

WELLESLEY COLLEGE
DISABILITY SERVICES

Service Animal and Assistance Animal Policy

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Service Animal and Assistance Animal Policy

I. Introduction.

Wellesley College (“Wellesley” or the “College”) is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to individuals with disabilities to facilitate their equal access to the College’s programs and activities. In compliance with applicable federal and state law, including the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990 and amendments (the “ADA”), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (“Section 504”), the Fair Housing Act (“FHA”), and Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 129, section 39F, individuals with disabilities who require the use of service or assistance animals as a reasonable accommodation for their disability may be permitted to bring such animals on campus as long as they comply with Wellesley’s policies regarding such animals as stated in this Service Animal and Assistance Animal Policy (the “Policy”).

II. Definitions

Service animal: A service animal is defined as a dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for a person with a disability. Other animals do not qualify as service animals at Wellesley. (In some limited circumstances, which generally are not applicable to Wellesley’s campus, a miniature horse may be permitted as a service animal.) Examples of work or tasks provided by a service animal include, among others, guiding a person with impaired vision, alerting a person who is hard of hearing or deaf, pulling a wheelchair, and alerting and protecting a person who is having a seizure. Service animals are working animals, not pets. The work or task a service animal has been trained to provide must be directly related to the functional limitations of the person’s disability. Animals whose sole function is only to provide comfort or emotional support do not qualify as service animals.

Assistance animal: An assistance animal is defined as an animal that: (i) works, provides assistance, or performs tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability; or (ii) provides emotional support that alleviates one or more identified symptoms or effects of a person’s disability. Examples of work or tasks performed by assistance animals include, among others, guiding a person with impaired vision, alerting a person with a hearing impairment, pulling a wheelchair, alerting and protecting a person who is having a seizure, or calming a person suffering from disabling anxiety or depression. Some, but not all, assistance animals receive training.

Approved assistance animal: An animal that has been approved by the College to be on campus as an assistance animal.

Approved service animal: An animal that has been approved by the College to be on campus as an approved service animal.

Owner: An owner is the student, employee, or other person who has requested an accommodation to bring a service or assistance animal on campus.

Pet: A pet is an animal kept for ordinary use and companionship. A pet is not considered a service animal or an assistance animal.

III. Service and Assistance Animals vs. Pets

Service and assistance animals as described in the definitions and the policy that follow provide specific assistance to a person with a disability. These animals are not pets. For more information regarding the College's pet policy (See <http://www.wellesley.edu/reslife/halls/policies>).

IV. Service Animal Policy

A. General Policy

Subject to the rules outlined in this Policy, Wellesley permits qualified individuals with a disability to bring a service animal to all areas of public accommodation where members of the public, students, faculty, employees, trustees, or guests are allowed to go. The service animal must be individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of a qualified individual with a disability.

B. Procedures for Non-Resident Students and College Employees

Non-resident students and College employees seeking to bring a service animal to campus must contact Disability Services to schedule a meeting with the Director of Disability Services, Jim Wice. He can be contacted at 781-283-2434 or by an appointment scheduled online at <http://www.wellesley.edu/disability>. The individual must also complete and submit an Assistance and Service Animal Request Form found at <http://www.wellesley.edu/disability/forms>. During the meeting with the Director of Disability Services, the individual will be instructed which sections to be filled out; these will be initialed by the Director at the meeting.

The sections of this Policy titled "Documentation for Review of Requests for Service Animals" and "Rules Applicable to Service Animals" apply whenever an individual seeks to bring a service animal to campus.

C. Procedures for Resident Students

A resident student seeking to keep a service animal in campus housing must contact Disability Services to schedule a meeting with the Director of Disability Services, Jim Wice. He can be contacted at 781-283-2434 or by an appointment scheduled online at <http://www.wellesley.edu/disability>. The resident student must also complete and submit a Assistance and Service Animal Request Form, found at <http://www.wellesley.edu/disability/forms>. Requests should be submitted as soon as possible before the semester the animal is requested, and by the deadlines specified on the Assistance and Service Animal Request Form. Absent extenuating circumstances, requests submitted after the deadlines generally will be reviewed within one month of the request. Requests outside of the deadlines will limit room options available due to the housing lottery process. Review of completed requests for a service animal from resident students will take place at scheduled meetings of the Housing Accommodation Review Team. The Housing Accommodation Review

Team may collaborate with other College offices, including the Dean of Students Office, to evaluate the request for a service animal. Once the Housing Accommodation Review Team completes its review, the decision of the Team will be provided in writing by electronic communication to the student. Students may appeal a decision by contacting the Director of Disability Services. Information concerning the appeal process can be found online at <https://www.wellesley.edu/disability/appeal>.

