

# Service and Assistance Animal Policy

Illinois College respects the needs of all members of the campus community and recognizes that service animals and emotional support animals can play an important role in facilitating the independence of individuals with certain types of disabilities. These animals work, provide assistance or perform tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability, or provide emotional support that alleviates the symptoms or effects of a person's disability. In order to maintain a safe, healthful and hazard-free environment, this policy outlines the responsibilities of students and the Illinois College administration in evaluating and approving requests by students for services animals and emotional support animals. All local, state and federal ordinances, laws and regulations shall be applicable to the administration of this policy, including but not limited to those that pertain to the treatment and care of animals.

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) a "service animal" is defined as "any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability ... The work or task performed by a service animal must be directly related to the individual's disability ..." (28 C.F.R. Part 35.104). Under limited circumstances, a miniature horse can be used in place of a trained dog. Service animals are working animals and are not considered "pets." The ADA states that "dogs whose sole function is to provide comfort or emotional support do not qualify as service animals under ADA." Only trained service animals are allowed to accompany students into academic buildings or other non-residential facilities.

Under the Fair Housing Act (FHA), individuals with a disability may be entitled to keep an "an emotional support animal (ESA)" as a reasonable accommodation in housing facilities provided the ESA is necessary to afford the person with a disability an equal opportunity to use the housing unit or participate in the housing service if there is an identifiable relationship or nexus between the individual's disability and the treatment the animal provides (75 Fed. Reg. 63834.63835). For animals to be designated as "emotional support animals" students are required to demonstrate that their animal is a reasonable accommodation for an emotional or mental health disability (defined as an impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities). Demonstrating this need requires documentation from a treating medical or mental health provider, not related to the

student and one who has an established relationship with the student to verify how the ESA is part of a **prescribed treatment plan** for the disabling condition. This documentation must be submitted with a request to Disability Resources in the Center for Academic Excellence, prior to bringing the animal to campus. The process to acquire an ESA may take up to 60 days from request.

For the full and most current version of this policy please contact [Disability Resources](#).