



University of the Virgin Islands

EMOTIONAL SUPPORT ANIMAL POLICY GUIDELINE

Leslyn Tonge

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University of the Virgin Islands Disability Student Services

Emotional Support Animal (ESA) in University Housing Policy

The University of the Virgin Islands (UVI or “University”) recognizes the importance of Emotional Support Animals (ESAs) under the Fair Housing Act that provides physical and/or emotional support to individuals with disabilities. UVI is committed to allowing Emotional Support Animals (ESAs) in University housing when the animal is necessary to provide students with disabilities an equal opportunity to fully participate in the University housing program. This Manual explains the specific requirements applicable to a student’s use of an ESA in University housing. The policy applies solely to ESAs, which may be necessary for University housing. It does not apply to Service Animals as defined by the ADA.

University of the Virgin Islands prohibits animals in University housing. However, UVI 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 Student Services (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 ESA in University Housing Policy.

University of the Virgin Islands reserves the right to amend the ESA in University Housing Policy 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 UVI’s Disability Student Services Office 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. Under guidelines from HUD, reptiles (other than turtles), banyard animals, kangaroos, monkeys, and other non-domesticated animals are not considered household animals. Generally, we do not approve of animals that may carry zoonotic diseases for which there is no accepted control. Species or breeds which have a history of unprovoked aggression or attacks are not eligible to serve as an ESA at the University, even if they meet the size requirements.

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. The University must also consider whether the ESAs presence in University housing is reasonable. 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 (SAs) under the criteria established by the ADA. ESAs, therefore, do not qualify for the same legal protection as SAs.

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.

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 requested the accommodation and received written approval to bring the ESA into University Housing.

E. Disability Student Services (“DSS”) collaborates with students, faculty, and staff to ensure that students with documented disabilities have equal access to all UVI programs, services, and activities.

SECTION II: PROCEDURES FOR REQUESTING EMOTIONAL SUPPORT ANIMALS IN UNIVERSITY HOUSING

The procedure and requirements for requesting an Emotional Support Animal are specified below.

A. All new and returning students requesting an Emotional Support Animal (ESA) must complete the Emotional Support Animal (ESA) Application for University Housing and submit it to Disability Student Services (DSS).

B. Students requesting an ESA must have their animal’s veterinarian complete the Emotional Support Animal (ESA) Veterinarian Verification Form. A copy of the animal’s veterinary and vaccination records along with a photograph of the animal (if the animal has been identified) must be submitted with the application. If the specific animal has not yet been identified, this information must be provided immediately upon identification.

C. Students requesting an ESA must have their mental health provider complete and submit the Emotional Support Animal (ESA) Clinician Verification Form.

D. Students requesting an ESA should submit the ESA Application for University Housing to DSS at least sixty (60) days before the date the student would like to bring the animal in University housing. This timeframe will allow for DSS, in collaboration with the Office of Residence Life, to evaluate the request and make the appropriate accommodation arrangements for the requesting student.

E. If the Application is made fewer than sixty (60) days before the individual intends to move into University housing, The University of the Virgin Islands cannot guarantee that it will be able to

meet the individual's accommodation needs for that semester or term of occupancy, and those requests may be held over until the following term, if appropriate.

F. If the need for the ESA arises after a student already resides in University housing, the student should contact DSS, complete the Application, and provide the Verification Form as soon as practically possible. UVI cannot guarantee that the accommodation need(s) will be met during the semester or term in which the request is received, and those requests may be held over until the following term, if appropriate.

G. ESA approval decisions regarding ESA requests are emailed to the student's UVI email account. Please be advised: While the student may be preliminarily approved to have an ESA in University housing, approval for the specific animal the student intends to bring is a separate consideration from qualification for an Emotional Support Animal.

H. The approval of a specific animal for an ESA may be subject to several considerations (e.g., the age of the animal, the space needed to house the animal, the care and feeding requirements, the risk of infectious disease in the communal living setting, etc.). As such, the University reserves the right to limit approval of proposed ESAs to animals that do not pose health or safety concerns or significantly disrupt the residence hall living environment for others.

I. As part of the approval process, a brief meeting is required to discuss the specific ESA, review the Emotional Support Animal in University Housing Policy, and sign the Emotional Support Animal (ESA) Owner's Responsibilities Contract. The contract outlines the student's responsibilities in University housing. Also, the student will sign an acknowledgment of this Policy and a Consent for Release of Information. A photograph of the ESA and a copy of the animal's veterinary records must be provided to DSS before the animal is permitted in University housing.