D. Documentation for Review of Requests for Service Animals

When the need for a service animal is not readily apparent, the College may request additional documentation in support of the request for the purpose of determining whether an animal qualifies as a service animal, namely: (i) that the service animal is required due to the functional limitations of the requesting individual's disability; and (ii) what work or tasks the service animal has been trained to perform for the benefit of the owner.

E. Request Approved

If the request for a service animal is approved, the College will make a reasonable effort to notify other residents in the housing and staff with a need to know such as Campus Police, Residential Life Staff, and Facilities regarding where the service animal will be located, if appropriate in the College's discretion. Any such notice will be limited to information about the animal's presence as an accommodation to a disability: there will be no disclosure of the specific nature of the disability. If other residents with medical condition(s) are affected by animals (e.g., respiratory diseases, asthma, severe allergies) and/or they have a health or safety related concern about exposure to an assistance animal, they are to contact Jim Wice, Director of Disability Services, (781) 283-2434. Such affected students may be eligible for an accommodation when living in proximity to a service animal, including a relocation to available alternative housing. The College will consider the accommodation requests of all residents involved. Requests for accommodation will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis in light of the circumstances, including, but not limited to, available housing options.

F. Rules Applicable to Service Animals

The owner must be in full control of the service animal at all times. The service animal must generally be on a leash, harness, or other tether unless the owner's disability prevents its use, or the use of one would interfere with the service animal's ability to be of service. Additionally, the owner must comply with "Additional Rules and Responsibilities for Owners of Approved Service or Approved Assistance Animals at Wellesley," set out at the end of this Policy. The College may place other reasonable conditions or restrictions on the service animal depending on the particular facts and circumstances, including the nature and characteristics of the service animal.

G. Notice and Education to College Community

Where appropriate, and in the sole discretion of the College, Disability Services staff may provide notice or offer targeted training to members of the Wellesley community most likely to come in contact with a service animal.

V. Assistance Animal Policy

A. General Policy

Subject to the rules outlined in this Policy, Wellesley permits qualified individuals with a disability to bring an assistance animal to a College-owned residence.

For the purposes of this Policy, the student's assigned bedroom in a College-owned residence is considered part of the residential space where an approved assistance animal is permitted.

If the student's assigned bedroom is within a designated suite in a College-owned residence, then the student may bring the assistance animal into the living spaces (which does not include the other bedrooms) of that suite if at all times the student is present with the assistance animal and the assistance animal is under the direct control and immediate supervision of the student.

If a student requests that the assistance animal be permitted in the common living spaces of the College-owned residence hall where the student is assigned a bedroom, the student should include on the Assistance and Service Animal Request Form in the section provided, the specified common living spaces and the reason for the request. That request will be reviewed as part of the assistance and service animal request considered by the Housing Accommodation Review Committee. The Committee looks at all the parts of the request so that it can meet the needs of the student making the request and other students who may have health issues that need to be addressed due to assistance and service animals. In the case of a student needing an assistance animal in certain common spaces, there may need to be a broader notification of residents so that they will have the awareness and ability to request accommodations through Disability Services in collaboration with the Office of Residential Life. The Committee and this Policy recognize that there may be cases where an assistance animal is only needed within the bedroom of the student. So as to make these distinctions clear and our response to both the individual and the community relevant, we include this question on the Assistance and Service Animal Request Form.

Assistance animals are otherwise restricted to the College-owned residence where the student has been assigned a bedroom, except as required for transportation off-campus or to eliminate waste, at which time the assistance animal must generally be in a cage, carrier, or on a leash, harness, or other tether and under the owner's control, or the student has received advanced approval for another method.

The owner of an assistance animal must notify the College in advance if the student's disability prevents the use of a cage, carrier, leash, harness, or other tether or the use of one would interfere with the assistance animal's ability to be of service. The student can request College approval for an alternate method of keeping control of the animal. The College will make determinations regarding whether an alternate method is approved on a case-by-case basis.

B. Procedures for Resident Students

A resident student seeking to keep an assistance animal in campus housing must contact Disability Services to schedule a meeting with the Director of Disability Services, Jim Wice. He can be contacted at 781-283-2434 or by an appointment scheduled online at <http://www.wellesley.edu/disability>. The resident student must also complete and submit an Assistance and Service Animal Request Form, found at <http://www.wellesley.edu/disability/forms>. Requests should be submitted as soon as possible before the semester the animal is requested, and by the deadlines specified on the Assistance and Service Animal Request Form. Absent extenuating circumstances, requests submitted after the deadlines generally will be reviewed within one month of the request. Requests outside of the deadlines will limit room options available due to the housing lottery process. Review of completed requests for an assistance animal from resident students will take place at scheduled meetings of the Housing Accommodation Review Team. The Housing Accommodation Review Team may collaborate with other College offices, including the Dean of Student's Office, to evaluate the request for an assistance animal. Once the Housing Accommodation Review Team completes its review, the decision of the Team will be provided in writing by electronic communication to the student. Students may appeal a decision by contacting Disability Services. Information concerning the appeal process can be found online at <https://www.wellesley.edu/disability/appeal>.

