



## WORKING ANIMALS ON CAMPUS

### Definition

For the purposes of formulating a campus policy and to insure that individual rights and privileges are properly addressed, Middle Georgia State University (MGA) has enacted this directive in regards to all service, support, and comfort animals that will be on any campus or at any sponsored activity of MGA. This policy is in accordance with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) regarding service animals, Housing and Urban Development (HUD) regarding the Fair Housing Act, and Georgia Law (OCGA 30.4.2) dogs that are being trained as service animals.

The ADA states a service animal is “Any animal that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability.”

The ADA law recognizes only dogs and miniature horses as service animals. To be classified as a service animal, the work or tasks performed by the service animal must be directly related to the Handler’s disability.

For a person to qualify as disabled, the disabling condition must be severe enough to substantially limit one or more major life activities. The dog and/or miniature horse that has been trained to assist a person who has a documented disability is allowed to accompany the person with a disability to classes, activities, programs, field trips, and residence halls as long as it is not specifically prohibited by this policy or federal/state law.

Support and comfort animals are only covered by the HUD regulations in relation to living in the residence halls. The Fair Housing Act (FHA) is enforced by the Department of Justice (DOJ) and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). University living areas fall under the FHA. In matters pertaining to “Assistance Animals” the FHA has a broader definition than the ADA. These animals are stipulated acceptable under the FHA if they comply with the following:

- The person has a documented disability.
- The animal is necessary to afford the person with a disability an equal opportunity to use and enjoy the dwelling.
- There is an identifiable relationship with the person with the disability and the assistance the animal provides.

HUD does not set any restrictions on the type of animal that could qualify as an assistance animal under the FHA as long as there is supporting documentation that the animal is assisting in the betterment of the person with a disability.

However, HUD does not require the university to permit animals on campus if they pose a direct threat to the health and safety of others; would cause substantial physical damage to the property of others; would pose an undue financial and administrative burden; or would fundamentally alter the nature of the university's dormitory operations.

In summary, the FHA requires reasonable accommodations for "assistance animals" in residential rooms only, but the university is not required to allow the person to bring that animal to other areas or buildings on campus unless that animal qualifies as a "service animal" under the ADA and Section 504.

### Inquiries about Service Animals

When it is not obvious what duties a service animal provides, the staff may ask two questions:

1. Is the dog's services required because of a disability?
2. What work or task has the dog been trained to perform?

The employee cannot ask about the person's disability, require medical documentation, require special identification or training documentation for the dog or ask that the dog perform the work or task.

Allergies or the fear of dogs are not acceptable reasons to deny accommodations to people using service animals. A reasonable solution to address the situation will be enacted whenever necessary.

The service dog will only be removed from the property if-

1. The dog is out of control and the handler does not take action to control it.
2. The dog is not housebroken.
3. The dog acts aggressively towards others.

The comfort and support animal will be removed from the property if-

1. The animal is at locations outside of the campus housing and approved designated locations.
2. The Handler does not register the animal on campus.
3. The animal is not wearing its' university approved identification tag.
4. The Handler does not maintain the care and upkeep of the animal.
5. The animal is aggressive towards others.

### Acknowledgement

To ensure compliance with all rules, regulations, and laws pertaining to Working Animals, MGA has enacted a Working Animal registry on its campuses. This policy is voluntary for persons with ADA recognized Services Animals temporarily visiting the campus or students commuting to school, but it is highly recommended while the service dog is on campus. This registry has been designed to assist if there is an on-campus incident involving the animal or in times of emergencies. The registry will enable the animal to have a campus-issued identification tag with the Handler's contact information. All students and employees who live in the campus residence halls with animals, including services animals, will have to comply with the registry.

## Requirements for Service Animals and Emotional Support Animals on Campus

- **REGISTRATION**

The Handler of the Emotional Support Animal (ESA) must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) and complete the Animal Registration Forms before the animal is allowed on campus. If the dog is a service animal and not living in campus housing, they are exempt from having to register.