J. All roommate(s) must sign an ESA Roommate/Suitemate Agreement before the ESA is permitted on campus. If any roommate or suitemate objects to sharing a residence with the ESA, alternate housing arrangements will be made for one or all the individuals. Decisions surrounding such arrangements will be made on a case-by-case basis.

K. ESAs must be approved each academic year using the process and application deadlines described above. New, 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.

L. The University strongly recommends that an approved ESA be spayed or neutered before being brought to campus.

M. The ESA is permitted in University housing only for as long as the student has a disability-related need for the animal, during the approved semester or academic year. The approval of an ESA in one academic year does not establish the need for the ESA in any subsequent academic year or semester. Students must reapply each academic year.

N. ESA denial decisions regarding ESA requests are emailed to the student's UVI email account or to such other email on record for the student. Please be advised: If the request is denied, the

student may provide additional documentation for reconsideration of the request. A student can appeal an ESA denial decision only if the student submits additional documentation for reconsideration and the reconsideration request is denied.

SECTION III: REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION FOR EMOTIONAL SUPPORT ANIMAL REQUESTS

Complete documentation must be submitted before a request for an ESA in University Housing is considered. The University of the Virgin Islands reserves the right to request additional information from the provider, if the documentation lacks sufficient information or if the components below are not present, to determine whether the accommodation is necessary. DSS will notify the student in writing if additional information is required and/or if DSS will need to contact the provider within ten (10) business days of receipt of documentation.

Documentation of the need for an ESA should include the following information:

- A. Verification of the individual's disability from a qualified individual (licensed psychiatrist, social worker, or other mental health professional) who is specifically overseeing the treatment of the diagnosed disability. The provider must include professional licensure information. Documentation should generally be provided by a local provider or one near the student's permanent address. The provider must be actively overseeing the ESA as a prescribed treatment method, and evidence of this must be present in the documentation they provide. The documentation provided by mental health providers based on limited electronic or telephonic contact with students typically is insufficient to establish need. Primary care physicians, online ESA support services (regardless of credentials) or medication prescribers are inadmissible providers.
- 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 IV: UTILIZING AN ESA IN UNIVERSITY HOUSING

A. Roommates

University housing is unique in several aspects, including the assignment of roommates and expectation that individuals must share a room or suite in certain residence halls. To ensure that the presence of an ESA is not an undue administrative burden to or fundamental alteration of University housing, UVI reserves the right to reassign a student with an ESA to a different room as needed.

Individuals residing in University housing may have a mandatory assignment of a roommate/s and may require individuals to share a room or suite in certain types of housing. To ensure the presence of an ESA is not a fundamental alteration of University housing or undue administrative burden, UVI reserves the right to assign the student to a space that will allow the accommodation to be met, including a single room without a roommate. If the request for the ESA accommodation is received after room assignments are posted, the University has the right to reassign the student to a space that will allow the accommodation to be met. If a reassignment is necessary, only the student with a medical need will be relocated, not any requested roommate(s). The ESA accommodation will take priority over any preferences indicated on paperwork submitted to UVI Housing & Residential Life. UVI does not approve more than one ESA per resident.

SECTION V: CRITERIA FOR DETERMINING IF PRESENCE OF THE EMOTIONAL SUPPORT ANIMAL IS A REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION

The Disabilities Student Services may deny the requested accommodation if it is unreasonable.

A. Unreasonable Accommodation

For all requests for ESAs, DDS shall consult with the Office of Residence Life to decide on a case-by-case basis, if the presence of the ESA is reasonable. A request for an ESA may be denied and deemed unreasonable if the presence of the animal:

1. Imposes an undue financial and/or administrative burden.
2. Fundamentally alters University housing policies.
3. Poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others, or would cause or caused substantial property damage to the property of others, including University property; and/or
4. Fundamentally alters the nature of university operations.

B. Other factors

UVI may consider the following factors, among others, when determining whether the presence of the animal is reasonable or when making housing assignments for individuals with ESAs:

1. The size of the animal is too large for available assigned housing space. An ESA animal cannot weigh no more than 40 pounds once matured.
2. The space needed for the crate in which the animal will be housed is too large for available assigned housing space. The crate size should be within the range to accommodate an animal that will weigh no more than 40 pounds once matured. UVI reserves the right to inspect the size of the animal's crate.
3. The animal must be fully vaccinated at the time of the ESA application.
4. The animal's presence would force another student to exit University housing (e.g., serious allergies);

5. The animal's presence otherwise violates other students' right to peace and quiet enjoyment.
6. The animal is not housebroken, or litter trained at the time of the ESA application or is unable to live with others reasonably.
7. The animal's vaccinations are not up to date.
8. The animal poses or has posed in the past a direct threat to the student or others (e.g., behavior towards or injuring the student or others). Animals that exhibit aggressiveness are not appropriate for University housing, regardless of whether or not they have injured someone (i.e., the University does not have to wait until someone is harmed – an exhibition of aggressive behavior is automatically disqualifying);
9. The animal causes or has caused excessive damage to the residence beyond reasonable wear and tear;
10. The animal poses health risks from infectious diseases or safety concerns regarding containment that cannot be sufficiently mitigated for inclusion in the communal living setting.

