

SWOSU HOUSING
ACCOMMODATIONS
PACKET



Disability Accommodations Request for University Housing

The following packet has been established to accommodate students who have special disability-related needs that may impact their on-campus housing. Once a student has documented a disability with the Office of the Dean of Students, they are then eligible to complete this SWOSU Housing Accommodations packet.

It is illegal to acquire certifications that are knowingly fraudulent, misrepresent an animal as a service animal and/or falsify documentation in an effort to seek accommodations that are protected through the ADA and FHA.

Procedure Statement:

Priority housing requests based on medical, psychological or other disability-related needs are initiated by completing the SWOSU Housing Accommodations packet and submitting it to the Office of the Dean of Students. Upon submission, students requesting housing accommodations must also formally submit their application for student housing to the Department of Residence Life & Housing. The Dean of Students and Director of Residence Life & Housing will review requests on a case-by-case basis. Decisions are based upon availability of the requested housing arrangement, along with the respective needs of all applicants. Documentation of a special need or disability does not guarantee that your request will be approved.

This request is only for housing accommodations at SWOSU and related to the functional limitations associated with your disability. Please contact the Office of the Dean of Students for additional information concerning any requested academic accommodations, as further documentation will likely be needed for review before such can be provided.

Complete the following three forms and submit to the Office of the Dean of Students:

1. Student-completed form: "Housing Accommodations Request".
2. Student or parent-completed form: "Permission for Release of Information"
3. Student and Physician/Professional-completed form: "Documentation of Disability-Related Housing Accommodation" with requested information on letterhead.

The priority deadlines for submitting the SWOSU Housing Accommodations packet to the Office of the Dean of Students for the Fall Semester are April 15th for returning students and June 15th for new students. Students entering SWOSU for the Spring Semester have a date of November 15th, and a Summer term date of April 15th. Failure to meet the priority deadline may mean that the residence hall of choice is not available. Students must re-apply every new academic year for housing accommodation(s). Returning students should inquire with the Office of the Dean of Students to determine if their documentation needs to be updated before completing and submitting their packet.

Application Process:

1. Schedule a meeting with the Office of the Dean of Students by calling 580-774-3767 to document the disability.
2. Submit the completed SWOSU Housing Accommodations packet to the Office of the Dean of Students.
3. Dean of Students and Director of Residence Life & Housing reviews the SWOSU Housing Accommodations packet.
4. The Office of the Dean of Students notifies the student in writing informing him/her to the outcome of the review.

All requested documentation will be maintained per FERPA guidelines and will only be utilized to determine the student's housing request. The Office of the Dean of Students will maintain the requested documentation and respect the student's confidentiality at all times.



Permission for Release of Information

I give permission for the exchange of my medical, psychological, psychiatric, sociological, or educational information between the following departments of Southwestern Oklahoma State University to facilitate the processing of my SWOSU Housing Accommodations packet:

Office of the Dean of Students
Student Health Services
Counseling Center
Department of Residence Life & Housing
Auxiliary Services
Other:

This form to be completed by student only after a disability has been documented with the Office of the Dean of Students. (Please print)

Name of Diagnosing Professional: _____

Title of Diagnosing Professional: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Student Full Name: _____ SWOSU ID#: _____

Home Address: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Email: _____

(Signature of student if age 18 or over, or signature of parent/guardian if student is under age 18)

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Return To:

**Office of the Dean of Students, Thomas P. Stafford Center #214, 100 Campus Drive,
Weatherford, OK 73096; or by fax: (580) 774-3034 / email: deanoffice@swosu.edu**



Documentation of Disability-Related Housing Accommodation

Top section ONLY to be completed by student with a SWOSU recognized disability. (Please print.)

Name: _____

SWOSU ID#: _____ Email: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Address: _____

The following section must be completed by a licensed professional who is qualified to diagnose or evaluate existing records. To avoid conflicts of interest, professionals employed by the University and relatives of the student are not permitted to provide supporting documentation. (Please print.)

