

ESA Approval and Service Dog Acknowledgement Information

Residential and Student Service Programs

University of California, Berkeley

- I. Requesting Acknowledgement of a Service Dog
 - A. A service dog is a dog that is trained to do a job or task(s) for a disabled person.
 - B. If you are a Service Dog user and want your Service Dog to live in a residential living, please provide the required information to the Housing Disability Specialist (housingaccommodations@berkeley.edu) by completing the [Service Dog Acknowledgement Form](#).
 - C. If you need to provide this information in an alternative format, you can email the address above or send in writing the following information:
 1. A typed letter stating the dog is a Service Dog, what task(s) it performs for you, its breed, name and age.
 2. A picture of the dog.
 3. A signed copy of the [Guidelines for Maintaining an Animal](#).
 4. A current veterinary record certifying that the animal has all recommended vaccinations to maintain the animal's health and prevent contagious diseases.
 5. The name and contact information of an alternate local caregiver for the Service Dog.
 6. A local license for any dog as designated by the local authorities. Please refer to the relevant local authority website ([Berkeley](#), [Albany](#), [Emeryville](#)). Proof of license must be provided to housingaccommodations@berkeley.edu within six weeks of moving in.
- II. Applying for approval of an Emotional Support Animal
 - A. An Emotional Support Animal (ESA) is an animal that provides emotional support, wellbeing, comfort, and companionship to a disabled person. They are not trained to perform specific tasks. A resident will generally only be allowed one ESA.
 - B. If you are an ESA user and want your ESA to live in campus housing please provide the required information by completing the [ESA Approval Request Form](#).
 - C. If you need to provide this information in an alternative format, you can email the address above or send in writing the following information:

1. An up-to-date veterinary record certifying that the animal has all recommended vaccinations to maintain the animal's health and prevent contagious diseases;
 2. A picture of the animal.
 3. A letter from a medical or mental health professional. You may share the [Medical Professional's Instructions](#) with your provider.
 4. A signed copy of the Guidelines for Maintaining an Animal.
 5. The name and contact information of an alternate local caregiver for the animal if needed. Please note that you are responsible for the animal's behavior and any damages caused by the animal, even if the animal is temporarily being cared for by an alternate caregiver within Cal Housing.
 6. A local license for any dog as designated by the local authorities. Please refer to the relevant local authority website ([Berkeley](#) (also required for unaltered cats), [Albany](#), [Emeryville](#)). Proof of license should be provided to housingaccommodations@berkeley.edu within six weeks of moving in.
- D. The ESA should not be in residence unless an approval has been received.
Approval is ESA-specific and non-transferrable.
- E. ESA Approval Application Review Process:
1. The Housing Disability Specialist will review the request for completeness and work with the resident to obtain any necessary additional materials.
 2. The Housing Disability Specialist will notify the resident by email of RSSP's decision to approve or decline to approve the ESA pursuant to University policy.
 3. If approved then the Housing Disability Specialist will work with the appropriate staff to determine a suitable residence for the resident and ESA.
 4. There is no need to reapply once approved unless the animal is replaced or retired from use, but you must provide current proof of vaccinations, current license, and re-sign the agreement each year.
 5. If the request is declined, the Housing Disability Specialist will work with the ESA user at their request to set appropriate timelines for the resident to find alternative housing.
 6. ESA approval may be denied where the required steps have not been taken or information has not been provided, or where approval would: constitute an undue financial burden; require a fundamental alteration of the RSSP program; or create a direct threat to the health or safety of other animals or people.
 7. The decision of the Housing Disability Specialist may be appealed, in writing, within five business days of the date on the decision email.

Written appeals must be submitted to the Director of Berkeley Housing, Residential and Student Service Programs (reshall@berkeley.edu).

8. Appeals must state one of the following specific reasons for reconsideration:
 - a) New information supportive of the animal as an accommodation that was not available at the time of the initial review; or
 - b) A procedural error that unfairly affected the process.