SECTION VI: ACCESS TO UNIVERSITY FACILITIES BY EMOTIONAL SUPPORT ANIMALS

- A. An ESA must be contained within the Owner's privately assigned individual living accommodations (e.g., room, suite, apartment, etc.) except to the extent the student is taking the animal out for natural relief. When the ESA is outside the private individual living accommodations, it must be in an animal carrier or controlled by a leash or harness. ESAs are not permitted in any University facilities or buildings other than the residence that the student is assigned.
- B. The ESA must remain caged as appropriate whenever the owner is not present. If the owner leaves their residence for any reason, for any amount of time, the ESA is required to stay in their cage until their return.
- C. The ESA is only allowed in a student's assigned university housing room and may not be taken to class. ESAs are restricted to the registered student's room and are only allowed outside the unit to care for the animal or to leave the building with the animal.
- D. Dominion and Control Notwithstanding the restrictions set forth herein, the ESA must be properly restrained or otherwise under the dominion and control of the Owner at all times. No Owner shall permit the animal to go loose or run at large. If an ESA is found running at large, the animal is subject to capture, confinement, and immediate removal from University housing.

SECTION VII: RESPONSIBILITIES OF OWNER REGARDING EMOTIONAL SUPPORT ANIMALS IN UNIVERSITY HOUSING

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:

1. 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.
2. The Owner must fully cooperate with University personnel about 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.).
3. 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. All animal waste must be disposed of in a sturdy plastic bag and tied before placing it in a waste receptacle.
4. Cat litter boxes should be scooped daily and at no time should an animal container or litter box be cleaned inside the residential halls.
5. The owner must be in full control of the ESA when transporting the animal for elimination. The ESA must have a harness, leash, tether, or be transported in an appropriate enclosure whenever it is outside of the resident room of where it is housed. The ESA may be excluded from University campus if it behaves in an unacceptable way and the Owner does not or is unable to control the ESA, (uncontrollable barking, jumping on other people, or running away from the handler are examples of unacceptable behaviors for an ESA).
6. The Owner shall notify the Student Housing and Residential Life Office and DSS if the ESA escapes. The Owner hereby holds the University of the Virgin Islands (UVI) blameless in the event the ESA goes missing. UVI staff is not responsible for the retrieval of the ESA in the event the ESA escapes or becomes lost.
7. If an animal is found running at large, the animal is subject to capture and confinement and immediate removal from University housing.
8. The Owner will not bathe the ESA in any University-owned facilities.
9. The Owner will not launder any materials or bedding in any University-owned facilities.
10. 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.
11. The Owner's living accommodations may be inspected for fleas, ticks or other pests 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.

12. The ESA should not have access to another person's belongings or private space without the roommate's permission.

13. Owner is responsible for instructing others on appropriate interactions with the ESA and setting clear expectations.

14. UVI 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.

15. A roommate and suitemates are not required to provide care or food for any ESA. If this occurs, it is a direct violation of the ESA Policy.

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

17. 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. If the Owner is unable to take the animal with them as a result of hospitalization, incarceration, or some other emergency, the Owner is required to have made prior arrangements for the animal to be transported, housed, or boarded off-campus.

18. 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.

19. 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. Excessive noises and behaviors such as barking and whining, chewing, scratching and aggression will not be permitted.

20. The Owner is responsible for the actions of the ESA, including, but not limited to, any bodily injury or property damage. The Owner must immediately report damage or injury to the Student Housing and Residential Life Office.

21. The University reserves the right to determine which housing facilities are appropriate for the owner and animal.

22. UVI shall have the right to bill the account of the Owner for unmet obligations arising for damage or extra cleaning caused by an ESA.

23. 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.

24. ESA accommodation requests are renewed each year; renewals must include updated veterinary documentation for the ESA and updated documentation from a mental health provider.

25. 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 suitemates. Such information shall be limited and only related to the animal and shall not include details related to the student's disability.

26. 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.

27. The ESA is not permitted in University housing until written approval has been provided by DSS. Any student found to have an animal on campus prior to it being approved as an ESA will be required to remove the animal from campus immediately.

