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Welcome to East Stroudsburg University and The Office of Accessible Services Individualized for Students (OASIS)

In order to help you begin your registration with OASIS and the accommodation process, this packet contains:

1. **Statement on Use of Emotional Support Animals (ESAs) in ESU's On-Campus Housing:** Explains the rules and regulations guiding the use of assistance animals in on-campus dwellings including an outline of student's responsibilities.
2. **Application Process and Documentation Requirements:** Explains the steps required to apply for accommodations and the type of information needed in order for an informed decision to be made about the granting of accommodations.
3. **This is a process that contains several steps.** Please read this entire document. After you have read and understand the requirements, you must [apply for accommodations using our online application](#). ESA's are considered a housing accommodation. Once you check the box that states that you are applying for a housing accommodation, you will see the option for Emotional Support Animal.

Please contact OASIS if you have any questions regarding the accommodation process. We are looking forward to working with you!

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Emotional Support Animal Statement

I. Introduction

Emotional support animals (ESAs) alleviate one or more identified symptoms or effects of a person's disabilities. For the purposes of this document, assistance, comfort and therapeutic companion animals will be referred to as emotional support animals. This document does not address service animals, which are defined by the ADA 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 disorder.

The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the Fair Housing Act (FHA) regulations provide that emotional support animals be considered a reasonable accommodation in campus housing. Since HUD/Fair Housing regulations only apply to housing facilities, the animals may not be allowed in other areas of campus. In order for an accompanying emotional support animal to be considered a reasonable accommodation, sufficient documentation meeting the requirements of current HUD/FHA regulations must be provided. These include the following:

- A. The existence of a disability.
- B. A relationship between the disability and the relief the animal provides.
- C. A showing of necessity in order for the resident to use and enjoy an on-campus residence.

In order to receive approval to have an emotional support animal in University Housing, the student must successfully complete the approval process with the Office of Accessible Services Individualized for Students (OASIS). This document is intended to outline the rights and responsibilities of residents who live in University Housing and this statement operates under the guidance of the East Stroudsburg University Residence Hall Policies and Regulations.

II. Statement

It is the statement of East Stroudsburg University (ESU) to comply with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act as amended by the ADA Amendments Act of 2008, the Fair Housing Act, and other applicable state regulations that prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability. ESU is aware of its responsibility to provide safe, affordable and healthy housing to all students who wish to live on campus in University Housing and is committed to providing equal access to University Housing to all students with qualifying disabilities. In keeping with this obligation, it is the statement of ESU that emotional support animals be permitted in all housing facilities provided the established requirements are met. However, any student wishing to exercise their right to have an ESA in University Housing must first have the approval of OASIS and the Office of Residence Life. Bringing an ESA to University Housing prior to acquiring approval, may result in loss of privileges of having an ESA in the future and/or disciplinary action by the Office of Student Conduct.

III. Definitions

A. Emotional Support Animals (ESA)

HUD uses the term "Assistance Animal" to cover any animal that works, provides assistance, or performs tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability, or provides emotional support that alleviates one or more identified symptoms or effects of a person's disability. For the purpose of this statement, we will refer to Assistance Animals as Emotional Support Animals. Unlike a Service Animal, an Emotional Support Animal does not assist a person with a disability at all times. Emotional Support Animals may be considered for University Housing, but are not permitted in other areas of the university (e.g. library, classroom buildings, dining centers).

B. Pet

A "Pet" is an animal kept for ordinary use and companionship. A Pet is not considered a Service or Emotional Support Animal. Students are not permitted to keep or bring pets on university property or in University Housing. Please review the East Stroudsburg University Residence Hall Policies and Regulations for further information.

C. Owner

The "Owner" is the East Stroudsburg University resident student who has requested the accommodation and has received approval to bring an Emotional Support Animal into University Housing. The Owner must furnish proof of ownership of the requested Emotional Support Animal.

D. University Housing

University Housing is any facility owned or operated by the university for the purpose of housing residential students, whether leased or owned by the university and regardless of location.