- **LIABILITY**

Care and upkeep of the animal- the Handler assumes full responsibility as long as the animal is on campus or at an off-campus university function. The Handler is responsible for all costs incurred when the animal damages property or causes injury to anyone. In the case in which the animal injures a person, the Handler shall make an immediate report to the campus police so that the incident can be properly investigated and fault can be determined and documented.

- **LEASH**

The animal must be on a leash at all time when in college buildings. When the animal is in residence halls, the animal can be unleashed in the Handler's room. The only other time the animal may be allowed to be off the leash is when it is exercising in an approved open area and at that time, it will be under close controlling/supervision. If Handler is unable to control the animal in this circumstance, this privilege may be taken away.

- **HOUSEBROKEN**

The animal must be housebroken before it is allowed on campus. Whether it is a service, comfort, support or a service dog in training, if the animal is not housebroken, it will be excluded from MGA. In the case of an isolated mishap, the Handler is responsible for the immediate clean up and disposal of the animal's bodily fluids and solid wastes whether indoors or outside unless the Handler is not physically able to perform that duty.

- **CLEANUP**

Whether it is liquid or solid waste or trash attributed to the animal, it is the Handler's responsibility to clean up after the animal. If the Handler is physically unable to clean up after the animal, arrangements will be made to address that situation and the cost of cleanup and/or repair will be the responsibility of the Handler. It is the Handler's responsibility to purchase appropriate supplies to sanitize and deodorize areas of occupancy and to have disposal bags available at all times.

- **BEHAVIOR**

The Handler is required to remove an animal that is disruptive from campus. If the animal is biting, attempting to bite, growling, running around, jumping on people, or other disruptive behavior, it must be removed immediately from campus. If the animal is disruptive and the Handler does not remove the animal, the animal will be banned from campus. The campus police can demand the animal be removed from campus if it is an immediate threat. In cases of

non-emergency requests to remove animals from campus, a hearing panel, chaired by the Director of Disability Services will address those concerns and make recommendations.

- **HEALTH**

The Handler shall not bring an animal that is ill in any facility on campus. If an animal becomes ill in any campus facility, the Handler must immediately remove the animal from that property. Animals must also be clean and well-groomed. Any animal that is not clean (no ticks, fleas, infestations, foul smelling, or inadequately groomed) it may be asked to leave the university facility until the condition is corrected.

- **INCIDENT REPORTING**

In the event that an incident occurs that involves damage to property or bodily injury by an animal, the Handler is REQUIRED to submit a written report to the ODS within 24 hours of the next school day. The report will include the events of the incident, names and contact numbers of persons witnessing the incident and names of persons involved in the incident.

- **IDENTIFICATION TAGS**

The animal must wear a Middle Georgia State University identification tag and an Handler's information tag (contact information) as long as the animal is on campus. Service animals are exempt from this requirement, but it is recommended as a safety consideration.

### Animals in Campus Housing

All animals, including ADA recognized services animals, will register with the ODS, if the student is requesting to live in the university's residence halls with an animal. If a resident requires an animal or has committed to raising and training a service animal, the student must apply for an accommodation by submitting a request to the ODS along with the appropriate documentation at least 30 days before making a reservation to live in on-campus housing.

The Director of Disability Services will review the request and make a recommendation to the Director of Residential Life.

When the animal is approved to be on campus, the Office of Residence Life will make a reasonable effort to notify the students living in the resident hall where the animal will reside. Students with medical conditions that may be affected by the presence of an animal (respiratory disease, asthma, severe allergies) should contact the ODS if they have a health or safety concern about exposure to the animal. The student will be asked to provide medical documentation to the ODS that identifies their condition and accommodations may be considered.

The Director of Residential Life will work with the Handler of the animal to make arrangements for roommate. Students will not be placed in the room with an animal unless they make the request.

The Handler of the animal is legally and financially responsible for all actions of the animal. If bodily injury or property damage occurs, the university reserves the right to bill the Handler's account for all necessary repair and/or replacement costs.

The Handler is responsible for any expenses that are due to costs incurred for cleaning which is beyond the normal cleaning and/or repairs to housing premises after vacating the residence.

