



Certified Professional Form

Request for Emotional Support Animal (ESA) Accommodation

*This form must be completed by a **certified professional**. The health care provider need not use this specific form, but all information requested here is necessary for the institution to have in order to consider the request for an ESA; the form is provided as a convenience.*

Student’s Name: _____ Student’s Email: _____

Student’s Phone: _____

The above-named student has indicated that you are the certified professional who has suggested that having an Emotional Support Animal (ESA) in the residence hall will have therapeutic benefit in alleviating one or more of the identified symptoms or effects of the student’s mental health disability. Generally, we prefer documentation from providers in the state of Florida or the student’s home state who have personal knowledge of the student, consistent with their professional obligations.

Some websites sell certificates, registrations, and licensing documents for assistance animals to anyone who answers certain questions or participates in a short interview and pays a fee. Under the Fair Housing Act, a housing provider may request reliable documentation when an individual requesting a reasonable accommodation has a disability and disability-related need for an accommodation that are not obvious or otherwise known. **In HUD’s experience, such documentation from the internet is not, by itself, sufficient to reliably establish that an individual has a non-observable disability or disability-related need for an assistance animal.** (Excerpt from 2020 HUD Guidance)

So that we may better evaluate the request for this accommodation, please thoroughly answer the following questions:

Information About the Student’s Disability

- 1. Federal law defines a person with a disability as someone who has a physical or mental impairment that **substantially limits** one or more major life activities. That suggests that a diagnosis does not necessarily equate with a disability (substantial limitation). What is the nature of the student’s mental health impairment (that is, how is the student **substantially limited**?)

Provider Response:



2. Documentation of disability must come from a source with sufficient direct personal knowledge of the individual to clarify the need for the ESA and the nexus between the disability and the presence of the animal in housing:
 - a. When did you first meet with the student regarding this mental health diagnosis?
 - b. What is the nature of your meetings (i.e., face-to-face or virtual meetings)?
 - c. When did you last interact with the student regarding this mental health diagnosis?
 - d. How often have you seen the student (or plan to see the student) for further counseling/treatment?

Provider Response:

a:

b:

c:

d:

3. What specific symptoms is this student experiencing, and how will those symptoms be mitigated by the presence of an ESA? **General assessments are typically insufficient.** For example, a statement that “The animal alleviates anxiety” is too general and does not explain HOW the animal may alleviate the symptoms of the student’s disability.

Provider Response:

4. If the accommodation would not be approved, what alternative resources would you recommend for this student?

Provider Response:



5. Please provide any additional factors to be considered in making this decision.

Provider Response *(if not applicable, please mark N/A)*:

Information About the Proposed ESA

Please note that there are some restrictions on the kind of animal that can be approved for the residence hall; it is possible the student may be approved for an ESA, based on the information you provide here, but may not be allowed to bring the specific animal named.

6. Proposed ESA
- a. Name
 - b. Type of animal
 - c. Age of animal
 - d. Size of cage/crate needed for containment

Provider Response *(if not identified, please mark N/A)*:

a:
b:
c:
d:

7. Dogs and cats are most often requested as ESAs and seem best suited to adapting to the communal living setting of the college residence hall. If another type of animal is being suggested for this student, please explain why you believe that animal is a better choice.

Provider Response *(if not applicable, please mark N/A)*:



8. Is there evidence that an ESA has helped this student in the past or currently? If not, why do you believe this may be an effective support for the student now?

Provider Response:

9. Please address the likely impact on the student should the following scenario occur: Once the student is living with the animal in the student housing unit, the animal is permanently removed from the unit because of a violation of policy (e.g. the animal injures someone or destroys property) and balance this impact, if any, against the benefit that you expect the animal to provide the student.

Provider Response:

10. This student was provided with a copy of the rules and restrictions surrounding the presence of an animal in residence in the University housing. Has the student shared those restrictions with you?

Provider Response:

11. Have you discussed the responsibilities associated with properly caring for an animal while engaged in typical college activities and residing in campus housing? Do you believe those responsibilities might exacerbate the student's symptoms in any way? (If you have not had this conversation with the student, we will discuss with the student at a later date)

Provider Response:



Florida Southern College – Student Disability Services (SDS)

111 Lake Hollingsworth Drive

Lakeland, FL 33801-5698

Phone: 863-680-4900

disabilityservices@flsouthern.edu

Thank you for taking the time to complete this form. If we need additional information, we may contact you at a later date. The named student has signed this form (below) indicating written permission to share additional information with us in support of the request.

We recognize that having an ESA in the residence hall can be a real benefit for someone with a significant mental health disorder, but the practical limitations of our housing arrangements make it necessary to carefully consider the impact of the request for an ESA on both the student and the campus community.

Please provide the following contact details below:

Certified Professional’s Name and Title (please print): _____

License/Certification Number & Issuing State: _____

Agency: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ **Email:** _____

Professional Signature

Date

STUDENT (Please sign this form before providing it to your mental health provider to complete):

By signing below, I consent to allowing my health care provider to share any information relevant to my need for an ESA as an accommodation, as shown on this form, with *Student Disability Services at Florida Southern College* for the next 60 days.

Student Signature

Date