

# Hendrix College - Assistance Animal Policy

[Including Service, Therapy, and Emotional Support Animals]

Hendrix College recognizes the importance of assistance animals for individuals with disabilities and has established the following policy regarding Assistance Animals on campus. Assistance Animals are Service Animals (including those in training), emotional support animals, and therapy animals. This policy ensures that students with disabilities, for whom the use of assistance animals is a reasonable accommodation, receive the benefit of the work or task performed by such animals.

Hendrix is committed to allowing the use of an Assistance Animal on campus to facilitate full-participation and equal access to the College's programs and activities for students with disabilities. However, the College also recognizes that such animals may present health, safety, security, and programmatic issues for other community members. The College reserves the right to enforce all relevant rules through the student conduct code and applicable laws. The College also reserves the right to revoke permission granted for the campus presence of any Assistance Animal whose owner fails to follow the requirements set forth in this policy. Finally, the College reserves the right to change this policy as necessary.

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## APPLICATION PROCESS

Students may apply for an Assistance Animal through the **Office of Academic Success (OAS)**.

Assistance Animals may not reside in College housing without expressed approval from College officials. Approval requests are processed in two phases:

### PHASE 1:

Submit a completed [Assistance Animal Request Form](#), including the following documents:

1. **Medical Verification Form:** This form must be completed by a licensed healthcare provider who is not affiliated with Hendrix College.
2. **Letter from Medical Provider:** This letter should be written by the same provider who completes the Medical Verification Form, and it should address each of the following items:
  - a. Diagnosis
  - b. Length of time under their care
  - c. The type of animal they recommend and why
  - d. Describe specifically how this animal will support their patient at Hendrix.
  - e. Describe their patient's experience and/or capability to care for an animal

On a monthly basis, completed Phase 1 submittals will be reviewed by the Assistance Animal Committee (AAC). If the AAC grants a conditional approval, applicants will be advised to proceed to Phase 2 below.

### PHASE 2:

Submit a completed **Approved Animal Registration Form**, including the following documents:

- Photograph of animal
- For cats and dogs:
  - Veterinary Immunization Records, to include rabies
  - Proof of licensing in Faulkner County

### Notes:

- [Unapproved animals are considered pets, which are not allowed in campus housing](#).
- The College may approve your request to have an ESA (emotional support animal), but not approve the specific animal you hoped to bring to campus. For example, reptiles, rodents, and monkeys may be rejected because of health and safety concerns, as they can carry zoonotic diseases. Zoonotic diseases pose a threat to the general welfare of residents in the communal living environment.
- Approved Animals (**specifically cats and dogs**) must be at least one year of age, to ensure reasonable independence and maturity.
- The committee recommends a minimum of 8 weeks/2 months of ownership of the animal prior to bringing it to campus, to ensure adequate compatibility and socialization.
- Only Service Animals have access to non-residential, College-owned facilities (except restricted areas). Emotional Support and Therapy Animals are restricted to housing only.

## **TIMELINE FOR APPLICATIONS AND DECISIONS**

The Assistance Animal Committee meets monthly to review requests, and decisions will be sent by the last day of the month. **Current student applications will not be reviewed during the months of August, December, January, or May.**

Each month, the Assistance Animal Committee will review documentation. Students who are approved will be contacted by Office of Advising & Academic Success staff, who will arrange a meeting to review the policy, explain protocols and procedures, and answer any questions.

Upon approval of an Assistance Animal, the student's roommate(s) or suitemate(s) will have the choice of rooming with the student with the assistance animal or being moved to another location. In addition, residential building staff will be notified.

## COMMUNITY CONCERNS & EXPECTATIONS

While the need for an Assistance Animal is tied to an individual, the safety and well-being of the Hendrix College community must also be considered.

### Conflicting Health Conditions

Residence Life personnel will make a reasonable effort to notify students in the residence building that an Assistance Animal will be moving into.

