a Service or Support Animal damages the assigned residence hall room or other College property, the cost of the damage will be assessed and assigned to the Owner's account. The Owner is responsible for insuring cleanliness and proper care and treatment of the animal and its environment.

### **VI. Responsibilities of Owners**

#### **1. Vaccination Records**

If applicable, depending on the type of animal, a veterinarian must examine an animal before being brought into the residence halls. The animal must be healthy and all vaccinations must be up to date. A record of this information must be dated within the last six months and be provided annually to the College. This record must be provided prior to the owner moving into the residence hall.

#### **2. Licensing**

The Owner must abide by all applicable laws and regulations regarding licensing, comply with all Providence licensing laws and tag laws pertaining to the animal. The College has the right to require documentation of compliance with these requirements.

#### **3. Control, Clean up and Grooming**

- a. The Owner is responsible for all actions of the Approved Animal and should be in **total** control of the animal at all times. An Approved Animal must be harnessed, leashed, or tethered, unless these devices interfere with the Service Animal's work or the individual's disability prevents using these devices. In that case, the Owner must maintain control of the animal through voice, signal, or other effective controls.
- b. The Owner is responsible for removal and proper disposal of the animal's waste. Removal must be immediate. The animal's waste must be removed into a proper receptacle located outside of campus facilities. It is the Owner's responsibility to remove cat or other small animal litter to an

outside trash receptacle. Indoor communal trash cans in the residence halls may not be used. If an animal urinates or defecates inside of a building, or in another area that requires cleaning or maintenance, the Owner must notify staff, and will be responsible for the cost of such cleaning. Animal soiling inside a building will be sufficient cause to remove the animal from campus.

- c. The animal must be well groomed, and measures taken at all times for hygiene as well as flea and odor control. The residence may be inspected for fleas, ticks and other pests once a semester or as needed. If necessary, college approved pest control services will be utilized and the Owner will be billed for the expense of any necessary pest treatment.

#### **4. Other Responsibilities**

- a. The Owner is responsible for assuring that the Approved Animal does not disrupt or interfere with programs or activities, including but not limited to teaching, research, service or administrative activities and those within the residence building.
- b. Service Animals may travel with their owner throughout the campus, except in areas that are prohibited to students on campus. Support Animals must be contained within the owner's housing assignment at all times, except when transported outside the private residential area enroute off campus in an animal carrier or controlled by leash or harness. Animals may not be tied or tethered to any College property, including but not limited to buildings, railings, bike racks, fences, sign posts, benches, or trees, and they may not be allowed to run loose anywhere on campus.
- c. Approved Animals are not to be left alone overnight in campus housing or left to be cared for by another student/individual. If the Owner with an Approved Animal has an extended leave (more than 24 hours), the animal must be removed from the residence hall. If the Owner with an Approved Animal fails to remove the animal during an extended leave, then the College reserves the right to remove and board the animal, at the owner's expense, until the Owner returns to the residence hall.
- d. The College reserves the right to place other reasonable conditions or restrictions on the animal depending upon the nature and characteristics of the animal. If an individual feels he or she is unable to comply with any of the requirements contained in the policy she or he should contact a member of the residence life staff to address the matter.
- e. For students with roommates: All roommates, suitemates or apartment-mates of the Owner must agree that the Approved Animal will be in residence with them. In the event that one or more roommates, suitemates, or apartment-mates later do not approve, either the Owner and animal or the non-approving roommates or suitemates, may be moved to a different location.
- f. The Owner agrees to continue to abide by all other residential and College policies. 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.
- g. The Approved Animal must be under the control of the Owner at all times. Safe and reasonable behavior is expected from Approved Animals while on campus. Service Animals are prohibited from food preparation areas with the exception of the private kitchen within the Owner's assigned suite or apartment.
- h. If an Approved Animal is determined to be out of control, the consequence will be decided on an individual basis. The Owner is fully responsible for the actions of the Approved Animal. The

Owner is held to the code of conduct in relation to any behavior caused by the animal. Consequences for misconduct may include exclusion from College facilities.