The Handler's residence may be inspected for fleas, ticks, and other pests once per semester or as needed. If fleas, ticks, or other pests are detected through inspection, the residence will be treated using approved fumigation methods by a MGA approved pest control service. The Handler will be billed for any treatments beyond any normally required pest management.

The Handler is responsible for properly disposing of any animal fecal matter. Outdoor animal feces must be immediately retrieved by the Handler and placed in a plastic bag, tied securely, and disposed of in an outdoor trash dumpster.

The Office of Residence Life has the authority to relocate the Handler and the animal as necessary per contractual agreements.

The Handler agrees to continue to abide with all other student residential requirements.

Should the animal be removed from the campus for any reason, the Handler is expected to fulfill his/her housing obligations.

The animal must be on the leash and escorted by the Handler at all times when entering and exiting public areas within the residential halls and across campus. In addition, the animal must wear the identification tags with contact information.

The animal must not be left within the Handler's living space should the Handler leave his/her campus residence.

Other responsibilities may be added to an individual agreement as determined on a case-by-case basis.

#### Checklist for Animal Health

- All animals must have all veterinarian vaccinations. The documentation of vaccinations will be handled by the ODS.
- Any and all state and county licenses must be kept current and a copy kept on file.
- All animals if taken out of the Handler's residential hall must be wearing their identification tags (contact information)
- All animals must be housed in acceptable conditions within the residential hall.
- All animals must be treated humanely. If mistreatment is reported, the university may initiate an investigation.

**Middle Georgia State University  
Animal/Handler Registration Form**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

MGA ID # \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Ph# \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have a disability as defined by the ADA?                     Yes                     No

Is this animal a service animal?     Yes                     No

Is this animal a support animal?     Yes                     No

Is this animal a comfort animal?     Yes                     No

Is this animal trained to perform a task related to your disability?    Yes                     No

What task(s) does this animal perform?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Name of animal \_\_\_\_\_

Is this animal certified through an agency?     Yes                     No

Name of Agency \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ I understand the above information to be true. Any changes to this information will require a new registration.

\_\_\_\_ I have read and agree to abide to the MGA Working Animal Policy.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Middle Georgia State University  
Office of Residence Life Registration Form**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

MGA ID # \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Primary Ph# \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Please check one of the statements

\_\_\_\_ I am requesting to have an animal and have it live in my residential hall room.

\_\_\_\_ I am requesting to train a Service Animal and have it live in my residential hall room.

If campus address is known, please provide:

Building \_\_\_\_\_ Unit/Room \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ I understand the above information to be true. Any changes to this information will require a new registration.

\_\_\_\_ I have read and agree to abide to the MGA Working Animal Policy.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Middle Georgia State University**  
**Service, Support, Comfort Animal/Roommate Agreement**

I understand that all roommates/suitemates must agree to allow the approved animal to reside within the living unit. Therefore, it is necessary to obtain permission from all persons living within the apartment. By signing this document, I am agreeing to allow the animal to reside in the unit I share with its' Handler.

I understand that \_\_\_\_\_ is requesting an accommodation to the housing agreement for an animal. As a roommate of the Handler of the animal, I agree to allow the animal to reside within my living space.

Roommate's Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_

Roommate's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Roommate's Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_

Roommate's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Roommate's Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_

Roommate's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Roommate's Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_

Roommate's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Departmental Approval:**

Director of Residence Life \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



**Middle Georgia**  
State University

## Approval Form

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Name of Animal

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Name of Handler

Student ID Number

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Telephone Number

Date of Submission

The Handler of the animal has knowledge and agrees to be in compliance with all policies and procedures pertaining to having an animal on the campus of Middle Georgia State University and has been informed of their responsibilities in caring for the animal while on campus.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Initials

The Handler is aware that each semester, the animal has to be registered by the Office of Disability Services (ODS) in order to be on property. Failure to comply with this request or any stipulation set forth in the Working Animal Policy will result in the removal of the animal from the property.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Initials

By signing this form, the Office of Disability Services (ODS) has approved the animal to be on the campus of Middle Georgia State University. The animal is registered with the Office of Disability Services (ODS) and can be issued a MGA identification card.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Initials

Name of Disability Provider \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Provider

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Date

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