

Animals and Pets on Campus

General Policy

Southwestern Oklahoma State University recognizes the important roles of animals in the lives of many people. The guidelines presented in this policy are designed to ensure SWOSU offers a safe and positive campus environment for everyone. This policy addresses SWOSU's guidelines for assistance/emotional support animals, pets, and service animals. There may be occasions where animals are covered by policies or guidelines other than and/or in addition to this policy (e.g., academic research, third party events).

Animals are the responsibility of their handlers and therefore their behavior is considered the handler's behavior. Animals of any classification are prohibited from being disruptive to the campus community. Additionally, animals are prohibited from behaving in a manner that harms the safe campus environment. In these instances, handlers may be asked to correct the animal's behavior and/or remove it from the grounds.

Pets

In general, pets are permitted on SWOSU's outside grounds areas that are accessible to the public. Pets must be responsive to and under their handler's control. Individuals are responsible for cleaning up their pet's waste.

Service Animals

Service animals are trained to perform tasks directly related to the individual's disability and are generally allowed to access anywhere their handlers are permitted on campus. It is possible incidents may arise that would not be accessible to a service animal (e.g., areas that require protective equipment for access, a sterile environment). However, should such a situation develop, the animal's handler and the appropriate SWOSU administrator may review the matter for optional resolutions. Individuals are responsible for cleaning up their pet's waste.

Employees requiring a service animal will participate in an interactive process to assist in establishing reasonable accommodations to perform essential functions of the job.

Students with a service animal are asked to contact the Dean of Students' office at (580) 774-3767, STF 214 for guidance on university procedures.

Emotional Support Animals:

These animals (also referred to as Assistance Animals) provide therapeutic support (e.g., emotional support, companionship, comfort) to an individual. An Emotional Support Animal (ESA) is not a Service Animal and does not perform specific tasks directly related to their handler's disability.

Assistance Animals are only permitted on SWOSU's outside grounds areas that are accessible to the public. They are prohibited from SWOSU buildings and vehicles. ESAs must be responsive to and under their handler's control. Individuals are responsible for cleaning up the animal's waste.

SWOSU's **Residential Halls** are governed by additional federal requirements. Individuals residing in campus housing should contact SWOSU office of Residence Life & Housing for specific guidelines pertaining to ESAs.