



TEXAS SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY

MANUAL OF ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

SECTION: Academic Affairs

Policy: 06.02.03

AREA: Office of Compliance

SUBJECT: Domesticated Animals on Campus Policy¹

1. General Prohibition

- 1.1 Animals, including but not limited to pets, are prohibited on campus except for:
 - a. Service animals as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA);
 - b. Service animals-in-training. Animals-in-training must be clearly identified (i.e., wearing a vest), and trainers should notify the Texas Southern University's (TSU) administration in advance via the Student Accessibility Services office (SASO) of the presence of a service animal in training. During work and classroom hours, no more than one service-animal-in-training is permitted on-site per employee or student.
 - c. Animals for instructional purposes as approved by the appropriate university authority;
 - d. Emotional Support Animals permitted only in dormitories or other student housing facilities, and
 - e. Working dogs used by a law enforcement agency for law enforcement purposes.

2. Service Animals

- 2.1 The ADA defines service animals as those that are individually trained to provide work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability. If animals meet this definition, they are considered service animals under the ADA, regardless of whether they have been licensed or certified by a state or local government. Only dogs and miniature horses are recognized as service animals.

¹ Policy History: Created December 2024

- 2.2 Service animals and service animals in training shall be leashed and remain under the owner's or caretaker's control at all times unless leashing prohibits the animal's service function.
- 2.3 Dogs that are used as service animals and service animals in training shall maintain current dog licenses and rabies vaccinations, as specified in [Harris County Animal Regulations](#) (Section 5).
- 2.4 Exclusion of service animals: TSU is not required to modify policies, practices, or procedures if such modification would "fundamentally alter" the nature of its goods, services, programs, or activities; The ADA/504 does not overrule legitimate safety requirements. If admitting service animals would fundamentally alter the nature of a service or program, service animals may be prohibited. Additionally, if a particular service animal is out of control (and the handler does not take effective action to control it) or is not housebroken, that animal may be excluded.

3. Service Animals on Campus—Owner's Responsibilities

- 3.1 The owner is responsible for attending to and being in full control of the service animal at all times. A service animal shall have a harness, leash, or other tether unless: a) the owner is unable to use a harness, leash, or tether, or b) using a harness, leash, or tether will interfere with the animal's ability to safely and effectively perform its duties.
- 3.2 The owner is responsible for the care costs necessary for a service animal's well-being. The arrangements and responsibilities with the care of a service animal are the sole responsibility of the owner at all times, including regular bathing and grooming, as needed.
- 3.3 The owner is responsible for independently removing or arranging to remove the service animal's waste.
- 3.4 The owner is responsible for complying with local and state licensing laws for animal rights and owner responsibilities.
- 3.5 The owner is responsible for paying for any damage to TSU property caused by the animal.
- 3.6 The owner may register the service animal with the Voluntary Registry at the Student Accessibility Services Office (SASO). This registry is voluntary.

4. Service Animals on Campus—TSU Responsibilities

- 4.1 TSU may prohibit service animals in certain locations due to health and safety restrictions or places where the animal might be in danger. Restricted areas may include, but are not limited to, food preparation areas, research or instructional laboratories, boiler rooms, and other areas prohibited by law.
- 4.2 TSU must allow service animals to accompany their owners at all times and everywhere on campus where the general public (if accompanying a visitor) or other students (if accompanying a student) are allowed, except for places where there is a health, environmental, or safety hazard.
- 4.3 Contact SASO if any questions or concerns arise relating to service animals.
- 4.4 TSU employees, when appropriate, will only ask two questions about service animals and may ask these questions only if the services or tasks performed are not visible.
 - a. Is the service animal required because of a disability?
 - b. What work or task is the animal trained to perform?
- 4.5 TSU employees and staff will not pet or feed a service animal or attempt to separate the animal from the owner.
- 4.6 TSU employees will contact SASO if faculty/staff have any additional questions regarding students who have service animals. Questions regarding employees and TSU visitors with service animals shall be directed to Human Resources.
- 4.7 TSU employees will report any service animals who misbehave or any owners (or other individuals) who mistreat their service animals to SASO or to the Department of Public Safety. Behavior qualifying as “misbehavior” will be determined by the Department of Public Safety, in consultation with the Office of the General Counsel.

5. Voluntary Service Animal Registry

- 5.1 The voluntary service animal registry is completely voluntary. There can be no mandatory obligation imposed on service animals to register with TSU, nor can there be a restriction of access for service animals not registered.
- 5.2 The voluntary service animal registry shall be maintained at the SASO office (for students) and HR (for employees) office and shall contain the name of the owner, the name of the service animal, a copy of the current rabies vaccination/license, and contact information for the owner.

5.3 The purpose of the voluntary service animal registry is to serve a public purpose. For example, to ensure that the Department of Public Safety or other TSU staff know to look for service animals during an emergency or evacuation process.

6. Emotional Support Animals

6.1 Emotional Support Animals (ESA) are animals that provide emotional support, which alleviates one or more identified symptoms or effects of an individual's existing disability.

6.2 To be considered an accommodation, the student must engage in the interactive process with the SASO. The procedure for having an ESA approved in residential housing is:

- a. Completion of a Service Packet (including providing confirmation that the animal is housebroken).
- b. Completion of the Verification Form by a licensed professional.
- c. Submit a copy of the animal's current license and vaccination record.
- d. Completion of a roommate agreement (if needed).
- e. Acknowledgement regarding owners responsibilities, compliance with health and safety guidelines, and reasons an ESA may be removed (excessive noise/aggressive behavior/injury to others/property damage)
- f. An ESA approval email is sent to housing and the student.

6.3 ESA's do not need specific training. However, they need documentation from a treating medical professional supporting the need for such an animal that specifically identifies the benefit the ESA provides the student.

6.4 Emotional support animals are not considered service animals because they are not trained to perform work or tasks specific to a person's disability.

6.5 Emotional support animals are only permitted in TSU dormitories or other student housing facilities.

7. Animal Use to Further Instructional Purpose

7.1 Animals used specifically to further an instructional purpose as part of a TSU academic program are permitted and may also be kenneled at that location.

- a. These animals shall be kenneled and handled in a way that does not pose a danger to anyone on campus.
- b. Any injuries resulting from interaction with these animals shall be reported immediately to the Department of Public Safety and Risk Management for documentation. Injuries may also be subject to reporting with Harris County Animal Control.

8. Oversight

8.1 Human Resources has oversight and monitoring responsibility for these processes as it pertains to paid and unpaid employees.

- a. Employees should work with HR to resolve any concerns regarding this policy. If attempted resolutions are unsuccessful, employees may contact the Compliance Office for resolution.

8.2 The Office of General Counsel and the Compliance Office have oversight and monitoring responsibility for these processes concerning students.

Students should work with SASO to resolve any concerns regarding this policy. If attempted resolutions are unsuccessful, employees may contact the Compliance Office for resolution.