



**Bethany**

*A Small College of National Distinction*

**POLICY MANUAL  
VOLUME 7.6 (D) (3)**

**Assistance Animal and Emotional  
Support Animal Policy**

*Approved by the Bethany College Board of Trustees on  
October 8, 2021*

**Policy dictates that the Officers of Bethany College are:**

**President of the College  
Provost and Dean of Faculty  
Chief Financial Officer  
Chief Advancement Officer**

**Specific titles for the latter three may vary according to organizational structure. For the purpose of Bethany College policy documents for the 2021-22 academic year, the Chief Academic Officer is the Provost and Dean of Faculty; the Chief Financial Officer is the Vice President for Finance; and, the Chief Advancement Officer is the Vice President for Institutional Advancement and Alumni Affairs. Titles for these three positions may change at the discretion of the President of the College.**

## Volume 7.6 (D) (3)

### Assistance Animal and Emotional Support Animal Policy

This Policy is intended to cover the inclusion of animals in College-owned residential housing only. For more information relating to animals outside of College-owned residential housing, please see [Bethany College Policy Manual Volume 7 – Student Life Policy](#).

#### I. Purpose

To provide reasonable accommodations to students, employees, and visitors with disabilities that give them the opportunity for equal access to educational programs, activities, and services provided by the College via use of a service animal on campus or an emotional support animal in College housing. Reasonable accommodations will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

#### II. Definitions

- a. **Disability.** A mental or physical impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activity(ies), such as seeing, talking, walking, hearing, breathing, working, and learning. (*see* Americans with Disabilities Act 42 U.S.C. Section 12102 and Fair Housing Act 42 U.S.C. Section 3602, for a full definition of *Major Life Activities*).
- b. **Service Animal.** A dog (or in rare cases a miniature horse) that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for a person with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual or other mental disability.
  - i. Service animals do not include:
    1. Animals other than a dog or miniature horse;
    2. Animals that serve solely to provide a crime deterrent effect; or,
    3. Emotional support, comfort, or companionship animals
- c. **Emotional Support Animal.** An animal that provides emotional support that alleviates one or more identified symptoms or effects of a person's disability. These animals need not be specifically trained, and may be of any species that is traditionally domesticated. For purposes of this Policy, a service animal in training will be considered an emotional support animal, until such time that the animal's training is considered complete.
- d. **Reasonable Accommodation.** A modification or adjustment to a policy, procedure, or practice provided to a qualified person with a disability to enable that person to participate in educational programs and activities, perform the essential functions of their job, access Bethany facilities or events, or have equal

access to College housing.

### **III. General Policies for Both Service Animals and Emotional Support Animals**

#### **A. Damage Caused by Animals**

Animal owners are responsible for all costs involved in the maintenance of the animal and/or any damage that the animal may cause.

If the animal causes damage to College-owned residential housing, the owner will be charged the full cost to repair the damage.

### **IV. General Community Guidelines**

- a. Do not ask an individual with a service or emotional support animal for details about their disability.
- b. Do not pet, feed, tease, taunt, or deliberately startle a service or emotional support animal.
- c. Allow service animals to accompany people with disabilities on campus so as to allow them an equal opportunity to access educational programs, activities, and services provided by the College.
- d. Do not deliberately separate a disabled person from their service or emotional support animal.

### **V. Service Animals**

#### **A. Service Animals in Areas of Public Accommodations**

The College will permit any student, employee, or visitor to use a service animal on campus in all areas of campus that are public accommodations, including inside academic or public buildings and residence halls pursuant to the terms outlined in the [Bethany College Policy Manual Volume 7 – Student Life Policy](#).

If it is not readily apparent that an animal is a service animal, College staff may inquire into only these two questions:

- a. Whether the animal is required because of a disability; and,
- b. What work or tasks the animal is trained to perform.

The College will not require documented proof that the animal is a service animal, ask about the person's disability, or require medical documentation of the person's disability.