SECTION VIII: DESIGNATED ANIMAL RELIEF AREAS

Student Housing and Residential Life Office/Residence Hall Staff/DSS/Physical Plant reserves the right to designate specific sites outdoors for animal relief areas and to prohibit (even if there is immediate clean up afterwards) animal waste in any other area. The owner is responsible for removing the animal waste and discarding it in a sturdy plastic bag in an outside trash receptacle.

SECTION IX: ABUSE OR NEGLECT

Any suspected or observed issues related to animal abuse or neglect will be reported to the Student Housing and Residential Life Office and may subject the student to disciplinary action as well. If an ESA accommodation is forfeited due to neglect/abuse of animal or failure to follow the guidelines, the Owner forfeits their right to be considered for another ESA accommodation. *Depending on the severity of the incident, the Owner may be referred to the Dean of Students and the animal may be removed from campus immediately without proceeding through the following steps.

SECTION X: VIOLATION OF AGREEMENT

If the Owner violates any part of this agreement, the following measures can be implemented. The Owner may be referred to the Student Conduct Board. A finding of non-compliance can result in conduct violation.

First Complaint:

The Owner will receive a warning from appropriate Housing personnel, the Owner will rectify the situation and correct the behavior.

Second Complaint:

Appropriate Housing personnel will conduct further assessment of the situation and the extent of its impact on the community, and the Owner will be referred to the Disability Student Services Coordinator. The Owner will rectify the situation and correct the behavior.

Third Complaint:

The Owner will be referred to the Dean of Students and possible removal of the animal from campus.

SECTION XI: REMOVAL OF THE EMOTIONAL SUPPORT ANIMAL

The University will base such determinations upon consideration of the behavior of the animal at issue, and not on speculation or fear about the harm or damage the animal may cause. Any removal of the animal will be done in consultation with DSS and may be appealed through the Dean of Students. The Owner will be afforded all rights of due process and appeal, as outlined in that process. UVI may require the individual to remove the ESA from University housing if:

1. The ESA poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others or causes substantial property damage to the property of others;
2. The ESAs presence results in a fundamental alteration of a University program;
3. The Owner does not comply with the Owner Responsibilities set forth above;
4. The ESA or its presence creates an unmanageable disturbance or interference with the University community, the ESA is disruptive to the living environment for others (e.g., barking or other loud noises, significant odor from cages or litter boxes, etc.), or the ESA causes damage to University facilities.

If such removal is necessary, the Owner may be given twenty-four (24) hours' notice or maybe asked to immediately remove the animal from University housing. If the animal is not removed by the designated timeline, the University will remove the animal to the nearest appropriate animal shelter. Should the ESA be removed from University housing for any reason, the Owner is expected to fulfill the housing obligations for the remainder of the housing contract.

SECTION XII: REPORTING CONCERNS AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

The University of the Virgin Islands (UVI) has adopted these procedures to facilitate the resolution of concerns and complaints by students with disabilities.

Reporting Concerns

A student with a concern related to a disability should first attempt to discuss the matter with the disability services provider at the UVI Campus where they are taking courses.

Albert A. Sheen Campus Disability Student Services Coordinator

340-692-4187
Location: EVC 721
Email: STXDSS@uvi.edu

Orville E. Kean Campus Disability Student Services Coordinator
340-693-1136
Location: Rouppe House, Room
Email: STT DSS@uvi.edu

INFORMAL RESOLUTION

If a student is not satisfied with the resolution proposed by the Disability Student Services Coordinator, they should submit in writing their concerns and any new information they wish to be considered to the Dean of Students for their respective campus:

Albert A. Sheen Campus, St. Croix
Dean of Students
EVC 802
340-692-4188

Orville E. Kean Campus, St. Thomas
Dean of Students
Rouppe House, Dean of Students Office
340-693-1120

FORMAL GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

A student may file a formal grievance with the Provost after attempting to resolve the concerns with the Disability Student Services Coordinator and the appropriate Dean of Students. The formal grievance should be filed as soon as possible with:

Provost Office
LaVern E. Ragster Administrative & Conference Center
Room 327,
Orville E. Kean Campus, St. Thomas
340-693-1200

Provost Office
Great House,
Albert A. Sheen Campus, St. Croix
340-692-4022

The grievance must be in writing and include the following:

1. The student's name, address, email address and phone number

2. Full description of the student's concern(s)
3. Description of the efforts made to resolve the concern through the Disability Student Services Coordinator and the Dean of Students
4. Statement of the remedy requested.

Upon receipt of the grievance, the Provost will promptly review the information contained within to make an assessment as to whether the grievance is in violation of the ESA Policy. This process should be completed 10 business days after receiving the written grievance. Upon completion of the fact-gathering process, the Provost will prepare and transmit a written reply to the student and the party(ies) against whom the grievance is directed.