Students with medical condition(s) that are affected by animals (e.g., respiratory diseases, asthma, severe allergies) are asked to contact Residence Life if they have a health or safety related concern about exposure to an Assistance Animal in residential facilities. These students are also asked to contact the Office of Academic Success if they have a health or safety related concern about exposure to an Assistance Animal in non-residential facilities on campus. The College is prepared to reasonably accommodate those with medical conditions that impact their ability to live, work, or study in proximity to Assistance Animals.

The Assistance Animal Committee – in collaboration with Residence Life – will resolve conflicts arising from the presence of Assistance Animals in a timely manner, considering everyone's needs. If an agreement between conflicting parties cannot be reached, the Vice President of Human Resources will make a final decision that is not subject to appeal.

### Requirements for Faculty, Staff, Students, and Other Members of the College Community

Members of the College community are required to abide by the following practices:

1. Service Animals must be allowed to accompany their owners at all times and in all places on campus, except where animals are specifically prohibited.
2. Assistance Animals are not to be touched or petted unless invited to do so by its owner.
3. Assistance Animals are not to be fed without permission from the owner.
4. Assistance Animals are not to be deliberately startled.
5. Assistance Animals are not to be separated from their owners.
6. Assistance Animals are related to their owners' personal health; do not inquire about an owner's health status or specific services provided by the assistance animal.

Service Animals will be given access to Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-appropriate buildings/rooms **unless**:

1. The animal is out of control and its handler does not take effective action to control it;
2. The animal is not housebroken (i.e., trained so that, absent illness or accident, the animal controls its waste elimination); or
3. The animal poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others, and that threat cannot be eliminated or reduced by a reasonable modification to other policies, practices and procedures.

## OWNER RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The owner is responsible for assuring that the Approved Animal does not unduly interfere with the routine activities of the College or cause difficulties for other members of the College community. The owner and approved animal are both responsible for abiding by the conduct policies outlined in the Student Handbook. The owner may be charged with a violation of student conduct for inappropriate behavior of an approved animal.
2. **Service Animals** may travel freely with their owner throughout College facilities. Therapy or emotional support animals must be contained within the approved student's privately assigned residential area (room, suite, and apartment) at all times, except when transported outside the private residential area in an animal carrier or controlled by leash or harness. When outside the residence, the owner of an assistance animal shall carry proof that the animal is an approved animal.
3. Maintenance checks will occur in student residences per the request of the student or as part of routine maintenance. Standard procedure for gaining access to student residences is as follows:
  - Facilities will knock on door and/or ring doorbell
  - If no response after 1 minute, Facilities will open the door slightly and announce themselves
  - If an animal is loose in the residence, Facilities will notify the Office of Academic Success. OAS staff will attempt to contact the student by phone. Please note that **facilities will not work in a residence with an uncrated animal.**
  - **Fines and/or sanctions may apply to the owner of the uncrated animal.**
4. The owner is responsible for posting an official animal sign on all external doors of their campus residence. These signs are obtained from the Office of Academic Success and must be posted continuously as long as the animal is in residence on campus.
5. The owner is financially responsible for the actions of the Approved Animal including bodily injury, cleaning expenses, or property damage. The owner's responsibility covers, but is not limited to, the replacement of furniture, carpet, window, wall covering, etc. **Carpet replacement expenses alone can be several thousand dollars; final restitution costs will vary depending upon the original condition of the residence and other factors.** The owner is expected to cover these costs at the time of repair and/or move-out. **In sum, the owner is personally and financially responsible for the actions of an assistance animal.**
6. In the event two or more roommates have an assistance animal, there is an expectation that the animals will co-exist harmoniously. Any conflicts between the animals should be worked out between the residents. **If there is animal-related damage to your residential unit, then the College's policy on room damage charges will apply.** If one resident takes responsibility for damages in a common area, then that resident will be charged. **If no individual resident claims responsibility for the damage, any fines and/or repair fees will be split evenly between the residents with animals.**
7. The owner must notify the Academic Success Office in writing if the Assistance Animal is no longer needed or is no longer in residence. **To replace an approved animal, the owner must file a new Request for an Assistance Animal.**

