

Service and Support Animal Policy

Nova Southeastern University (NSU) Service and Support Animal Policy follows the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), as well as the Fair Housing Act and Section 504 regulations.

Students who require the use of a service animal or a support animal must follow all university guidelines as outlined in Nova Southeastern University's Service and Support Animal Policy, www.nova.edu/disabilityservices.

All questions related to service animals or support animals on NSU campus locations should be directed to the Office of Student Disability Services via email: disabilityservices@nova.edu or by phone: 954-262-7185.

Service Animals:

Nova Southeastern University (NSU) will permit the use of trained service animals by individuals with documented disabilities in all public areas of the university where members of the public, participants in services, programs or activities, or invitees, as relevant, are allowed to go.

A service animal is defined by state and federal law as an animal that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability. The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the individual's disability.

In addition to provisions for service dogs, revised ADA regulations have new, separate provisions for miniature horses that have been specially trained to assist individuals with documented disabilities such as but not limited to, visual impairments, hearing impairments, or mobility impairments by performing specific tasks. Individuals who utilize a miniature horse as a service animal should coordinate with the Office of Student Disability Services for guidance.

Examples of work or tasks a service animal has been trained to perform may include but are not limited to, assisting individuals who are blind or have low vision with navigation and other tasks, alerting individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to the presence of people or sounds, providing non-violent protection or rescue work, pulling a wheelchair, assisting an individual during a seizure, alerting individuals to

the presence of allergens, retrieving items such as medicine or the telephone, providing physical support and assistance with balance and stability to individuals with mobility disabilities, and helping persons with psychiatric and neurological disabilities by preventing or interrupting impulsive or destructive behaviors.

NSU recommends that the service animal wear an identification symbol which is commonly recognized as indicating a service animal at work. A service animal shall have a harness, leash, or other tethers unless either the handler is unable to use a harness, leash, or other tethers because of a disability or the use of a harness, leash, or other tethers would interfere with the service animal's safe, effective performance of work or tasks, in which case the service animal must be otherwise under the handler's control (e.g., voice control, signals, or other effective means). The service animal shall always be under the control of the handler. NSU is not responsible for the care or supervision of a service animal. NSU may ask an individual with a documented disability to remove a service animal from any campus location if the animal's behavior poses a direct threat to the health and safety of others, the handler does not take effective action to control it, or if the service animal is not housebroken. However, if Nova Southeastern University (NSU) excludes a service animal for these reasons, it will allow the individual with a disability the opportunity to participate in the service, program, or activity without having the service animal present.

When it is not obvious what tasks the service animal has been trained to perform, NSU employees are only permitted to ask two questions:

- Is the service animal required because of a disability?
- What work or task is the service animal trained to perform?

NSU personnel should refrain from making these inquiries if it is readily apparent that an animal is trained to do work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability (e.g., the dog is observed guiding an individual who is blind or has low vision, pulling a person's wheelchair, or providing assistance with stability or balance to an individual with an observable mobility disability).

With respect to an individual with a service animal, NSU employees are not permitted to ask about the nature or extent of a person's disability, nor are employees allowed to ask for documentation of either the disability or the need for the service animal, such as proof that the animal has been certified, trained, or licensed as a service animal.

NSU will not ask or require an individual with a disability to pay a surcharge, even if people accompanied by pets are required to pay fees, or to comply with other requirements generally not applicable to people without pets. If NSU normally charges individuals for damages they cause, an individual with a disability may be charged for damage caused by his or her service animal.

Students who are not living on campus and are using a service animal solely to access the campus environment are encouraged to register with the Office of Student Disability Services but are not required to do so. Students who need a service animal in campus housing must register with the Office of Student Disability Services and provide the necessary documentation that the service animal meets all requirements for the presence of animals in public places (vaccinations, licensure, ID tags, etc.) mandated by state or local ordinances and must have an annual clean bill of health from a licensed veterinarian. Students can contact the Office of Student Disability Services via email: disabilityservices@nova.edu or by phone: 954-262-7185.

Animals whose sole function is to provide emotional support, well-being, comfort, or companionship do not qualify as a trained service animal. Please refer to the Support Animal section below for more information.

Support Animals

Nova Southeastern University (NSU) recognizes the importance of allowing support animals to provide individuals with documented disabilities an equal opportunity to use and enjoy university housing.

A support animal does not necessarily need to be trained and is not limited to any specific type of animal. A support animal is restricted to the assigned campus residence of the individual and may not accompany the individual to other areas of the university without permission.

An emotional support animal (ESA) or comfort animal is a support animal that provides emotional support that alleviates one or more identified symptoms or effects of an individual's existing disability. Unlike a trained service animal, a support animal not necessarily need to be trained and is not limited to any specific type of animal. A support animal is not a pet or a service animal.

NSU may require students who are seeking a reasonable accommodation for a support animal to provide reliable documentation from a qualified third party indicating that the student has a disability and that the animal provides emotional support that alleviates one or more of the identified symptoms or effects of an existing disability. A reliable third party includes, but is not limited to, a physician, psychiatrist, social worker, or other mental health professional.

NSU is not responsible for the care or supervision of a support animal. NSU may deny an individual's request to live with and use a support animal if: (1) the specific support animal in question poses a direct threat to the health and safety of others that cannot be reduced or eliminated by another reasonable accommodation; or (2) the specific support animal in question would cause substantial physical damage to the property of others that cannot be reduced or eliminated by a reasonable accommodation.

At NSU, approved support animals must remain confined to the assigned campus residence of the individual except for trips outside to visit relief areas. Since a support animal is not a trained service animal, a support animal may not be taken into any other public area of any campus location, including, not limited to, the university center, dining areas, lab, classrooms, and administrative buildings.

An individual with a disability may be charged for damages caused by the support animal, absent reasonable wear and tear, to the same extent that NSU charges other individuals for damages.

Additionally, approved support animals may not be brought to campus events, even if those events are being held outdoors. Students who require the use of A support animal must register with the Office of Student Disability Services. Please contact the office via email: disabilityservices@nova.edu or by phone: 954-262-7185 for more information on requesting accommodations.