IV. Procedure for Requesting Emotional Support Animals in University Housing

Students must make a formal request to the Office of Accessible Services Individualized for Students (OASIS). To do so, the individual must submit the following:

1. Apply for accommodations using our [online application](#). If you require assistance completing the application, please feel free to contact OASIS. **In addition to completing the information in the online application, you must also upload the following information into the application:**
 - a) **Documentation of Disability:** Students seeking the use of an ESA in University Housing from OASIS on the basis of a previously diagnosed disability must upload documentation in the application that supports your need for this accommodation. The documentation must be on professional letterhead and be completed by a **licensed Psychiatrist, Psychologist, or other licensed health professional** qualified to assess your eligibility under the HUD's Section 504 and the Fair Housing Act (FHA). Documentation **MUST** include the professional's license number and signature. Hand written prescriptions **WILL NOT** be accepted. **All documentation submitted is considered confidential under Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).**
 - Documentation must include the following:
 - The specific functional limitations you experience as a result of your psychiatric diagnosis.
 - Demonstration of relationship between the disability and the relief the specific animal provides.
 - Demonstration of necessity in order for the resident to have equal opportunity to use and enjoy an on-campus residence.

- b) **Proof of Ownership:** Students requesting an ESA in University Housing must upload proof of ownership of the requested animal in the form of the letter of good health from a licensed veterinarian. This letter should list the student's name or the name of the student's immediate family member as the owner of the animal.
- 2. **ESA Health Documentation:** Students requesting an ESA in University Housing must provide to OASIS documentation from a veterinarian licensed to practice in the United States that the ESA is current on all applicable vaccinations, including rabies, and is in good health. All ESAs must have an annual well care visit with a licensed veterinarian. They must have had a general maintenance vaccination series appropriate to the species. All vaccinations must be current, and applicable animals must wear a current rabies vaccination tag. ESA owners must provide satisfactory documentation from a veterinarian licensed to practice in the United States of this on-going compliance for an ESA at the start of each academic year in order to remain in compliance. Documentation **MUST** be typed on professional letterhead and include the veterinarian's license number and signature.
- 3. **The Review Process:** The review process typically takes up to 15 business days. Requests for ESAs will not be reviewed by the committee until documentation of both current disability and ESA health, as well as proof of ownership is received. You will be notified once the application and documentation have been reviewed.
- 4. **Intake Interview:** Once a student is notified of their eligibility for an intake interview, an appointment is scheduled to meet a faculty member of OASIS. The disability service faculty will review with the student their application form and documentation and gather any additional information necessary. In conjunction with the Office of Residence Life, the faculty member will assess the appropriateness of the animal in an on-campus dwelling.
- 5. **Notification:** The student will be notified in writing of the decision to grant permission for the use of an ESA in University Housing. In addition, the student will be asked to sign a contract with the Office of Residence Life outlining the responsibilities of the ESA owner.

V. Criteria for Determining if Presence of the Emotional Support Animal is Reasonable

- A. University Housing is unique in several aspects including the mandatory assignment of roommates for many individuals and the mandate 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 or fundamental alteration of University Housing, ESU reserves the right to assign an individual with an ESA to a single room without a roommate. In such cases, the owner of the ESA will incur any additional charges of residing in a single room.

In situations where the owner of the ESA is currently residing with roommates, suitemates, or apartment mates consent must be obtained from each resident of the room, suite, or apartment prior to the ESA residing in University Housing.
- B. For all requests for an ESA, OASIS shall consult with the Office of Residence Life in making a determination on a case-by-case basis of whether the presence of an ESA is reasonable. A request for an ESA may be denied as unreasonable if the presence of the animal: (1) poses an undue financial and/or administrative burden; (2) fundamentally alters University Housing policies; and/or (3) poses a direct threat to the health and safety of others or would cause damage to the property of others, including university property.
- C. ESU may consider the following factors, among others, as evidence in determining whether the presence of the animal is reasonable or in the making of housing assignments for individuals with ESAs. If:
 - 1. The size of the animal is too large for available assigned housing space;