## B. Service Animals in College Housing

Although service animals are permitted in areas of public accommodation on campus without registration, anyone who wishes to live in College-owned residential housing with their service animal must apply for an accommodation through the College's Section 504 Coordinator. Below is the contact information for the College's Section 504 Coordinator.

Khali Blankenship Carpenter  
Student Life Office  
Bethany House  
[kblankenship@bethanywv.edu](mailto:kblankenship@bethanywv.edu)  
(304) 829-7064

The purpose of the accommodation process is to coordinate the presence of the service animal in College-owned residential housing with Resident Life staff and plan for issues such as identifying waste disposal areas and roommate allergies. The request will be considered a request for accommodation and will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

## C. Rights and Obligations

- a. Service animals need not wear anything that identifies them as a service animal, unless they are a service animal in training. Please see the above list of definitions for more information about service animals in training.
- b. Service animals must be under the physical control of their owner by way of a harness or leash, unless the person is unable to hold the animal or use of a leash or harness interferes with the animal's ability to perform the task for which it was trained, in which case the animal must be under the owner's control by way of verbal commands or other non-physical restraints.
- c. The service animal or service animal in training must be housebroken.
- d. The owner is responsible for cleaning up after the animal and properly disposing of waste.

## VI. **Emotional Support Animals**

### A. Policy

A student may apply for a reasonable accommodation to have an emotional support animal reside in their College residence hall room or housing unit. This request will be considered a request for accommodation and will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Emotional support animals must remain in the student's dwelling unit, except for necessary trips outside to use the restroom.

As a general policy, emotional support animals are not permitted in classrooms, dining locations, or any other non-residential facilities without explicit permission from the

Section 504 Coordinator.

B. Application Process

- a. A person wishing to have an emotional support animal in College-owned residential housing should submit an accommodation request to the Section 504 Coordinator as far in advance as reasonably possible. **This must be completed each year.**
- b. If you are a returning student and wish to continue the accommodation into the following academic year, you must re-apply for this accommodation before the start of the new academic year.
- c. The application must:
  - i. Include documentation as to the applicant's disability from a licensed provider. This document must:
    1. Describe the accommodation necessary for the applicant to enjoy and use the dwelling (preferably including the species, breed, and other information about the specific animal);
    2. Specifically describe an identifiable nexus between the applicant's disability and the services that the animal provides.
  - ii. Include up-to-date veterinary records of the animal, if the animal is of the species that requires routine veterinary maintenance. All veterinary records must show a current rabies vaccine.
- d. The Section 504 Coordinator, in conjunction with other necessary, designated College staff, will consider other relevant factors in determining the reasonableness of the accommodation, including but not limited to:
  - i. Safety and compliance with local law;
  - ii. Undue financial or administrative burden on the College;
  - iii. Any evidence of the animal's prior destructive or disruptive nature;
  - iv. Allergies of other residents; and/or
  - v. Phobias of other residents.

C. Rights, Obligations and Exceptions

- a. All animals on campus must conform to state and local animal ordinances concerning vaccinations and registration.

- b. Owners are required to provide documentation yearly to the Office of Student Life.
- c. The animal's owner, not the College, is responsible for the animal's care and maintenance.
- d. The student is required to ensure the animal is well cared for at all times. Any suspected or observed issues related to animal abuse or neglect will be reported to the proper investigatory authorities and may subject the student to Bethany College disciplinary action. Any evidence of mistreatment or abuse may result in immediate removal of the animal.
- e. Although the College will not charge a deposit to disabled persons who wish to have their service animal or emotional support animal on campus, the owner will be responsible for damage the animal may cause to the personal property of others, including College property.
- f. The student is responsible for designating an alternative caregiver for the animal if the owner student becomes ill or unavailable.
- g. The College may require the removal of a service or emotional support animal if:
  - i. The animal is out of control and the owner takes no action to control it;
  - ii. The animal is not housebroken or the owner fails to clean up and dispose of waste properly; or
  - iii. The animal poses a threat to the health or safety of others.
- h. The student will continue to fulfill their housing obligations for the remainder of the housing contract if the animal is removed from the premises for any violation of rules contained in this Policy.