All decisions made by the Provost are final.

SECTION XIII: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For additional information concerning Emotional Support Animals or other DSS policies and procedures, please contact:

Albert A. Sheen Campus Disability Student Services Coordinator
340-692-4187
Location: EVC 721
Email: STXDSS@uvi.edu

Orville E. Kean Campus Disability Student Services Coordinator
340-693-1136
Location: Rouppe House, Room
Email: STTDSS@uvi.edu

Local

Disability Rights Center St. Croix

Phone: 340-772-1200
TTY: 772-4641
Fax: 340-772-0609
www.drvi.org

Disability Rights Center, St. Thomas

Phone: 340-776-4303
Fax: 340-774-7844

Federal

Students may always contact the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development regarding allegations of disability discrimination:

- You can file a complaint by using their online form.
- You can call toll-free 1 (800) 669-9777.
- You can print out a form (903.1), complete it, and drop it or mail it to:

Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity
Department of Housing and Urban Development
Room 5204
451 Seventh St. SW
Washington, DC 20410-2000

SECTION XIII: FORMS and REFERENCES

Student Acknowledgement and Release of Information Consent Form

By my signature below, I verify that I have read, understand, and will abide by the requirements outlined in the Emotional Support Animal (ESA) Policy, Procedures & Guidelines in University Housing. I agree to provide the additional information required to complete my request for reasonable accommodation under the UVI Emotional Support Animal (ESA) Policy, Procedures & Guidelines in University Housing.

I have read and understand this policy and I agree to abide by the requirements applicable to Emotional Support Animals. I understand that if I fail to meet the requirements set forth in the Policy, UVI has the right to remove the ESA and I will be nonetheless required to fulfill my housing, academic, and all other obligations for the remainder of the housing contract.

I also give permission to Disability Student Services to disclose to others impacted by the presence of my ESA (e.g., Residence Life staff, potential and/or actual roommate(s)/suite(s)), that I will be living with an animal as an accommodation. I understand that this information will be shared with the intent of preparing for the presence of the ESA and/or resolving any potential issues associated with the presence of the ESA.

I further recognize that the presence of the ESA may be noticed by others visiting or residing in University Housing. I agree that the University staff may acknowledge the presence of the animal in the residence hall and explain that under certain circumstances, ESAs are permitted to live in the residence hall for persons with disabilities.

I further acknowledge that I am responsible for the financial cost associated with completing the Emotional Support Animal (ESA) Licensed Mental Health and Veterinarian Verification Forms.

UVI ID Number: _____ Date: _____

Student Name: (Please print): _____

Student Signature: _____

For official use by Disability Student Services

Received by:	Date:	Notes:

**University of the Virgin Islands Disability Student Services
Emotional Support Animal (ESA) Application for University Housing**

Section I: TO BE COMPLETED BY STUDENT

(Please Print)

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

Date of Birth: _____ UVI ID Number: _____

Phone#: _____ UVI Email: _____

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

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

Class Standing: _____ Freshman _____ Sophomore _____ Junior _____ Senior

If not currently enrolled, specify the expected start date:

_____ Fall _____ Spring _____ Summer Year: _____

If you are currently enrolled and living in University Housing, do you have an assigned roommate?

_____ Yes or _____ No

If yes, indicate the full name and UVI email address of roommate:

If currently enrolled and living in University Housing, do you have assigned suitemates?

_____ Yes or _____ No

If yes, indicate the full name and UVI email addresses of your suitemates:

PROPOSED ESA INFORMATION

A copy of the veterinary and vaccination records and a photograph 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: _____
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Please respond to the questions listed below as completely as possible. Feel free to submit a separate document if you would prefer, so long as all questions are answered

1. What is the disability for which you are seeking an ESA? What is the nature and severity of this impairment?

2. What identified symptoms and/or effects of your disability will be alleviated by this ESA being requested?

3. In what ways will the requested ESA alleviate these symptoms?

4. How is your requested ESA necessary for you to use and enjoy your living space?

5. How long have you owned your ESA?

6. Have you experienced a previous benefit from this ESA or a current benefit of having the ESA?

7. Understanding that an ESA is a housing-only accommodation, are you able to properly care for an ESA while engaged in typical college activities and/or residing in campus housing?

8. Is the ESA fully housebroken or litter trained? _____ Yes or _____ No

9. Is the ESA crate trained? _____ Yes or _____ No

10. Have you reviewed the ESA Guidelines for University Housing? _____ Yes or _____ No

11. Do you understand the rules and restrictions surrounding the presence of an animal in University Housing? _____ Yes or _____ No

12. Has the requested ESA ever injured another person or animal? _____ Yes or _____ No

If yes, describe in detail:

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: _____

This completed form can be emailed or mailed to the following address.