2. The animal's presence would force another individual from individual housing (e.g. severe allergies, asthma, etc.);
3. The animal's presence otherwise violates an individual's right to peace and quiet enjoyment of their residence;
4. The animal is not housebroken or is unable to live with others in a reasonable manner;
5. The animal's vaccinations are not up-to-date or the ESA is no longer in good health as determined by a veterinarian licensed to practice in the United States;
6. The animal poses, or has posed in the past, a direct threat to the individual or others, or to other animals, such as aggressive behavior or injury to the individual or others, or other animals;
7. The animal causes, or has caused, damage to housing beyond reasonable wear and tear.

ESU will not limit room assignments for individuals with ESAs to any particular building or buildings as a result of the individual's need for an ESA due to a disability.

VI. Access to University Facilities by Emotional Support Animal

A. Emotional Support Animals

An ESA must be contained within the privately assigned individual living accommodations except to the extent the individual is taking the animal out for natural relief. ESAs must be taken out of the building by way of the shortest and most direct path, and must be maintained under standard restraints such as an animal carrier or controlled by a leash or harness. ESAs are not allowed in any university facilities other than the university residence hall unit to which the individual is assigned.

B. Dominion and Control

The ESA must be properly housed and 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 animal is found running at large, the animal is subject to capture and confinement and immediate removal from University Housing.

VII. Individual's Responsibilities for Emotional Support Animal

If the university grants an individual's request to live with an ESA, the individual is solely responsible for the custody and care of the ESA and must meet the following requirements:

A. General Responsibilities

1. The ESA Owner cannot bring the requested ESA to campus until approval of the ESA has been received from OASIS. Bringing and allowing an ESA to stay in University Housing prior to acquiring approval, may result in loss of privileges related to having an ESA in the future.
2. The ESA Owner agrees to abide by all other University Housing policies. An exception to the animal statement made under this ESA Statement does not constitute an exception to any other university statement.
3. Residents with ESAs must comply with all state and local animal ordinances. Local animal ordinances may include species limitations, required municipal license, collar with identification (with Owner's current phone number) and rabies tags. Ordinances also state that no dog may be left unattended in a public space and no animal may be allowed to roam free. University Housing requires that dogs and cats approved as ESAs, must wear current vaccination and identification tags at all times.
4. The ESA Owner will be required to annually submit ESA Health Documentation verifying all required

vaccinations as well as proof of absence of communicable diseases, fleas, and parasites and licenses for the ESA at the start of each academic year.

5. Emotional Support Animals may not be left alone overnight in University Housing to be cared for by any individual other than the Owner. If the Owner is to be absent from their residence overnight or longer, the animal must accompany the Owner. In the event that an ESA is left alone in a room or apartment for longer than a reasonable time, and/or is not being attended to as needed (food, time outside, allowed to create a disturbance, etc.), University Housing will contact the Owner or their emergency contact to remove the ESA. If this is not successful, ESU may notify the University Police Department and/or Stroud Area Regional Police Department and have the right to have the ESA removed. Such action may be taken by University Housing without liability. Any cost incurred from removing the ESA if the Owner is not present, and prior arrangements have not been made by the Owner for the ESA to be removed, shall be the responsibility of the Owner.
6. When ESAs are left unattended in the Owner's room, they are required to be stored in a crate, carrier, cage, or kennel. This containment will allow ESU officials to routinely access the residential facilities for maintenance and other routine tasks without posing a risk to the animal or employees of the university.
7. Emotional Support Animals must be housebroken when species appropriate. The Owner is responsible for cleaning up all animal waste (both indoors and outdoors) in a timely and effective fashion. Animals that are not housebroken, when applicable, will not be eligible to serve as an ESA. Additionally, the Owner shall be fully and solely responsible for disposal of animal waste in an appropriate receptacle. Litter boxes must be cleaned daily and changed weekly. Failure to properly dispose of animal waste will result in a charge of violating University Housing policies. Violations may result in eviction and disciplinary action with the Office of Student Conduct.
8. Any hair/fur/molting from care of my ESA is to be disposed of in an outside dumpster in order to be sensitive to those who have allergies.
9. Any inside messes/odors from my ESA are to be cleaned promptly with cleaners that are furniture/fabric safe and are designed for pet odors.
10. All ESA food must be stored in an air-tight container at all times.
11. Emotional Support Animals must be well-behaved and properly trained; this includes no barking, whining, scratching, chewing or aggression. The ESA must be under the control of the Owner, such as on a leash or in a carrier, when being transported to and from University Housing. The Owner is responsible at all times for the actions of their ESA. Emotional support animals shall not disturb, annoy, or cause nuisance to other members of the residential community. The Owner is responsible for any odors, noise, damage, or other conduct of their ESA that disturbs others or damages the premises. Owners that violate this statement, or these obligations, may be required to remove the ESA from University Housing.
12. Emotional Support Animals cannot interfere with the reasonable enjoyment of people sharing the space (e.g. allergies, phobias, religious preference, and need for quiet). Emotional support animals are not permitted in any public common spaces within University Housing, including but not limited to community/shared bathrooms, lounges, dining rooms, indoor recreational rooms, computer labs, and study rooms.
13. The Owner is required to ensure that 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.

