Guidelines and Request Form for an Emotional Support Animal (ESA) in College Housing at Brevard College

Brevard College Housing does not allow for pets but recognizes that there are some circumstances where a student with a documented disability that substantially limits a major life function may seek permission for an Emotional Assistance Animal (ESA) according to the Fair Housing Act. An Emotional Support Animal (ESA) is not limited to a specific type of animal and is not required to have had special training but is part of a mental health treatment plan to provide emotional support that alleviates one or more of the identified symptoms or effects of a person’s existing disability. ESAs authorized as a housing accommodation are generally only permitted to be in the student’s individual residence hall room and are not approved to be taken into other classrooms, campus buildings, other students’ residences, on school related trips, or campus venues such as dining and athletic facilities. (Requests to have an ESA accompany a student in campus buildings other than the student’s residence must be reviewed under federal ADA accommodation guidelines through OSADS on a case by case basis.) Students who wish to have an ESA in their residence must contact the Office of Student Accessibility and Disability Services and follow procedures set forth to request a housing accommodation.

REQUEST PROCEDURES
Any Brevard College student who seeks to have an ESA in college housing must complete the following process before bringing any animal into campus housing:

The procedure for requesting Emotional Support Animals follows the general procedures set forth in Guidelines for Requesting Accessible Housing Accommodations and the requirements set forth. However, individuals with a disability who reside or intend to reside in College Housing and who wish to request the accommodation of having an Emotional Assistance Animal in their residence should contact the Office of Student Accessibility and Disability Services and follow procedures set forth in the these BC Guidelines for Requesting an Emotional Support Animal in College Housing:

1. Read and review the Guidelines for Emotional Support Animals in College Housing.
2. Complete the student portion of Request for Emotional Support Animal in College Housing form and return it to the Director of Student Accessibility and Disability Services.
3. The Supporting Documentation for Emotional Support Animal Request Form (or a letter that addresses the same information requested on this form) must be sent directly from the practitioner’s office to the Office of Student Accessibility and Disability Services. In order to best evaluate a student’s request for a Emotional Support Animal (ESA) in the residence hall, the college requires information from a licensed professional mental health provider who is familiar with the student’s clinical history and is responsible for the treatment of the student’s disability, including the intentional use of an ESA to address or alleviate the effects of specific functional limitations. Documentation should be current from a student’s qualified mental health provider (who is not a relative of the student) practicing in the State of North Carolina or from the student’s home state. Letters and certificates based upon (for example) answers to an online survey purchased for a set price via commercial internet sites are not viewed as a reliable source of information. Websites that offer documentation for a price but were not established for the purpose of treating persons for a disability-related condition rarely contain sufficient and reliable verification of disability.
4. As is the procedure for other housing accommodation requests, new incoming students should review and submit a completed Guidelines and Request for Emotional Support Animal in College Housing form and arrange for submission of a completed Supporting Professional Documentation for Emotional Support Animal Request form by June 1 for the start of Fall Semester or by October 1 for the start of Spring Semester. (Note-Returning students should submit their request to continue a previously approved ESA accommodation or a new housing accommodation request by April 1 for the Fall Semester.) Students may submit a request and supporting documentation to the Director of Accessibility and Disability Services for an ESA for consideration at any time; however, OSADS and the Housing Office are not able to process new requests for an ESA in housing between August 1-September 15 nor during Fall, Spring, or Winter Breaks. The Housing Office requires sufficient time, up to 60 days following notice of a student’s approval, to determine appropriate placement for the approved owner/ESA and to avoid concerns or competing disability-related issues within the housing community.

5. If the request for accommodation is made fewer than 60 days before the individual intends to move into college housing, BC cannot guarantee that it will be able to meet an approved individual’s accommodation needs during the first semester of occupancy. Therefore, approved students with late requests may be required to wait until the following semester to be approved for entry to allow time for housing assignments to be adjusted.

6. Once both the request form and supporting professional documentation are received, The Director of Student Accessibility and Disability Services will notify the student via campus email within seven days of receipt regarding the status of the completed request.

7. If the third party returns the Verification Form or other documentation without sufficient information for OSADS to determine whether an accommodation is necessary, the Director will inform the individual in writing of the insufficiency of the verification and may request additional information, including speaking directly with the individual supplying the third-party verification. The individual making the request for accommodation must cooperate with OSADS in a timely manner in providing all information needed to determine whether the requested accommodation is necessary.