Albert A. Sheen Campus, St. Croix

University of the Virgin Islands Disability Services for Students

Evan Center Room 721

St. Croix, VI 00850

(340) 692-4187

Email: STXDSS@uvi.edu

Orville E. Kean Campus, St. Thomas

University of the Virgin Islands Disability Services for Students

#2 John Brewers Bay

St. Thomas, VI 00802

(340) 693-1136

Email: STTDSS@uvi.edu

Next Steps:

1. Have your veterinarian complete the verification form and submit a copy of the animal's medical and vaccination records to DSS.
2. Complete the first page of the ESA Mental Health Provider Verification Form, including the consent statement at the bottom so that your provider can share pertinent information relevant to your ESA request. Provide ALL pages of the Verification Form to your licensed mental health provider for completion.
3. Follow up with your licensed mental health provider and veterinarian to ensure that the completed Verification Forms have been submitted.
4. Check your UVI email or the email you provided for updates and follow all instructions within the given timeline(s).

SECTION II: TO BE COMPLETED BY LICENSED MENTAL HEALTH PROVIDER

**University of the Virgin Islands Disability Student Services
Emotional Support Animal (ESA) Licensed Mental Health Verification Form**

STUDENT INFORMATION (Please Print)

Name (Last, First, Middle): _____

Date: _____

Date of Birth: _____

UVI ID Number: _____

UVI Email: _____

Phone#: _____

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

STUDENT CONSENT FOR RELEASE OF INFORMATION

Student must sign this form before providing it to the licensed Mental Health provider.

By signing below, the student grants the University of the Virgin Islands Disabilities Student Services permission to contact the mental health provider for additional information.

I, _____ (printed name of student), hereby authorize DSS to obtain and/or release information from/to _____ in order to evaluate eligibility for an Emotional Support Animal. This consent will expire at the end of the semester.

_____ By selecting this box, I verify that the information provided is correct, that I am currently being treated or have been treated by this provider, and that I am not a relative of the provider.

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____

Witness Signature: _____

Date: _____

University of the Virgin Islands Disability Student Services
Emotional Support Animal (ESA) Licensed Mental Health Verification Form

Student's Name: _____

Proposed ESA Name: _____

Type of animal: _____ Age of animal: _____

The above-named student has indicated that you are the licensed mental health professional who has personally visited and seen them and who has suggested that having an Emotional Support Animal (ESA) in the residence hall would be helpful in alleviating one or more of the identified symptoms or effects of the student's disability. So that we may better evaluate the request for this accommodation, please answer the following questions.

Information about the Student's Disability

(A person with a disability is defined as someone who has "a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.")

When was your initial contact with the student, how many follow-ups has the student had, what is the frequency of appointments, and how long have you been working with student regarding this mental health disability?

What is the nature of the student's mental health disability (how is the student substantially limited?)

Does the student require ongoing treatment? If not, why not? Are you actively overseeing this student's care presently? Yes or No If no, please explain.

What diagnostic criteria, evaluation methods, procedures and formal testing were used to identify student's mental health disability?

What is the student's formal diagnosis including an ICD or DSM 5 or later?

Information about the proposed ESA

Is this an animal that you specifically prescribed part of treatment for the student, or is it a pet that you believe will have a beneficial effect for the student while in residence on campus?

What symptoms will be reduced by the student having the ESA?

Is there evidence that an ESA has helped this student in the past or currently?

Importance of ESA to Student’s Well-Being

In your opinion, how important is it for the student’s well-being that the ESA be in residence on campus and why?

What consequences, in terms of disability symptomology, may result if the accommodation is not approved?

Have you discussed the responsibilities associated with properly caring for an animal while engaged in typical college activities and residing in campus housing?

Do you believe those responsibilities might exacerbate the student's symptoms in any way?

Thank you for taking the time to complete this form. The student signed a Consent for Release of Information on page 1 of this form. If we need additional information, we may contact you at a later date.

Please provide your contact information below.

By checking this box, I am verifying that the named student information is correct, that the student is a patient that I have been treating, and that I am not a relative of the student.

Contact information:

Print Name: _____

Title: _____ License #: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Facsimile: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

This information will be reviewed and accommodation decisions made in accordance with federal mandates and the policies of the University of the Virgin Islands. For further information or

discussion, please contact Disability Support Services at 340-693-1136, Orville E. Kean Campus or 340-692-4187, Albert A. Sheen Campus.

This completed form can be emailed or mailed to the following address.

