Franklin & Marshall College
Procedure for Requesting an Accommodation Animal as an Exception to the Residential Pet Policy

For the purpose of this policy, the term “accommodation animal” refers to “service animals,” “emotional support animal”, “assistive animals” and “necessary assistance animals” as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act, Fair Housing Act, and other applicable laws.

The health and safety of F&M students, faculty, staff, and the accommodation animal is an important concern; therefore, each request for such an accommodation will be made on a case by case basis. In reviewing requests for accommodation animals, Disability Services (DS) consults as necessary with a wide variety of appropriate experts.

In all cases, the owner of the animal is responsible for the animal’s behavior. The removal of any accommodation animal and any necessary cleaning, repairs and/or pest control will be done at the expense of the resident responsible who may also be subject to disciplinary action. Residents will be permitted to have no more than one animal due to confined residential living space.

Any resident wanting an accommodation animal to live in the residence must prepare a written Request for Exception, which includes a typed cover letter with an explanation of the disability-related need for the animal, the types of tasks, if any; the animal is trained to perform, as well as a description of the animal, including type and the animal’s name.

A Request for an Exception to the Pet Policy (Request for Disability-Related Accommodation Animal) should be submitted to Disability Services. With the exception of a trained service dog, the animal should not be in residence unless/until the Request is approved. The approval of a Request is animal-specific and is not transferable to another or different animal.

If the animal is a trained service dog trained to perform service tasks, then the resident’s Request for Exception must answer two questions:

(1) Is this a service animal that is required because of a disability? and
(2) What work or tasks has the animal been trained to perform?

Disability Services requires appropriate medical documentation verifying the resident’s disability.
If the animal is not a dog, or the animal (even if a dog) is not trained to perform service tasks but is an emotional support animal, then the resident may request a reasonable accommodation in the form of an assistive animal. In this case, the resident’s Request for Exception must answer these two questions:

1. Does the resident (asking to use and live with the animal) have a disability — i.e., a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities?

2. Does the resident making the request have a disability-related need for an assistance animal?

The resident’s Request for Exception must include a letter from a treating physician or licensed mental health professional documenting the disability and/or disability-related need for the animal. The letter must outline:

a) Verification of the disability the animal is supporting

b) How the animal serves as an accommodation for the verified disability

c) How the need for the animal relates to the ability of the resident to use and enjoy the living arrangements provided by the College

Requests for an assistive animal as a disability-related accommodation may be denied if granting the request would constitute an undue financial or administrative burden, or would fundamentally alter the nature of a campus approved housing living space. In addition, animal accommodation requests may be denied if:

1. the specific assistance animal in question poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others that cannot be reduced or eliminated by another reasonable accommodation,

2. the specific assistance animal in question would cause substantial physical damage to the property of others that cannot be reduced or eliminated by another reasonable accommodation. Breed, size, and weight limitations are not applicable to an assistance animal.

All documentation must be submitted to Dr. Alison Hobbs, Disability Services Coordinator (ahobbs@fandm.edu or 717-358-5988). Documentation may also be submitted by mail to:

Disability Services
Franklin and Marshall College
P.O. Box 3003
Lancaster, PA 17604-3003
1. The Request will be reviewed for completeness and we will work with the resident to obtain any necessary additional materials.

2. We will notify the resident by email of the decision to accept or decline the request for an exception to the Residential Pet Policy in the form of permission to have an Accommodation Animal in the residence.

   a. If the request is accepted, Disability Services will work with the appropriate House Dean to:
      i. Coordinate with the resident and House staff, to determine a suitable location for the resident and animal to reside
      ii. Review the Guidelines for maintaining the community standards while the animal is in residence.

   b. If the request is declined, if requested,
      Disability Services will work with the resident to set appropriate timelines for the resident to find alternative housing arrangements where an Accommodation Animal is permitted.

3. The decision of the Disability Services may be appealed, in writing, within fifteen business days of the date on the decision email. Written appeals must be submitted to:

   Dean Maria Flores-Mills, Senior Associate Dean of the College 
   Office of the Dean of the College 
   P.O. Box 3003 
   Lancaster, PA 17604-3003

   Appeals must state a specific reason for reconsideration. Appeals may only be based on:
   a) New information, that was not available at the time of the initial review, to support the animal as an accommodation, or
   b) A procedural error that occurred which unfairly affected the decision in the request.
If the Request for an Exception to the Pet Policy is granted, the resident must enter into the following agreements and complete the following additional information regarding the animal:

1. Accommodation Animal Registration Form

2. Up-to-date veterinary record certifying that the animal has all recommended vaccinations to maintain the animal’s health and prevent contagious diseases

3. Signed Guidelines for Maintaining an Accommodation Animal within the Residential Community document
Guidelines for Maintaining an Accommodation Animal within the Residential Community

Introduction

The following guidelines apply to all approved disability-related accommodation animals and their residents who live in the residential community, unless the nature of the disability of the resident precludes adherence to these guidelines, and permission for a variance from the guidelines has been granted.

Animal Behavior

1. An Exception to the Residential Pet Policy is granted for accommodation animals provided that their behavior, noise, odor and waste do not exceed reasonable standards and that these factors do not create unreasonable disruptions for residents and F&M staff.