Name of Diagnosing Professional: _____

Title of Diagnosing Professional: _____

Address: _____

Office Phone: _____ Office Fax: _____

Professional's Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

In addition to this form, please include ON LETTERHEAD, the following information, as well as your professional credentials and signature:

- Clearly state the diagnosed disability or disabilities, diagnostic criteria used, and include the original date of diagnosis and date of the most recent evaluation.
- The current impact on major life activities or functional limitations resulting from the student's disability.
- Treatments, medications, devices and/or services currently prescribed or used to minimize the impact of the student's disability, as well as the expected duration, stability or progression of the disability.
- A description of the recommended housing arrangements (e.g., private room, private bath, accessible level, etc.) based on the impact of the functional limitations associated with the student's disability, why the recommended arrangements are needed and would be deemed reasonable as SWOSU evaluates the request.
- Alternatives if the request is not practical for SWOSU to implement.

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Housing Accommodations Request Form

To be completed by student with a SWOSU recognized disability. (Please print.)

Name: _____ SWOSU ID#: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____ Email: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Please list specific housing accommodation(s) and explain need based upon documented disability. Attach additional sheets as necessary.

Request(s):

Justification*:

*Note - The Office of the Dean of Students reviews applications to ensure that the claimed disability is a "substantially limiting condition" as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act.

I understand that I must provide supporting documentation to the Office of the Dean of Students for consideration of accommodations in my housing assignment. This includes submitting the "Statement of Need" from the appropriate Physician/Professional to support my request.

(Signature of student if age 18 or over, or signature of parent/guardian if student is under age 18)

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Return To:

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Animal Registration, Certifications & Veterinarian Records

This form is required only for those seeking accommodation of an assistance animal. Top section **ONLY** to be completed by student with a SWOSU recognized disability. (Please print.)

Owner's Name: _____

SWOSU ID#: _____ Email: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Address: _____

Animal's Name: Breed: _____

Birthday: _____ Spay/Neuter Date: _____ Gender: _____

Color/Special Markings (must also provide current color photo of animal):

Weight: Chip or ID Tag #: _____

Certifications (if applicable): _____

The following section must be completed by a licensed veterinarian qualified to treat and evaluate the animal registered above and who has access to existing records for documentation. (Please print.)

Vet Clinic Name: _____ Name of Veterinarian: _____

Vet Address: _____ Phone: _____

Medical Conditions/Medications for Animal Above:

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Veterinarian's Signature: _____ Date: _____

In addition to this form, please provide **ON LETTERHEAD**, the most recent immunization records for the animal listed above, as well as your professional credentials and signature:

Return To:

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Weatherford, OK 73096; or by fax: (580) 774-3034 / email: deanoffice@swosu.edu

**Southwestern Oklahoma State University
Residence Life & Housing - Assistance Animal Policy**

Southwestern Oklahoma State University is committed to accommodating persons with disabilities who require the support of assistance animals; however, the university is also mindful of the health and safety concerns of the campus community. Thus, the university must balance the needs of the disabled individual, as well as the potential impact of the assistance animals on other campus residents.

The Office of the Dean of Students is responsible for assisting students with disabilities and documentation of their specific need for an accommodation. Residence Life & Housing is responsible for implementing this policy in residential facilities on campus.

I. Definitions

Disability

The ADAAA defines the term “disability” as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities (such as walking, seeing, hearing, working, or learning); a record “or past history” of such an impairment; or being regarded as having a disability.

Pet

A pet is an animal kept for companionship. A pet is not considered a service animal or a therapy/emotional support animal, and, therefore, is not covered by this policy. Residents are not permitted to keep pets on university property or in University Housing.

Owner

The “Owner” is the resident who has requested the accommodation and has received approval to bring an Assistance Animal to the University.

Assistance Animals

A. Service Animal

ADA defines a service animal as any dog or miniature horse that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including but not limited to, guiding individuals with impaired vision, alerting individuals who are hearing impaired to intruders or sounds, providing minimal protection or rescue work, pulling a wheelchair or fetching dropped items. A service animal must be registered through the Office of the Dean of Students.