Albert A. Sheen Campus, St. Croix

University of the Virgin Islands
Counseling Services- Disabilities Student Services
RR1 Box 10000
Kingshill, VI 00850-9781
Email: STXDSS@uvi.edu

Orville E. Kean Campus, St. Thomas

University of the Virgin Islands
Counseling Services- Disabilities Student Services
#2 John Brewers Bay
St. Thomas, VI 00802
Email: STTDSS@uvi.edu

SECTION III: TO BE COMPLETED BY LICENSED VETERINARIAN

**University of the Virgin Islands Disability Student Services
Emotional Support Animal (ESA) Veterinarian Verification Form**

The student is applying for use of an emotional support animal (ESA) in the residence halls. An ESA is an animal that provides assistance in the form of emotional support which reduces or alleviates one or more identified symptoms or effects of a person's disability. Under the Fair Housing Act, a person may keep an assistance animal in their dwelling unit if there is an identifiable relationship between the disability and the assistance the animal provides.

This form needs to be completed by a veterinarian who has (1) an established patient relationship with the animal and (2) be an impartial individual who is not a family member of the student. Additional pages may be attached if needed.

Owner's Information:

Owner's Name: _____

Owner's Signature: _____

Emotional Support Animal Information:

ESA's name: _____ Type and Breed: _____

Sex: Male or Female _____ Spayed/Neutered: Yes or No _____

1. Is the animal housebroken or confined as such that being housebroken is not necessary?

Yes or No please explain: _____

2. Is the animal fully vaccinated? (Please attach vaccination record as appropriate)

Yes or No please explain: _____

3. Does this animal require any additional vaccinations during the academic year (August to May)?

Yes or No If yes, please indicate which vaccines and the date needed.

4. Is this animal free from internal parasites?

Yes or No. please explain: _____

Is the animal on flea and tick control? Yes or No If no please explain:

5. Is the animal in overall good health?

Yes or No. please explain: _____

6. Does the animal exhibit behaviors that could unduly interfere with the enjoyment of campus living facilities by roommates, suitemates, and/or members of the University community?

Yes or No. please explain: _____

7. The average single-sized room is approximately 99 square feet and the double-sized room is approximately 173 square feet. This space may be occupied with or without a roommate depending on the student's housing assignment. Based on your assessment of this animal and owner, do you feel that the animal can appropriately reside in the residence hall without detriment to the animal's health?

Yes or No, please explain: _____

8. Can the ESA withstand room temperatures 85 degrees and above?

Yes or No. please explain: _____

Please submit a copy of the ESA's medical and vaccination records with this form.

Veterinarian's Signature: _____ Date: _____

License #: _____

Veterinarian's Name and/or Clinic Information: _____

Address: City, State, Zip: _____

Phone number and Fax: _____

*The information contained in this form is essential for the health and safety of the ESA, other animals on campus and in the community, and anyone who may come into contact with the ESA.

The completed form should be uploaded by the student to the Health Hub Portal through www.mycampus.uvi.edu.

For more information, contact the following individuals.

Albert A. Sheen Campus

Telephone: 340-692-4187

Email: STXDSS@uvi.edu

Orville E. Kean Campus

Telephone: 340-693-1136

Email: STTDSS@uvi.edu

**University of the Virgin Islands Disability Student Services
Emotional Support Animal Application**

Emotional Support Animal Information

Name of the ESA: _____ Type of Animal: _____

Animal Breed: _____ Age of Animal: _____

Veterinarian Information

Veterinarian Name: _____

Veterinarian Phone: _____

Alternate/Emergency Caretaker Information

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email: _____

Explain the emergency housing/boarding & transportation arrangements for the ESA on island in instances of a medical emergency or incarceration.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please submit a current photo of the animal to: STTDSS@uvi.edu on the Orville E. Kean Campus and STXDSS@uvi.edu on the Albert A. Sheen Campus. If your ESA is a dog, please submit a photo of the dog's license as well if you have one.

**University of the Virgin Islands Disabilities Student Services
Emotional Support Animal (ESA) Roommate/Suitemate Agreement**

ROOMMATES/SUITEMATES: Please read, complete, sign and return this agreement to the Disability Student Services Coordinator. If you have questions or concerns about an ESA residing in your residence, please contact the Disability Student Services Office.

ESA Owner's Name:
ESA Species:
ESA Name:

Your (Roommate/Suite Mate) Name:
You (Roommate/ Suite Mate) Email:
Residence Hall & Room #:

Please initial to indicate that you understand the following.

