



University Policy: Animals On Campus

Policy Category: Employment, Benefits, and Workplace; University Police, Risk Management, Environmental Health and Safety

Subject: Prohibition of Animals in University Controlled and Managed Buildings, Offices, and Other Properties

Offices Responsible for Review of this Policy: Office of Finance and Treasurer

Procedures: Guidelines for Service, Emotional Support/ Assistance, and Therapy Animals on Campus (Incorporated in Policy – Attached), Statement on Animal Use in Research and Education

Related University Policies: Student Conduct Code, Residence Hall Regulations

I. SCOPE

This policy addresses the permissibility of animals on campus. This policy applies to all faculty, staff, students, visitors and guests of the University.

II. POLICY STATEMENT

Animals may pose a real or perceived threat to other members of the University community and may disrupt University activities. Consequently, animals brought into campus buildings present a liability for the University that is not normally associated with university operations. In order to promote a safe, non-threatening and healthy work environment for the members of the University community and to protect the University's physical assets, American University prohibits animals in campus buildings or on athletic fields. (Exceptions are defined in the Policy below.)

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. *Campus Building:* Any University controlled and/or managed building and/or office.
- B. *Emotional Support/ Assistance Animals:* As defined by the Fair Housing Act, an emotional support/ assistance animal may provide physical assistance, emotional support, calming, stability, and other kinds of support. The presence of the animal must be necessary in order to provide the resident with a disability the use and enjoyment of the dwelling. There must be an identifiable relationship or nexus between the disability and the assistance or support the animal provides. Emotional support/ assistance animals do not perform work or tasks that qualify them as "Service Animals" under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

- C. *Therapy Animal*: An animal owned by a therapist or is certified with an animal-assisted therapy program and is used by the University's Counseling Center as an integral part of a treatment process. A Therapy animal demonstrates a good temperament and reliable, predictable behavior.
- D. *Handler*: Person accompanying an animal or responsible for bringing it to campus.
- E. *Pet*: Any animal, including amphibians, mammals, reptiles and birds kept for pleasure or companionship.
- F. *Research and Teaching Animals*: Animals approved for use in direct support of the University's teaching and research mission and used in accordance with guidelines established by the Office of the Vice Provost for Research and Dean of Graduate Studies.
- G. *Service Animal*: As defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), a service animal is any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability. (In some instances, as set out in the ADA regulations at 28 CFR 35.136(i), a miniature horse may qualify as a service animal.) The work the dog has been trained to do must be directly related to the person's disability.
- H. *Service Animal in Training*: As defined by DC 7-1009 a service animal in training is an animal that is a) at least six months of age; b) undergoing special training to assist persons with physical or mental disabilities; c) accompanied by an experienced service animal trainer; and d) designated as a service animal in training by wearing a harness, backpack, or vest that identifies it as a service animal in training.

IV. POLICY

- A. It is the policy of American University that animals are not permitted in University controlled and managed buildings or on athletic fields, except for the animals listed in this policy and defined above.
- B. Animals brought onto campus outdoor grounds (other than those specified above) must be on a leash, in a vehicle, contained or kenneled or otherwise kept under physical control and possession of the handler at all times. If an animal demonstrates threatening or aggressive behavior to members of the University community and guests (e.g., growling, scratching, biting), its handler may be directed to remove the animal from University property. Animal handlers are responsible for cleaning up after their animals while on campus grounds. Additionally, handlers are expected to be aware of and must comply with District of Columbia ordinances regarding licensing, vaccination, the storage, transport and care of animals, and any other requirements for animals. Animals prohibited by District of Columbia and/or federal law are not permitted on campus.

- C. Animals found out of compliance with this policy are subject to impounding and may be taken, at the owner's expense, to the District of Columbia Department of Health Animal Shelter, operated by the Washington Humane Society.
- D. Faculty, staff, or students found in violation of this policy may be subject to disciplinary actions in accordance with the Student Conduct Code, WCL Honor Code, Staff Personnel Policies Manual, and Faculty Manual, as appropriate.
- E. American University permits the following animals in campus buildings or on athletic fields:
 - a. Service animals;
 - b. Emotional Support/ Assistance Animals in an individual's University residence hall room, provided that the animal has been approved as a disability-related housing accommodation by the Academic Support and Access Center (ASAC) (the individual with the approved housing accommodation must be able to produce an ASAC approval letter if questioned about the presence of the animal) and the intended purpose of an individual's occupancy is as a residence (an individual's occupancy for attending a conference or a transient visit would not be considered as an individual's residence);
 - c. Therapy animals used by the University's Counseling Center for treatment purposes;
 - d. Service Animals in Training, as defined and meeting all the criteria outlined by DC 7-1009, when they are accompanied by a service animal trainer who is training the animal to be a service animal pursuant to DC 7-1002(c);
 - e. Research and Teaching Animals;
 - f. On-Duty police, search and rescue, detection or guard dogs;
 - g. Pets of full-time faculty and professional staff living in University housing in their assigned residence space.
- F. Although the above exempt animals are permitted in campus buildings or on athletic fields within the limitations described, these animals must be housebroken and remain under the control of their handlers at all times. The care or supervision of an exempt animal is solely the responsibility of its handler and/or owner. The University reserves the right to exclude an exempt animal whose behavior is disruptive or poses a threat to the health or safety of others.
- G. Any University official is authorized to maintain compliance with this policy when non-compliance is observed or reported. University Police Services will enforce this policy to ensure a safe University environment for all. Anyone who brings an animal to the University will be held liable for any damages or injuries attributable to the behavior of the animal while on campus.
- H. Requests for exceptions to this policy will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the ASAC in accordance with applicable laws regarding reasonable accommodations or by the Assistant Vice President for Risk, Safety, and Transportation for all other exemption requests.

V. EFFECTIVE DATE(S)

Policy revised June 2019