



Disability Services for Students

275 Eastland Road

Berea, Ohio 44017

www.bw.edu/DisabilityServices

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Emotional Support Animal (ESA) Application for University Housing

Emotional Support Animals can play an important role in facilitating the independence and well-being of some individuals with certain types of disabilities. Therefore, in accordance with the Fair Housing Act, the University provides reasonable and appropriate accommodations for students with a documented disability and need for an emotional support animal in University housing.

Baldwin Wallace University recognizes that having an ESA in University Housing can be beneficial 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. Requests must be submitted each academic year and evaluated on a case-by-case basis, as outlined in the "Emotional Support Animal Policy, Procedures, and Guidelines." A person may qualify for this accommodation if:

1. The person has a documented, significant mental health condition;
2. The animal is necessary to afford the person with a disability full benefit and enjoyment of the residence halls; and
3. There is an identifiable relationship between the disability and the assistance the animal provides.

Baldwin Wallace University prohibits animals in University housing. BW will consider an exception from this prohibition if the request is reasonable and necessary because of a documented disability. However, no ESA may be kept in University housing until the student receives written approval from Disability Services for Students (DSS) as a reasonable accommodation under this Policy. Failure to abide by this will be considered a conduct violation. Judicial charges will be filed for violating the pet policy.

Baldwin Wallace University reserves the right to amend the ESA Application at any time as circumstances require.

Section I: Definitions

A. Emotional Support Animal

Emotional Support Animals (ESAs) are a category of animals that provide necessary emotional support to an individual with a mental or psychiatric disability that alleviates one or more identified symptoms of an individual's disability, but which are not considered Service Animals under the ADA and BW's Service Animal Policy. In most cases, ESAs provide the necessary support to individuals with mental health disabilities without any formal training or certifications. Dogs are commonly used as ESAs, but any animal may serve a person with a mental health disability.

The question in determining if an ESA will be allowed in University housing is whether or not the ESA is necessary, because of the student's disability, to afford them an equal opportunity to use and enjoy University housing and its presence in University housing is reasonable. However, even if the individual with a disability establishes the necessity for an ESA and it is allowed in University housing, an ESA is not permitted in other areas of the University (e.g., dining facilities, libraries, academic buildings, athletic buildings and facilities, classrooms, labs, individual centers, etc.).

ESAs are not trained to assist individuals with disabilities in the activities of daily living and are therefore NOT considered Service Animals under the criteria established by the ADA and do not qualify for the same legal protection.

B. Pet

A “Pet” is an animal kept for ordinary use and companionship. A pet is not considered a Service Animal or an Emotional Support Animal. These guidelines do not cover it. Residents are not permitted to keep pets on university property or in university housing, other than non-dangerous fish in an aquarium no larger than 20 gallons.

C. Approved Animal

An “Approved Animal” refers to an Emotional Support Animal that has been approved as a reasonable accommodation under these guidelines.

D. Owner

The “Owner” refers to the student who has requested the accommodation and had received approval to bring the ESA into University Housing.

E. Disability Services for Students

Disability Services for Students (“DSS”) collaborates with students, faculty, and staff to ensure that students with documented disabilities have equal access to all BW programs, service, and activities.

Section II: Emotional Support Animal Application

Incoming students, or students making a request for an ESA for the first time, must complete an application for accommodations using the Disability Services Online System. Select “Emotional Support Animal” under Accessible Housing. Please submit the following to DSS: the application (pages 4-6), and, once the animal is identified, a copy of the animal’s veterinary records and a photograph.

Section III: Animal’s Medical Record

DSS must be provided with copies of the animal’s veterinary records, once the animal is identified.

Section IV: ESA Documentation

Requests for an ESA in University Housing require reliable documentation of a disability to be submitted to review and render a decision. Baldwin Wallace University reserves the right to request additional information if the questions on the ESA Verification Form and ESA Application are not thoroughly answered. Documentation of the need for an ESA should include the following information:

- a. Verification of the individual’s disability from a qualified individual (physician, psychiatrist, social worker, or other mental health professional). The provider must include professional licensure/certificate information. Generally, documentation should be provided by a local provider or one near the student’s permanent address, suggesting an ongoing therapeutic relationship. The documentation provided by mental health providers based on limited electronic or telephonic contact with students typically is insufficient to establish need.
- b. A statement regarding how the animal serves as an accommodation for the verified disability.
- c. A statement explaining how the need for the animal relates to the ability of the student to use and enjoy the living arrangements provided by the University.
- d. Current documentation (dated within the last six months) of items requested above.