Additionally, neglect and/or abuse will be reported to the Monroe County Humane Officer.

14. The ESA Owner's residence may be inspected for fleas, ticks, pests, and/or damage to residential facilities once a semester, or as needed. The Office of Residence Life will schedule the inspection and notify the resident in advance of the scheduled inspection. If fleas, ticks, or other pests are detected through inspection, the residence hall will be treated using approved fumigation methods by a university-approved pest control service. The ESA Owner will be billed for the expense of any necessary pest control treatment. The university shall have the right to bill the Owner's account for unmet obligations under this provision.
15. The Owner will be financially responsible for expenses incurred above a standard cleaning or for repairs to the residential premises, including losses, liability, claims, and harm to others caused by the ESA.
16. East Stroudsburg University 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, damage to, or loss of the animal.
17. The Owner must take reasonable precautions to prevent the ESA from escaping the Owner's care. The Owner must notify Residence Life staff in person within 1 hour of realizing that the ESA has escaped. The Owner will hold the university blameless in the event the ESA goes missing. University staff is not responsible for the retrieval of the ESA in the event the animal escapes or becomes lost.
18. The ESA is permitted in University Housing only as long as it is necessary to alleviate symptoms of the Owner's disability. The Owner must notify OASIS and the Office of Residence Life in writing if the ESA is no longer needed or is no longer in University Housing. To replace a previously approved ESA, the new animal must be necessary to address the Owner's disability, and the Owner must follow the procedures in this Statement when requesting a different animal.

VIII. Removal of Emotional Support Animal

The university may require the Owner to remove the ESA from University Housing if:

1. The ESA poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others or causes damage to the property of others and/or the University;
2. The ESA's presence results in a fundamental alteration of a university program;
3. The Owner does not comply with the Owner's Responsibilities set forth above; or
4. The ESA or its presence creates an unmanageable disturbance or interference with the university community.

The university will base such determinations upon the consideration of the behavior of the particular ESA at issue, and not on speculation or fear about the harm or damages an animal may cause. Any removal of the ESA will be done in consultation with OASIS and may be appealed to East Stroudsburg Director of Diversity/Ombudsperson (Office of Diversity and Equal Opportunity) following the procedure set forth in the OASIS Grievance Procedure. The Owner will be afforded all rights of due process and appeal as outlined in that process.

Should the ESA be removed from the premises for any reasons, the Owner is expected to fulfill their housing obligations for the remainder of the housing contract.

IX. AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Office of Residence Life and the Office of Accessible Services Individualized for Students will assist students requiring emotional support animals in their compliance with these policies. Any departments wishing to assist students or report violation of these policies and obligations should contact either of these offices. Any questions regarding enforcement of these policies and obligations will be forwarded to the Director of Diversity/Ombudsperson (Office of Diversity and Equal Opportunity).