C. Documentation for Review of Requests for Assistance Animals

When the need for an assistance animal is not readily apparent, the College may request additional information from a physician, psychiatrist, social worker, or other licensed medical health professional, including (i) verification of the disability; (ii) a statement on how the animal serves as an accommodation for the documented disability; and (iii) a statement on how the need for the assistance animal relates to the ability of the student to use and gain benefit from Wellesley housing.

D. Request Approved

If the request for an assistance animal is approved, the College will make a reasonable effort to notify the other residents in the housing where the assistance animal will be located, if appropriate in the College's discretion. Any such notice will be limited to information about the animal's presence as an accommodation to a disability: there will be no disclosure of the specific nature of the disability. If other residents with medical condition(s) are affected by animals (*e.g.*, respiratory diseases, asthma, severe allergies) and/or they have a health or safety related concern about exposure to an assistance animal, they are asked to contact Disability Services. Such affected students may be eligible for an accommodation when living in proximity to an assistance animal, including a relocation to available alternative housing. The College will consider the accommodation requests of all residents involved. Requests for accommodation will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis in light of the circumstances, including, but not limited to available housing options.

E. Rules Applicable to Assistance Animals

All individuals who bring an assistance animal on College property must comply with the requirements of this Policy and adhere to the following rules:

- The assistance animal is only permitted within the College-owned residence hall to which the student has been assigned a bedroom and only under the conditions specified in this Policy. The assistance animal is not permitted in other Wellesley facilities, including dining-rooms and classrooms.
- As determined in the College’s discretion, the behavior, noise, odor, and waste of an assistance animal must not exceed reasonable standards and these factors must not create an unreasonable disruption for other residents and Wellesley staff.
- Dangerous, poisonous, and illegal animals are not permitted.

Additionally, the owner must comply with the “Additional Rules and Responsibilities for Owners of Approved Service or Approved Assistance Animals at Wellesley.” The College may place other reasonable conditions or restrictions on the assistance animals depending on the particular facts and circumstances, including the nature and characteristics of the assistance animal.

F. Notice and Education to College Community

Where appropriate in the sole discretion of the College, Disability Services staff may provide notice or offer targeted training to members of the Wellesley community most likely to come in contact with an assistance animal.

VI. Additional Rules and Responsibilities for Owners of Approved Service Animal and Approved Assistance Animals at Wellesley

All members of the community are expected to comply with the terms of this Policy. Violations of the rules applicable to approved assistance animals and service animals in this Policy may result in the removal of the animal from campus property, in the sole discretion of the College.

In addition to the other terms of this Policy, the following list contains requirements that the owners of approved service and approved assistance animals must follow:

- The approved service or assistance animal must receive all required immunizations against diseases in accordance with applicable state and local ordinances and regulations. Dogs must have current vaccination against rabies and wear a rabies vaccination tag. Local licensing requirements must be followed. License and vaccination verification will take place when the animal first arrives on campus. The College may request updated verification regarding a service animal’s vaccinations during the period that the animal is permitted on the College’s campus.
- The approved service or assistance animal must be in good health. If deemed appropriate under the circumstances, the College may, in its sole discretion, request documentation from a licensed veterinarian confirming the health of the animal. The College may direct that the approved service or assistance animal receive veterinary attention in appropriate circumstances.