B. Emotional Support Animal (ESA)

An emotional support animal (which also include comfort/therapy animals) is selected to play an integral part of a person’s treatment process. The animal must demonstrate a good temperament and reliable, predictable behavior. ESAs must be prescribed to an individual with a disability by a physician or mental health professional. An emotional support animal is not a service animal, and therefore, are only permitted in specific areas of housing facilities, not in other campus buildings. Additionally, emotional support animals are only covered by the Fair Housing Act, not ADA/504.

II. Assistance Animal Requests in University Housing

Assistance animals may not reside in University housing without expressed prior approval of university officials. Requests for assistance animals cannot be retroactive, meaning that animals residing in University housing without authorization will not be eligible for future review/consideration. Proper requests should be processed as follows:

- A.** A person requesting an assistance animal must have on file a current Residence Life Housing Application with deposit in place. If qualifying disability exists, it must then be documented via “ADAAA Appropriate Documentation” found on the Dean of Students website. Then arrange a meeting with the Office of the Dean of Students to establish/document the disability and any accommodations being requested. Once established, the SWOSU Housing Accommodations packet will be provided, which must then be completed and returned to the Office of the Dean of Students at least 30 days before prospective housing will be needed. The Office of the Dean of Students requires this 30-day notice period to gather and verify the necessary documentation from the student. During this time, the University may request additional information, a meeting with the student, and/or recommend alternative accommodations. The

determination of all disability accommodations is made on a case-by-case basis through an interactive process between the student and the University.

The University is not required to provide accommodations that would pose a direct threat to the health or safety of others, and will furthermore deny requests that would result in substantial physical damage to the property of others, pose an undue financial and administrative burden on the University, or fundamentally alter the nature of the University's residential life operation. The Office of the Dean of Students, as well as the Department of Residence Life & Housing may place reasonable conditions or restrictions on animals depending on the nature and characteristics of the animal. Additionally, an assistance animal will not be approved unless it is permitted in residential housing by state/local laws and in conformity with these laws.

- B.** Once accommodations have been approved by the Office of the Dean of Students, a meeting will be arranged with a representative from the Department of Residence Life & Housing and the person requesting the assistance animal. During this meeting, this policy will be carefully reviewed with the person to discuss the impact of the animal on the university housing program. The assistance animal approval is specific to the animal for which the accommodation request is made and limited to the academic year in which the approval is given. The student must request the accommodation and follow the procedures set forth in the policy and packet for each academic year. To replace one assistance animal with another assistance animal, the student must reapply for the accommodation.
- C.** Residence Life & Housing reserves the right to assign or reassign an individual with an assistance animal to best accommodate the needs of all students, whether it be to a different housing facility or a private room. The approval for assistance animals can be rescinded by the University at any time should the agreement of terms listed in the Assistance Animal Contract Addendum be violated or breached. The student must notify the Department of Residence Life & Housing in writing if the animal is no longer needed in residence.

III. Responsibilities of Individuals with Assistance Animals

A. Animal Care & Guidelines

The care and supervision of the assistance animal is solely the responsibility of the student. This includes, but is not limited to, regular feeding, bathing, grooming, daily care, and veterinary services. The University is not responsible for the animals care or supervision. The student is responsible to ensure the assistance animal is house broken or litter trained, in good health, clean, free of fleas and ticks, does not create safety hazards for other people, and is at all times in compliance with all state and local laws and requirement associated with licensing, vaccinations, and other health regulations.

B. Restricted Spaces

The University may prohibit the use of assistance animals in certain locations due to health and safety restrictions. The ESA may not be taken into other students' rooms or apartments, and is not permitted in the common areas of the residential facilities including lounges, bathrooms, laundry facilities, storm shelters, etc., or in other public areas of SWOSU, such as classroom, academic buildings, administrative buildings, libraries, dining service areas, fitness centers, etc. Additionally, ESAs are further limited from being outside of the owner's immediate residence, with the exception of direct transfer by shortest route to the outdoors and must be maintained under standard restraints such as a carrier or collar/harness and leash when outdoors, in public areas, or in transit. Exceptions to restricted areas may be granted on a case-by-case basis by contacting the Department of Residence Life & Housing.