8. The owner's residence may be inspected for fleas, ticks or other pests twice a semester or as needed. Residence Life or Facilities will schedule the inspection. If fleas, ticks or other pests are detected through inspection, the residence will be treated using approved fumigation methods by a College approved pest control service. The owner will be billed for the expense of any pest treatment beyond standard pest management in the residential facilities.
9. For students in the Residence Halls and/or Apartment shares, all roommates or suitemates of the owner must sign an agreement allowing the approved animal to be in residence with them. In the event that one or more roommates or suitemates do not approve, either the owner and animal or the non-approving roommates or suitemates, as determined by Residence Life, may be moved to a different location.
10. Approved Animals may not be left overnight in College Housing to be cared for by another student. Animals must leave campus if the owner leaves campus for a prolonged period, including overnight. **For a partial list of animal boarding businesses, check the last page of this document.**
11. Housing has the ability to relocate the owner and approved animal as necessary according to current contractual agreements.
12. The owner undertakes to comply with the [Guidelines for Maintaining an Approved Animal at Hendrix College](#) as set forth in this policy.
13. The owner agrees to continue to abide by all other College policies. Any violation of the above rules may result in immediate removal of the animal from the College and may be reviewed through the Student Conduct Process and the owner will be afforded all rights of due process and appeal as outlined in that process. Should the approved animal be removed from the College premises for any reason, the owner is expected to fulfill his/her housing obligations for the remainder of the housing contract.

## **RESTRICTIONS**

### **Removal of Approved Animal**

The College may exclude/remove an approved animal in any of the following circumstances:

1. The animal poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others
2. The animal's presence results in a fundamental alteration of the College's program
3. The owner does not comply with Owner's Responsibilities as outlined in this policy
4. The animal or its presence creates a significant disturbance or interference within the Hendrix community.

### **Damage**

Owners of Approved Animals are solely responsible for any damage to persons or college property caused by their animals.

### **Areas off limits to Service Animals**

The College may prohibit the use of Service Animals in certain locations because of health and safety restrictions (e.g. where the animals may be in danger, or where their use may compromise the integrity of research). Restricted areas may include, but are not limited to: custodial closets, boiler rooms, facility equipment rooms, research laboratories, classrooms with research/demonstration animals, areas where protective clothing is necessary, wood and metal shops, swimming pools, rooms with heavy machinery, and areas outlined in state law as being inaccessible to animals.

Exceptions to restricted areas may be granted on a case-by-case basis by contacting OAS and the appropriate department representative; the person directing the restricted area has the final decision.

## GUIDELINES FOR APPROVED ANIMAL MAINTENANCE

The following guidelines apply to all approved animals and their owners, unless the nature of the documented disability of the owner precludes adherence to these guidelines, and permission for a variance from the guidelines has been granted.

### Care and Supervision:

The student who received approval for the animal is responsible for the animal's care and supervision at all times. The person is required to maintain control of the animal at all times. This includes the cleanup of the animal's waste in accordance with College policy. Outdoor solid animal waste must be picked up immediately and disposed of in outside trash dumpsters. Indoor animal waste, such as cat litter, must be placed in a sturdy plastic bag and securely tied up before being disposed of in outside trash dumpsters. Litter boxes should be placed on mats so that waste is not tracked onto carpeted surfaces. Hendrix Housekeeping is not responsible for disposing of animal waste.