- The owner is responsible for the care and supervision of the approved service or assistance animal. Wellesley is not responsible for the care or supervision of the approved service or assistance animal. It is the owner's responsibility to care for the approved service or assistance animal properly, including to remove and to properly dispose of any waste. An approved service or assistance animal must be clean and well groomed, and effective measures should be taken at all times for flea control. In keeping with College policy regarding damage to College property, the owner will be responsible for the costs of any damage to College property caused by the approved service or assistance animal.
- The owner is responsible for assuring that the approved service or assistance animal does not unduly interfere or adversely affect the routine activities of the Wellesley Residential Life staff or other residents.
- The owner must ensure that the approved service or assistance animal does not pose a threat to the health, safety, or property of anyone in the College community. If the College determines that the approved service or assistance animal threatens the health, safety, or property of anyone in the College community, Wellesley will take appropriate measures, up to, and including, a determination that the animal may no longer be permitted on campus.
- The owner is financially responsible for the approved service or assistance animal, including for any bodily injury or property damage caused by the animal. In keeping with College policy regarding damage to College property, the owner's financial responsibility may include replacement of furniture, carpet, window, wall covering, and costs of damage to other Wellesley owned property, or property of others, caused by the approved service or assistance animal. The owner is expected to cover these costs at the time of repair and/or move-out.
- In keeping with College policy regarding damage to College property, the owner is responsible for any expenses incurred for required cleaning above and beyond a standard cleaning caused by the approved service or assistance animal. Any such expenses will be assessed after the owner and approved animal vacate the applicable Wellesley Housing unit. The College shall bill the student account for unmet obligations.
- The owner must notify Disability Services, in writing, if the approved service or assistance animal is no longer needed or is no longer in residence. To request to replace an approved service or assistance animal with another animal, the owner must notify Disability Services and submit a new Assistance and Service Animal Request Form . The College may require additional information, in its sole discretion, consistent with the procedures described in Sections IV and V of this Policy, as applicable.
- The College may relocate the owner and approved service or assistance animal if necessary to accommodate other residents with medical condition(s) who are affected by animals, or in other circumstances as deemed appropriate in the sole discretion of the College.

- The owner must abide by all other College policies, including housing policies.

As detailed above, approved service or assistance animals may not unduly interfere or adversely affect the routine activities of the Wellesley Residential Life staff or other Wellesley community members. In order to meet this expectation, the College recommends that owners review The Canine Good Citizen's program for guidance on appropriate dog behavior: <http://www.petmd.com/dog/training/evr dg canine citizen>). The Canine Good Citizen guidance includes the following recommendations:

- The animal can be still and not break position when a friendly stranger approaches the owner.
- The owner is in control of the animal, and that the animal is attentive to all of the owner's moves, even when walking on a loose lead.
- The animal is under control and can be walked on a leash, or in a public place with humans close by, without getting over-excited or straining at its lead.
- The animal will come to the owner when called.
- The animal can behave appropriately when it is around other animals, maintaining a neutral stance.
- The animal does not panic or get aggressive when faced with common distractions, such as items being dropped or people running.

VII. Resolution of Complaints Regarding Reported Policy Violations

Complaints regarding violations of the rules applicable to service animals or assistance animals, as described in the relevant sections of the College's Service Animal and Assistance Animal Policy, should be addressed to the Director of Disability Services, Jim Wice, [781-283-2434](tel:781-283-2434), jwice@wellesley.edu.

After receiving a complaint, the Director of Disability Services, or designee, will contact the owner of the animal to schedule a meeting to discuss the complaint and may conduct an investigation if deemed necessary, in the sole discretion of the College. The Director of Disability Services, or designee, may consult with the Housing Accommodation Review Committee and other College offices and individuals, including, but not limited to, the Dean of Students Office, Human Resources and College Animal Officer to evaluate the reported violation(s) of the Service Animal and Assistance Animal Policy and to determine how the complaint will be resolved. The Director of Disability Services, or designee, will notify the owner of the animal in writing whether the College has determined that there has been a violation of the Service Animal and Assistance Animal Policy. If the College determines that there has been a violation, the College may require the owner to redress the violation within a specified timeframe. In certain circumstances, including, but not limited to, violations of the rules requiring proper health, care, supervision, or control of the animal, the owner may receive a warning and a date by which the violations must be resolved. For example, if it is determined

that an animal is not in good health, the College may require the animal to receive appropriate veterinary attention and request documentation from a licensed veterinarian confirming the treatment and health of the animal. The College may require removal of an animal from campus pending the College's determination that a violation of the rules has been resolved. Failure to appropriately redress violations of the rules applicable to Service or Assistance Animals will result in further action, including, but not limited to, required removal of the animal from campus property. In addition, the College expressly reserves the right to require immediate removal of the animal from campus property if it determines that the animal threatens the health, safety, or property of the College community, or as a result of repeated violations of the rules applicable to Service or Assistance Animals.

VIII. Accommodations and Modification Requests & Acknowledgement of Reading the Policy

Individuals with disabilities and others who need more information about service and assistance animals or need accommodations/modifications to these policies and procedures should contact the Director of Disability Services, Jim Wice, ADA/504 Coordinator, jwice@wellesley.edu, 781-283-2434.

The individual noted below is acknowledging having understood the above stated policy.

Print name _____ Date _____

Sign name _____ Date _____