- i. Should the Approved Animal be removed from the premises for any reason, the Owner is expected to fulfill housing obligations for the remainder of the housing contract.

## **VII. Areas Off Limits to Service and Support Animals**

The College may prohibit Service Animals in specific locations due to health and safety restrictions. Restricted areas may include, but are not limited to, mechanical rooms, custodial closets, research laboratories, wood and metal shops, rooms with heavy machinery, areas where protective clothing is necessary, areas where there is a danger to the animal, and areas outlined in state law as being inaccessible to animals. Animals may be prohibited from labs if the lab supervisor has reason to believe the animal's presence would compromise the environment or if the environment poses a physical danger for the animal. Support Animals are only permitted within the student's on-campus housing assignment.

The Owner may be directed to remove an animal that is unruly or disruptive (e.g. barking, jumping on people). If the improper behavior happens repeatedly, the Owner may be prohibited from bringing the animal into college facilities or events until the Owner can demonstrate appropriate steps taken to mitigate such behavior. Any animal that exhibits aggressive or unsafe behavior may be prohibited from college facilities or events. An Approved Animal may be removed from the premises if it is a direct threat to the health or safety of others, if it would result in substantial physical damage to the property of others, or if the animal substantially interferes with the reasonable enjoyment of housing by others.

## **VIII. Requirements for Faculty, Staff, Students, and Other Members of the College Community Regarding Service or Support Animals**

1. The Owner of an Approved Animal at any college facility or event is expected to maintain appropriate behavior of the animal as follows:
  - a. Animal must not be allowed to initiate contact/approach/sniff people, tables in eating areas, or personal belongings of others.
  - b. Animal must not display behaviors or noises that are disruptive to others, such as barking, growling, or other behavior not a part of the task the animal is trained to conduct.
  - c. Animal must not block an aisle or passageway; impede access to ingress/egress of a facility.
  - d. Animal must be trained not to interfere with food that may be in common areas.
2. Community Members (students, staff, faculty, and visitors) are to recognize the working role of Service or Support Animals and adhere to the following:
  - a. They are to allow a Service Animal to accompany its Owner/handler at all times and allow Support Animals as authorized for the individual circumstance.
  - b. They are not to feed, pet or touch an Approved Animal without the express invitation of the Owner. Service Animals are trained to be protective of their Owner, among other tasks, and petting the animal can distract them from their working responsibilities.

- c. They are not to deliberately startle, tease or otherwise distract an Approved Animal.
- d. They are not to separate or attempt to separate an Owner from their Approved Animal.
- e. They are not to inquire details about the Owner's disability or the nature of work of the Approved Animal. As the College does not generally allow animals, appropriate staff may inquire (if not obvious) whether the animal is required for a disability or what work/task the animal provides for the Owner.

## **X. Grievance Procedures**

If the decision is made to deny a request or to remove a Service or Support Animal, the Owner may request an appeal of the decision to the Associate Dean of Students. Appeal requests must state a specific reason for reconsideration. A subcommittee of the ADA Committee will review appeals.

## **IX. Contact Information and Related College Policies**

Tiffany Gaffney, MBA  
Associate Dean of Students  
Providence College  
Slavin Center 201  
One Cunningham Square  
Providence, RI 02918  
Tel. 401-865-2191

Related College Policies: Student Handbook – Residence Life section; Animals and Pets Policy (campus-wide policy)

## **Providence College Service and Support Animal Policy**

**By my signature below, I verify that I have read, understand and will abide by the guidelines in this policy.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
College Representative \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Providence College Service and Support Animal Policy Roommate Acknowledgement

By my signature below, I understand that I will share the common areas of my housing assignment with an Approved Animal (approval has been provided by the Office of the Dean of Students, working with Residence Life). If any concerns should arise related to the Approved Animal, I will discuss those concerns with the Approved Animal's Owner and then with the Director of Residence Life, if an agreement cannot be made. In the event that there is not an agreement, either the Owner and Approved Animal or I, as determined by appropriate College staff, may be moved to a different location.

Resident's Name/Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Resident's Name/Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_