### Animal Health and Well-being

1. **Identification:** All approved animals are required to obtain and wear Hendrix identification at all times. If wearing the identification is not feasible for the animal, then the identification will be affixed to the animal's carrier and or containment apparatus.
2. **Vaccination:** In accordance with local ordinances and regulations, the animal must be immunized against diseases common to that type of animal. Dogs and cats must have current vaccination against rabies and wear a vaccination tag. Local licensing requirements must be followed.
3. **Health:** Animals housed in college housing must have an annual clean bill of health from a licensed veterinarian. Documentation can be a vaccination certificate for the animal or a veterinarian's statement regarding the animal's health. The College has authority to direct that the animal receive veterinary attention. (Local licensing law is followed.)
4. **Licensing:** The College reserves the right to request documentation showing that the animal has been licensed if applicable. **All applicants should contact Faulkner County animal control office at 501.450.6160, to insure compliance with local ordinances.**
5. **Assistance Animals and Conduct Policy violations:** Students in violation of the controlled substance, alcohol, or any other Hendrix conduct policy that may put the animal at risk, may have their Assistance Animal approval revoked. Students can apply for reinstatement of the Assistance Animal. An interim period of one semester or longer may be required between the violation and the reinstatement of the Assistance Animal.
6. **Leash:** The animal must be on a leash or in a carrier anytime it is outside the owner's private residential facility, including residential common areas. The only exception to this rule would be if the leash would inhibit the animal's ability to be of service. If the owner is not able to put the animal on a leash, then it should be in a carrier when leaving the private residential facility of the owner. The owner is required to maintain control of the animal at all times. The city of Conway has a leash law.
7. **Spaying, neutering, pregnant Assistance Animals:** The Assistance Animal committee strongly endorses spaying or neutering for all assistance animals. No offspring of assistance animals will be permitted to reside in campus housing.

8. **Containment of assistance animal during owner temporary absence:** Any assistance animal left in a residential facility while the owner is away temporarily from that facility for any length of time must be housed in a crate or other appropriate containment apparatus. Roommates or suitemates cannot be left in charge of assistance animals to avoid this requirement, nor can animals be moved to another room on campus, if the owner is not present. The owner of the animal retains responsibility for the animal at all times. If the student needs assistance locating a local kennel, they can contact the Office of Advising & Academic Success staff at [AssistanceAnimals@hendrix.edu](mailto:AssistanceAnimals@hendrix.edu).
9. **Containment of assistance animal when College Officials are present:** If the owner is present in the residential facility and a College official comes to that facility on College-related business, then the assistance animal must be placed in the containment apparatus for the duration of the time the College official is present. If the owner needs a small amount of time to contain the animal before College officials enter the facility, then the owner should open the door enough to prohibit the animal from escaping out of the door to request a small amount of time to contain the animal. If the owner's disability prohibits the student from placing the animal in a containment apparatus, then that animal should be leashed and sitting beside the owner while College Officials are present.
10. **Cleaning of assistance animals:** Animals may not be washed in College residence halls. Here is a [partial list of grooming businesses](#) (p. 10).
11. **Other Conditions:** The Office of Academic Success may place other reasonable conditions or restrictions on the animals depending on the nature and characteristics of the animal.

## **LOCAL VETERINARIANS, BOARDING, AND GROOMING BUSINESSES**

### **Animal Care Veterinary Center**

2215 Washington Ave.  
501.329.2064

### **Chestnut Animal Clinic**

612 Chestnut St.  
501.327.4413

### **Conway Animal Clinic**

1320 E. Oak St.  
501.327.4416

### **Hartman Animal Hospital**

385 Hogan Ln.  
501.327.9200

### **Hounds Hideaway (boarding, grooming)**

1238 McNutt Rd.  
501.358.6598

### **Out West Veterinary Center and Urgent Care**

3725 College Ave.  
501.585.7778

### **PetSmart (grooming, supplies)**

650 Elsinger Blvd. (Conway Commons)  
501.548.6083

### **St. Francis Veterinary Clinic**

3180 Dave Ward Dr.  
501.327.9200

### **Tucker Creek Vet**

2725 College Ave.  
501.329.2940

## **ASSISTANCE ANIMAL COMMITTEE**

The Assistance Animal Committee is comprised of representatives from the Office of Advising & Academic Success and the Division of Student Affairs, with consultation from Residential Life.

## DEFINITIONS

### Approved Animal

An **Approved Animal** is an Assistance Animal that has been granted as a reasonable accommodation under this policy.

### Assistance Animals

For ease in interpreting this document, service, therapy, and emotional support animals will be collectively labeled as **Assistance Animals**.