2. Dangerous, poisonous, and/or illegal animals are not permitted.

3. The approved accommodation animal must be contained within the private residential area (room, suite or apartment) at all times, except when transported outside the private residential area in an animal carrier or controlled by leash or harness (if a leash interferes with a service dog’s ability to perform essential tasks, a request for an exception to the leash requirement should be requested in advance).

Animal Health and Well-Being

1. Accommodation animals must have all veterinarian-recommended vaccinations to maintain the animal’s health and prevent contagious diseases. Documentation of vaccinations is due at time Request for Exception is granted. The College reserves the right to make reasonable requests for updated vaccination verification during the animal’s residency.

2. All accommodation animals, if taken outside the home, must wear identification tags with home address and, if applicable, vaccination information.
**Animal Cleanliness**

Residents are responsible for properly containing and disposing of all animal waste, including but not limited to:

1. Indoor animal waste, such as cat litter, must be placed in a sturdy plastic bag and tied securely before being disposed of in outside trash dumpsters. Litter boxes should be placed on mats so that feces and urine are not tracked onto carpeted surfaces.

2. Outdoor service animal waste, such as dog feces, must be immediately retrieved by resident, placed in a plastic bag and securely tied before being disposed of in outside trash dumpsters.

3. With respect to common areas, Disability Services reserves the right to designate specific sites indoors/outdoors for animal elimination of waste and to prohibit (even if there is immediate clean up afterwards) animal waste in any other common area.

**Resident Responsibilities**

1. The resident must register their accommodation animal with Disability Services through completing and signing the Animal Registration Form and providing all necessary documentation.

2. The resident is responsible for assuring that the accommodation animal does not interfere with the routine activities of the residents or cause unreasonable difficulties for students and/or other residents who reside there. Residential community living requires respect for the needs of residents with allergies and those who may fear animals.

3. The resident is financially responsible for all consequences caused by the actions of the accommodation animal, including bodily injury or property damage which may necessitate replacement or repair of damaged furniture, carpet, drapes, or wall covering, etc. If an accommodation animal causes substantial physical damage to the property of others that cannot be reduced or eliminated by reasonable accommodation, the animal may be excluded from living in the residence.

4. The College shall have the right to bill the account of the resident for unmet obligations arising for damage caused by an accommodation animal.

5. The resident's place of residence may be inspected for fleas, ticks or other pests once per semester or as needed. The Facilities and Operations (F&O) department will schedule the inspection. If fleas, ticks or other pests are detected through inspection, the residence will be treated using approved fumigation methods by a university-approved pest control service.
6. The resident must notify Disability Services in writing if the accommodation animal is no longer needed as an accommodation or is no longer in residence.

7. Even if the resident previously obtained permission for an accommodation animal, the resident must file a new Request for Exception if s/he wishes to bring in a new/different accommodation animal in substitution of the previous accommodation animal.

8. Disability Services has the ability to relocate resident and accommodation animal as necessary provided the new site is consistent with the terms of the current contractual agreement.

9. All roommates or suitemates of the resident, if applicable, must sign an agreement allowing the accommodation animal to be in residence with them. In the event that one or more roommates or suitemates do not approve, either the resident and accommodation animal or the non-approving roommates or suitemates, as determined by the House Dean, may be moved to a more suitable location.

10. Resident agrees to continue to abide by all other residential policies. An exception to a policy that otherwise prohibits having an animal does not constitute an exception to any other policy.

11. Any violation of the above rules will be reviewed through the F&M Judicial Process and the student will be afforded all rights of due process and appeal as outlined in that process.

By my signature below, I verify that I have read, understand and will abide by the Guidelines outlined here and I agree to provide the additional information required to complete my Request for an Exception to the Pet Policy.

______________________________________________  ____________________
Resident Name (Please print)                      Date

______________________________________________  ____________________
Resident Signature                                 Date

______________________________________________  ____________________
Disability Services Coordinator                    Date
Franklin & Marshall College
Roommate/Suitmate Agreement

By my signature below, I agree to share the common areas of my assigned residential space with the accommodation animal approved by this agreement. Should I have any concerns regarding the care and control of the approved accommodation animal, I will discuss my concerns with the accommodation animal’s owner and then with my HA and/or House Dean if the accommodation animal owner and I cannot come to an agreement.

_________________________________  ______________________
Resident’s Name  Date

_________________________________  ______________________
Resident’s Name  Date

_________________________________  ______________________
Resident’s Name  Date

_________________________________  ______________________
Resident’s Name  Date

_________________________________  ______________________
Resident’s Name  Date
Accommodation Animal Checklist:

☐ Register with the F&M Office of Disability Services (ODS);

☐ You will need to submit page 8 and the Roommate Agreement from the Accommodation Animal paperwork provided by ODS.

☐ Write a cover letter describing why you need an accommodation animal on campus. Submit to ODS;

☐ Submit a letter from a therapist or medical professional stating why an Accommodation Animal would allow you to remain at F&M;

☐ Submit recent Vet Records to ODS;

☐ Contact the property manager of your building (if applicable) to let them know you need to go through their Accommodation Animal process;

☐ Contact your rental insurance provider (if applicable) to let them know that you will have an accommodation animal on the premises;

☐ Meet with Dr. Alison Hobbs in ODS for final approval.