Section V: ESA Review Process

The review process may take up to ninety (90) days. Students should submit their request to DSS at least sixty (60) days before the date the student would like to bring the animal into on-campus housing. This timeframe will allow for DSS, in collaboration with the Office of Residence Life, to make the appropriate accommodations for the requesting student.

While applications submitted at any time will be accepted and considered, there is no guarantee that BW will be able to meet an applicant's accommodation request once a semester has started, including any needs that develop during the semester. As such, those requests will be held over until the following term, if appropriate.

Section VI: ESA Approval

Decisions about ESA requests are emailed to the student's BW email account. As part of the approval process, a brief meeting is required to discuss the specific ESA, review the ESA Guidelines, and sign an ESA Contract. The contract outlines Owner responsibilities in University Housing. If the student has a roommate, the roommate will also be required to sign a Roommate Agreement before the animal is allowed on campus.

ESAs must be approved each academic year, using the process described above. Updated documentation from the student's mental health provider must be submitted to DSS each academic year. This documentation must meet the requirements listed above.

Section VII: ESA Denial

Decisions about ESA requests are emailed to the student's BW email account. Please be advised: If a student chooses to provide updated documentation, upon receipt of a denial, DSS will reconsider the request.

Section VIII: ESA Removal

Failure of the student (Owner) to follow the rules and responsibilities articulated in the ESA Contract may result in the removal of the animal. If removal is necessary, the student will be given twenty-four (24) hours' notice to remove the animal voluntarily. After which time the University may remove the animal to the nearest appropriate animal shelter.

Section IX: Additional Information & Other Factors

1. Please refer to the "Guidelines for Emotional Support Animals in University Student Housing" for more detailed information, or visit our website at www.bw.edu/DisabilityServices.
2. There are some restrictions on the kind of animal that can be approved for University Housing. As such, it is possible a student may be approved for an ESA, but may not be allowed to bring the specific animal named.
3. We will not grant requests for an ESA if the animal:
 - a. poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others;
 - b. causes substantial physical damage to the property of others;
 - c. poses an undue financial and administrative burden; or
 - d. Fundamentally alters the nature of the provider's operations
4. BW may consider other factors as evidence in determining whether the presence of the animal is reasonable or in making housing assignments for individuals seeking an ESA:
 - a. The size of the animal is too large for available assigned housing space;
 - b. The animal's presence would force another student from University housing (e.g., serious allergies);
 - c. The animal's presence otherwise violates students' right to peace and enjoyment;
 - d. The animal is not housebroken or is unable to live with others reasonably;
 - e. The animal's vaccinations are not up-to-date;
 - f. The animal poses or has posed in the past a direct threat to the student or others such as behaving aggressively towards or injuring the student or others. *Animals that exhibit aggressiveness are not appropriate for University housing, regardless of whether or not they have actually injured someone (i.e., the University does not have to wait until someone is harmed). Exhibition of aggressive behavior is automatically disqualifying*;
 - g. The animal poses health risks from zoonotic diseases or safety concerns regarding containment that cannot be sufficiently mitigated for inclusion in the communal living setting.



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Emotional Support Animal (ESA) Application for University Housing

STUDENT INFORMATION (Please Print)

Name (Last, First, Middle): _____ Date: _____

Date of Birth: _____ BW ID Number: _____

Status (check one): current student transfer student prospective student

Phone: (____) _____ - _____ BW Email: _____@bw.edu

Address (street, city, state, zip code): _____

Class Standing:

Freshman Sophomore Junior Senior Graduate Student

If not currently enrolled, specify the expected start date:

Fall 20____ Spring 20____ Summer 20____

If currently enrolled and living in University Housing, do you have an assigned roommate? Yes No

If yes, Indicate full name and BW email address of roommate: _____

PROPOSED ESA INFORMATION

A copy of veterinary records and a photography of the animal must accompany this application. If the specific animal has not yet been identified, this information must be provided immediately upon identification

Type of animal: _____ Breed: _____

Name of animal: _____ Age: _____ Weight: _____

1. What is the nature of your mental health impairment? _____

2. Do you currently participate in psychological therapy (e.g., psychotherapy, group therapy, cognitive-behavior therapy)? If yes, describe the nature of the therapy, how long you have been in therapy, and how often you participate: _____

3. Have you reviewed the ESA Guidelines for University Housing?

Yes No

4. Do you understand the rules and restrictions surrounding the presence of an animal in University Housing?

Yes No

5. Have you shared the rules and restrictions surrounding the presence of an animal in University Housing with your mental health provider?

Yes No

6. Has the requested ESA ever injured another person or animal?

Yes No

If yes, describe in detail: _____

OWNER’S RESPONSIBILITIES FOR AN EMOTIONAL SUPPORT ANIMAL (ESA)

Baldwin Wallace University will not require a student with a disability to pay a fee or surcharge for an approved ESA. BW is not responsible for loss of, injury to, or death of the animal. BW reserves the right to inspect the cage or container of an ESA.