### Disability

In order to qualify for a reasonable accommodation under the [Americans with Disabilities Act](#) (ADA), the student must meet the statutory definition of having a **disability**, defined as a physical or mental condition or impairment that is medically recognizable, and diagnosable, and that substantially limits one or more of a person's major life activities. These limitations may include caring for oneself, 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 in how s/he can perform that activity when compared to the average person.

### Emotional Support Animal

An **Emotional Support Animal (ESA)**, often referred to as a *companion animal*, is an animal whose sole responsibility is to provide calming influence, affection, stability or security. An ESA should demonstrate a good temperament and reliable, predictable behavior. Unlike a Service Animal, an Emotional Support Animal does not assist with daily activities, nor does it always accompany a person with a disability. An ESA may, however, be incorporated in a treatment process to assist in alleviating the symptoms of that individual's disability. This treatment occurs within the person's residence.

Emotional Support Animals are not Service Animals and will not necessarily qualify as a reasonable accommodation under ADA. *If* they meet the qualifications as a reasonable accommodation, then such animals can only be permitted in housing and not in public indoor areas on campus. Generally, the presence of one ESA will be approved for a student, in order to fulfill the intent of the FHA requirements in providing support to the student with a mental health disability.

Requests for emotional support animals will only be reviewed under this policy for college housing. These animals will not be allowed in other campus facilities. Requests that do not carry evidence of the necessity of the animal will be denied.

### Fair Housing Act

The [Fair Housing Act](#) prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in all housing transactions. The Act defines persons with a disability to mean those individuals with **mental or physical impairments** that substantially limit one or more **major life activities**.

- **Mental or physical impairment** may include conditions such as blindness, hearing impairment, mobility impairment, HIV infection, alcoholism, drug addiction, chronic fatigue, learning disability, head injury, and mental illness.
- **Major life activity** may include seeing, hearing, walking, breathing, performing manual tasks, caring for one's self, learning, speaking, or working. The Fair Housing Act also protects persons who have a record of such an impairment, or are regarded as having such an impairment.

## Medical Provider

In the context of Assistance Animal Approval, **Medical Providers** must be certified and/or accredited in one of the following categories:

- A. M.D.
- B. Ph.D.
- C. Nurse Practitioner
- D. Licensed Counselor or Therapist

## Owner

The **owner** is the student or other covered person who has requested the accommodation and received approval to bring the Approved Animal on campus.

## Service Animal

(adapted from <https://www.ada.gov/topics/service-animals/>)

**Service Animals** are defined as dogs that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities. Examples of such work or tasks include (but are not limited to):

- Guiding individuals with impaired vision
- Alerting individuals who are hearing impaired to intruders or sound
- Pulling a wheelchair
- Alerting and protecting a person who is having a seizure
- Reminding a person with mental illness to take prescribed medications
- Calming a person with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) during an anxiety attack

Service Animals are working animals, not pets. The work or task a dog has been trained to provide must be directly related to the person's disability. Dogs whose sole function is to provide comfort or emotional support do not qualify as service animals under the ADA.

## Therapy Animal

A **Therapy Animal** may soothe anxiety in some individuals but does not assist an individual with a disability in activities of daily living. Therapy animals are not service animals and will not necessarily qualify as a reasonable accommodation under ADA. If they meet the qualifications as a reasonable accommodation, then *such animals can only be permitted in housing* and not in public indoor areas on campus.

## Verification of Disability and Need for a Service Animal

A student seeking approval for a Service Animal must provide **verification** to the Office of Academic Success that s/he has a qualifying disability and that the Service Animal is needed for the use and enjoyment of the College facilities and services (outside of College housing). The student's Medical Provider (MP) must submit a signed letter on professional letterhead expressing the following:

1. The MP's diagnosis of the person's condition.
2. The MP's opinion that the condition affects a major life activity.
3. The MP's professional opinion that the Service Animal is used to help with the person's daily living activities and is necessary to effectively utilize college facilities and services.
4. The provider's description of what service(s) the animal will specifically provide.
5. Any additional rationale or statement the College may reasonably need to understand the basis for the professional opinion.