8. Choice of ESA: Emotional Support Animals are not limited to dogs, but the College reserves the right to limit approval of proposed ESAs to domestic animals that pose only mitigable health or safety concerns and do not significantly disrupt the residence hall living environment for others. Other factors that may be considered in determining whether the presence of an animal is reasonable include the following:
   a. Dogs must be a minimum of 6 months in age, housebroken, spayed or neutered, and have received their first rabies vaccination before they can be approved. The College has determined that the residence hall setting is not an appropriate environment in which to raise a young puppy.
   b. Animals known to carry zoonotic diseases that cannot be reasonably controlled are not permitted.
   c. Heating devices are not permitted.
   d. The size of the animal and its crate must be reasonable for the space allowed.
   e. Past history of aggression or having history of excessive damage to housing beyond reasonable wear and tear will result in an animal needing to be removed.

9. A student who is found to be eligible for an ESA housing accommodation must complete and submit registration requirements before being permitted to bring any animal on campus.

10. Upon completion of all ESA Registration Requirements, the student must contact the Office of Housing and Residence Life to request review the animal registration documents and to verify approval of a particular animal within an assigned housing placement.
HOUSING POLICY SUMMARY & CARE GUIDELINES

Before completing a request for an ESA, please review the following expectations that are part of the Housing Contract. Sign the bottom of this page to verify understanding of these summary guidelines:

- Animals are not allowed to be taken into campus housing until the owner has been approved through the Office of Student Accessibility and Disability Services (OSADS) and the student is notified through the Housing Office (HO) that the ESA Registration requirements are complete for approval of the animal.
- A request for an ESA cannot be processed until an unauthorized animal is removed.
- Emotional Support Animals (ESAs) are only approved for the student’s specific residence and are not allowed in other campus venues (ie classrooms, library, dining services, athletic facilities, friend’s campus residence, etc.).
- Owners must ensure prompt cleanup and hygienic disposal of the ESA’s waste.
- ESAs may not be left in the residence overnight or left in the care of other students on campus during the owner’s absence.
- ESAs are not authorized to travel with athletic teams or with groups attending other school sponsored activities. The student who participates on an athletic team or other school-related travel functions must make arrangements in advance for a reliable off-campus caregiver for an ESA for any overnight and/or extended hours care.
- Dogs and cats should be at least 6 months of age and be previously spayed/neutered.
- Dogs must be completely housebroken. Use of training pads is not an acceptable substitute for waste management.
- ESAs must be crated or contained while the owner is away from the room. Owners should not be away from their room for extended periods of time that will not allow for proper care and treatment of the animal.
- The ESA must have documentation of current state and county required immunizations.
- Owners of dogs need to follow a routine tick/flea treatment plan.
- Students bringing ESAs to campus are fully responsible for the animal’s behavior, and for any damage done. If the ESA is disruptive to the living environment for others (for example, barking or other loud noises, or significant odor from litter boxes or cages), or if there is damage done to college facilities, the ESA will need to be removed from the premises within 48 hours of notice being given. The student will be responsible for paying for property damage.
- Violations of these expectations and others listed in the Emotional Support Animal in College Housing Guidelines will result in the owner having to remove the animal from campus.

*Bringing an unauthorized animal to campus without following these requirements can result in the mandatory removal of the animal to the nearest Animal Control Shelter, termination of campus housing rights, and/or further sanctions as specified according to the BC Student Handbook.

My signature indicates that I am aware of these procedures and requirements for requesting an ESA in College Housing.

Student Signature: ____________________________ Date: ____________________________
Request for Emotional Support Animal (ESA) in College Housing

Full name: ___________________________  BC ID #: ___________________________
Phone number: ________________________  BC email address: _____________________
Residence Hall Address: __________________ Date of Birth: ________________________

Per the federal Fair Housing Act, students may qualify for an ESA in housing accommodation if they are substantially limited by a psychological or emotional disability. What is the mental health disability for which you have been treated? (Please be specific)

Please explain your need for an ESA, based on your disability. How would having an ESA provide assistance that helps the effects of your disability?
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

Please describe the animal you intend to bring to campus as an ESA, if approved: type of animal/breed, size, & age
__________________________________________________________________________

- Do you participate in athletics or any other college sponsored activity that involves travel?
  Circle one:  No  Yes  If so, what is the activity? ______________________________
- If yes, have you been made aware of the extent and frequency of off-campus travel involved and would you be able, if approved, to arrange for required off-campus care for an ESA when away from campus?
  Circle one:  No  Yes

By signing below, I certify that the information provided on this form is correct. I understand that eligibility for specific accommodations/services is determined on an individual basis and only with supportive documentation. I authorize the Office of Student Accessibility and Disability Services to disclose information regarding any approved accommodations with BC faculty and staff directly involved in providing academic or support services as needed.

Student signature ___________________________ Date ___________________________

*All documentation and records provided will be maintained in a confidential manner as outlined in the Family Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974. Disability information is shared only on a limited basis within the college and then only when there is compelling reason for the individual seeking the information to have knowledge of a specific aspect of this confidential information. Disability-related records are maintained separately from academic files and are excluded from free access under FERPA.