Initial here:	My roommate/suitemate has discussed with me about having an ESA move into our shared residence.
Initial here:	I understand that the ESA owner is 100% responsible for this animal and that I am under no obligation to provide care in any form for this animal.
Initial here:	I understand that it is a violation of the ESA Disability Policy for any roommate or suitemate to care for an ESA for an extended period of time, including overnight. A roommate or suitemate can care for an animal in an emergency situation with permission from Student Life & Residential Housing Office until the emergency housing/boarding & transportation arrangements are made for the ESA.
Initial here:	If the owner will be away from campus overnight, the owner is responsible for transporting the ESA off campus for the duration of their absence.
Initial here:	As per university guidelines, unless explicitly arranged by the Disability Student Services, the ESA is only permitted in the owner's bedroom and may not enter into other student's bedrooms or common areas (except as necessary to enter or exit the building).

Initial here:	To the best of your knowledge, I am not aware of any medical condition that may be impacted by the ESA.
Initial here:	I understand that I have rights as a co-resident. Please contact DSS if you feel your rights have been infringed upon by the presence of an animal in your residence.

_____ I agree to have the above-named ESA, owned by the above-named roommate, live in our shared residence for the duration of one semester. I understand that I may change my mind at any time. I understand that I will be asked to complete this form each semester that I live with this or any ESA owner and ESA.

_____ I do not agree to have the above-named ESA, owned by the above-named roommate, live in my residence. I understand that this ESA owner should not have this or any ESA living in my residence without my agreement.

Print Name

Signature

ID Number

Date

University of the Virgin Islands Disabilities Student Services
Emotional Support Animal (ESA) Owner's Responsibilities Contract

University of the Virgin Islands will not require a student with a disability to pay a fee or surcharge for an approved ESA. UVI is not responsible for loss of, injury to, or death of the animal. UVI 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 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 must fully cooperate with University personnel about 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 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. All animal waste must be disposed of in a sturdy plastic bag and tied before placing it in a waste receptacle.

_____ Cat litter boxes should be scooped daily and at no time should an animal container or litter box be cleaned inside the residential halls.

_____ Dogs who serve as an ESA must be housebroken. The owner must be in full control of the ESA when transporting the animal for elimination. The ESA must have a harness, leash, tether, or be transported in an appropriate enclosure whenever it is outside of the resident room of where it is housed. The ESA may be excluded from University campus if it behaves in an unacceptable way and the Owner does not or is unable to control the ESA, (uncontrollable barking, jumping on other people, or running away from the handler are examples of unacceptable behaviors for an ESA).

_____ The Owner shall notify the Student Housing and Residential Life Office and DSS if the ESA escapes. The Owner hereby holds the University of the Virgin Islands (UVI) blameless in the event the ESA goes missing. UVI staff is not responsible for the retrieval of the ESA in the event the ESA escapes or becomes lost.

_____ If an animal is found running at large, the animal is subject to capture and confinement and immediate removal from University housing.

_____ 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 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 ESA should not have access to another person's belongings or private space without the roommate's permission.

_____ Owner is responsible for instructing others on appropriate interactions with the ESA and setting clear expectations.

_____ UVI 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.

_____ A roommate and suitemates are not required to provide care or food for any ESA unless there is an emergency, and you receive permission to care temporarily for the animal from the Office of Student Housing and Residential Life. If this occurs, it is a direct violation of the ESA Policy.

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

_____ 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. If the Owner is unable to take the animal with them as a result of hospitalization, incarceration, or some other emergency, the Owner is required to have made prior arrangements for the animal to be transported, housed, or boarded off-campus.

_____ 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. Excessive noises

and behaviors such as barking and whining, chewing, scratching and aggression will not be permitted.

_____ The Owner is responsible for the actions of the ESA, including, but not limited to, any bodily injury or property damage. The Owner must immediately report damage or injury to the Student Housing and Residential Life Office.

_____ The University reserves the right to determine which housing facilities are appropriate for the owner and animal.

_____ UVI shall have the right to bill the account of the Owner for unmet obligations arising for damage or extra cleaning caused by an ESA.

_____ 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.

_____ ESA accommodation requests are renewed each year; renewals must include updated veterinary documentation for the ESA and updated documentation from a mental health provider.

_____ 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 suitemates. 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 Owner is permitted only one ESA.

_____ The ESA is not permitted in University housing until written approval has been provided by DSS. Any student found to have an animal on campus prior to it being approved as an ESA will be required to remove the animal from campus immediately.

References

Southern Adventist University Emotional Support Animal Webpage

The University of Rhode Island Emotional Support Animal Application

University of Louisville Policy Use of Service and Emotional Support Animals on Campus

University of New Haven Policy on Emotional Support Animals in University Housing Students Policy

SUNY Potsdam Emotional Support Animal Process Overview