If the University grants an Owner’s request to live with an ESA, the Owner is solely responsible for the custody and care of the ESA and must meet the following requirements. You must confirm your agreement by initialing each statement.

_____ The Owner must supply the name of a non-resident emergency contact who will be responsible for the animal if the owner is incapacitated.

_____ The Owner must abide by current city, county and state ordinances, laws, and regulations about licensing, vaccination, and other requirements for animals. It is the Owner’s responsibility to know and understand these ordinances, laws, and regulations. The University has the right to require documentation of compliance with such ordinances, laws, and regulations, which may include a vaccination certificate. The University reserves the right to request documentation showing the animal has been licensed and vaccinated.

_____ The Owner is required to clean up after and properly dispose of the animal’s waste in outdoor waste receptacles and must use designated animal relief areas.

_____ The Owner will not bathe the ESA in any University-owned facilities.

_____ The Owner will not launder any materials or bedding in any University-owned facilities.

_____ The Owner is required to ensure the animal is well cared for at all times. Any evidence of mistreatment or abuse may result in immediate removal of the ESA and/or discipline for the Owner.

_____ The Owner’s living accommodations may be inspected for fleas, ticks or other pests if necessary as part of the University’s standard or routine inspections. If fleas, ticks or other pests are detected through inspection, the residence will be treated using approved fumigation methods by a University- approved pest control service. The Owner will be billed for the expense of any pest treatment above and beyond standard pest management in the residence halls. The University shall have the right to bill the Owner’s account for unmet obligations under this provision.

_____ The Owner must fully cooperate with University personnel with regard to meeting the terms of this Policy and developing procedures for care of the animal (e.g., cleaning, feeding and watering the animal; designating an outdoor relief area, disposing of feces, etc.).

_____ The Owner must not leave the ESA overnight in University housing to be cared for by any individual other than the Owner. If the Owner is to be absent from the residence hall overnight or longer, the animal must accompany the owner.

_____ The Owner is responsible for ensuring the ESA is contained, as appropriate when the Owner is not present during the day while attending classes or other activities. Containment will allow University staff to access the space for maintenance and other routine tasks without posing a risk to the animal. The Owner may also choose to post a sign alerting staff to the presence of the animal. This sign must follow University housing policies.

_____ The Owner must abide by all equally applicable residential policies that are unrelated to the student's disability such as assuring that the animal does not unduly interfere with the routine activities of the residence or cause difficulties for individuals who reside there.

_____ The Owner may have the ESA in University housing only as long as it is necessary because of the Owner's disability. The Owner must notify DSS in writing if the ESA is no longer needed or is no longer in residence. To replace the ESA, the new animal must be necessary because of the Owner's disability. The Owner must follow the procedures in this Policy to make a new request and receive written approval from DSS for the new animal.

_____ BW personnel shall not be required to provide care or food for any ESA including but not limited to, removing the animal during emergency evacuation for events such as a fire alarm. Emergency personnel will determine whether to remove the animal and may not be held responsible for the care of, damage to, or loss of the animal.

_____ The Owner must provide written consent for DSS to disclose information regarding the request for and presence of the ESA to those individuals who may be impacted by the presence of the animal, including, but not limited to: Residence Life personnel and potential and/or actual roommate(s) or neighbors. Such information shall be limited and only related to the animal and shall not include details related to the student's disability.

_____ The Owner is expected to fulfill all housing obligations for the remainder of the housing contract, should the ESA be removed from University housing for any reason.

_____ The ESA is not permitted in University housing until written approval has been provided by DSS.

We recognize that having an ESA in University Housing 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 ESA on both the student and the campus community. *Print, sign, and date below.*

Student Name (Print): _____ Date: _____

Student Signature: _____

Please complete this form in its entirety and submit it to:

Baldwin Wallace University
Disability Services for Students
275 Eastland Road
Berea, OH 44017
Fax: (440) 826-3832
Email: disability@bw.edu

Next Steps:

1. Have your veterinarian submit a copy of the animal's medical record to DSS.
2. Print the Emotional Support Animal Verification Form for University Housing found on the DSS website:
<https://www.bw.edu/about/offices/disability-services>.
 - a. Complete the first page of the ESA Verification Form, including the consent statement at the bottom so that your provider can share pertinent information relevant to your ESA request.
 - b. Provide ALL pages of the Verification Form to your mental health provider for completion.
3. Follow up with your mental health provider to ensure that the completed Verification Form has been submitted.
4. Check your BW email for updates and follow all instructions within the given timeline(s).