C. Damages/Cleaning

Any damage or requested repairs to the apartment/residence hall or any other SWOSU property, due to the result of the animal, will be the financial responsibility of the student. Physical alterations/repairs to the premises are not allowed; any changes needed must be conducted by employees of SWOSU. An inventory and condition inspection of the residence will be taken prior to the animal's arrival. The residence will receive routine cleaning treatment by Residence Life Custodial Services once animal & owner moves out.

D. Waste Disposal Guidelines

For animals that defecate outdoors, the animal owner is required to properly dispose of solid waste in a plastic bag and discard the excrement in an outdoor dumpster. For indoor animals, the waste should be disposed of in a similar process and taken directly to a dumpster in a sealed container. Owners are restricted from using bathroom facilities to dispose of animal waste and/or cleaning pads, mats, and litter boxes. SWOSU employees are not responsible for cleaning up after any animal.

E. Student Responsibilities

The owner must have their animal on a leash or crated whenever the animal is not inside the owner's residence and in transition to/from the outdoors. The animal must be fed and watered inside the residence only; food and water is not to be left outside at any time. The animal must not be left unattended for more than 4-5 hours in a single period. The student must have the animal in a kennel/crate when they are away from their residence. The approved student is the sole caretaker of the assistance animal at all times. It is expected that the assistance animal will remain with the student during breaks, whether the student chooses to leave campus or remain on campus during those time periods.

F. Animal Liability

It is understood that Southwestern Oklahoma State University is to be held harmless from all damage to property or injuries to persons caused wholly or in part by, or resulting from the animal which will be living in the residence at Southwestern Oklahoma State University. The University suggests that all students purchase renter's insurance. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that the assistance animal does not interfere with the normal activities of residents or negatively impact those who reside in residence.

IV. Removal of Assistance Animal

- A.** In the event the student violates any of the requirements or responsibilities in this policy or other guiding policies and requirements, the accommodation will be reviewed and considered for revocation. The University may remove an assistance animal for the any of the following reasons, but is not limited to:
1. Animal exhibits aggressive behavior, whereas posing a direct threat to the health or safety of others;
 2. Animal is unruly or disruptive (barking, jumping up on people, running around), and the owner does not take effective action to control it;
 3. Animal in ill health or is excessively unclean (e.g., flea-infested, foul-smelling, shedding excessively);
 4. Animal is found to be loose or running at large;
 5. There is evidence of neglect, mistreatment, or abuse;
 6. Animals presence disrupts the educational environment of SWOSU and/or the residential community;
 7. Student incurs violations for not complying with owner responsibilities and/or set policies.

If suspension of animal owning privileges is implemented, the student is responsible for finding immediate alternative placement for the animal. SWOSU has the right to correct potentially harmful situations, including entry into the student's residential area, and removal of the animal. SWOSU retains the right to remove and board the animal at owner expense. Should the animal be removed from the premises for any reason, the student is expected to fulfill their housing obligations for the remainder of the housing contract.

B. Conflicting Disabilities

Students with medical condition(s) who are affected by animals (respiratory diseases, asthma, severe allergies) are asked to contact the Department of Residence Life & Housing and/or the Office of the Dean of Students if they have health or safety related concerns about exposure to an assistance animal. The individual will be asked to provide medical documentation that identifies the condition(s) to help determine as to whether the condition is disabling and whether there is a need for an accommodation.

V. Complaint Process

Members of the University community will have the opportunity to email, from SWOSU email address only, complaints and concerns in regard to noise, odor, pests, threat, or danger to reslife@swosu.edu and/or the DOS email studentdean@swosu.edu. Complaints and concerns will be validated and addressed in a timely manner for a ruling. Possible sanctions may include the following:

- Requiring specific reasonable action on the part of the student to rectify a problem.
- Letter of Warning
- Letter of Reprimand
- Suspension of animal owning privileges

By virtue of my signature, I hereby understand and accept the conditions, obligations, and responsibilities set forth in this SWOSU Housing Assistance Animal Policy, as they relate to my University provided housing agreement.

Name of Resident

Date