

# Requesting an Emotional Support Animal (ESA) in On-Campus Housing

## Policy Statement

Student Disability Services will work with students requesting an emotional support animal (ESA) in their on-campus housing assignment as part of the student's treatment/care plan. Approval for an ESA requires documentation from a licensed healthcare professional, who has an established relationship with the student, acknowledging an ESA as part of the student's ongoing treatment/care plan and; from the ESA's veterinarian, verifying the animal is up to date on their vaccinations. Students approved for an ESA need to adhere to the Memo of Expectations for an ESA. If a student is found to be in violation of these expectations, Residential Living, Residence Education, Student Disability Services, and the Office of Academic and Community Conduct will follow the procedure outlined in the memo, which may result in the withdrawal of the approval of an ESA.

## Policy Requirements

This policy applies to students who require an ESA as part of their treatment/care plan established with their licensed healthcare provider.

Students requesting approval for an ESA must complete the Student Disability Services Packet to Request an Emotional Support Animal (ESA) in On-Campus Housing and submit their completed packet to Student Disability Services in the following time frame. Approval is required before the animal may be on campus.

- A. Incoming students: return completed form 60 calendar days prior to their move in date
- B. Current students: may return completed forms at any point in the semester.

## Reason for Policy/Purpose

This policy provides students, Student Disability Services, Residence Education, Residential Living, and the Office of Academic and Community Conduct with clearer expectations of the process to request and follow up regarding a student needing an ESA in on-campus housing.

## Related Policy Information

Student responsibilities: Students are responsible for notifying Student Disability Services of their interest in being considered for an ESA. During the application process it is the student's

responsibility to monitor their Michigan Technological University email account for communications regarding their ESA.

Staff responsibilities: Staff communicating with the student regarding the ESA process will communicate in a timely manner (adhering to the outlined timeline in the procedure) to assist the student.

## Exclusions

This policy applies to students who will reside, or are currently residing, in on-campus housing facilities. Students who live in off-campus housing should consult their state laws, lease contract, and sites like the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for information regarding their rights and responsibilities for an ESA.

## Contacts

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## Definitions

Established Relationship: A professional bond between a licensed healthcare provider and a client, initiated by informed consent and characterized by a mutual agreement for the delivery of care. This is evidenced by a formal assessment, the development of a treatment plan, and a documented history of services that suggest a continuity of care.

## Forms and Instructions

[ESA Request Form](#)  
[Memo of Expectations for ESA](#)

## Appendices

[Student Disability Policy](#)

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# Requesting an Emotional Support Animal (ESA) in On-Campus Housing Procedures

## Procedures

### A. Application

- a. Students should submit a request for approval of an Emotional Support Animal (ESA) using one of the below processes depending on their status at the time of request.
  - i. Students who are new to Michigan Technological University, (moving into a residence hall for the first time) must apply for an ESA 60 calendar days prior to their move in date. Applications within the 60 calendar day time frame may experience delays in processing.
    1. During the admissions process, incoming students may make admissions staff aware of their need for an ESA. Admissions will provide the name and contact information of the student to Student Disability Services. OR;
    2. Students may reach out directly to Student Disability Services by either emailing [sds@mtu.edu](mailto:sds@mtu.edu) or requesting an appointment with SDS to discuss the process for having an ESA.
    3. Student Disability Services then reaches out to or responds to the student with the policy, procedures, Form A, Memo of Expectations, instructions on how and what to return to their office for approval, and answers any questions the student may have about the process.
    4. A student may request an in person or virtual meeting at any point during this process to discuss the application process or expectations of having an ESA in on-campus housing.
  - ii. Students who are currently residing within one of the Michigan Technological University residence halls.
    1. Students should reach out directly to Student Disability Services inquiring about the process for an ESA by either emailing [sds@mtu.edu](mailto:sds@mtu.edu) or requesting an appointment with SDS.
    2. Student Disability Services then responds to the student with the policy, procedures, Request Form, Memo of Expectations, instructions on how and what to return to their office for approval, and answers any questions the student may have about the process.

3. A student may request an in person or virtual meeting at any point during this process to discuss the application process or expectations of having an ESA in on-campus housing.

## **B. Decision**

### a. For both new and current students:

- i. Once a student has completed all necessary forms and returned their packet (including Request Form, signed Memo of Expectations, and photos of the animal), Student Disability Services will first confirm receipt of the packet within 2 business days and that their request will be considered within the following 10 business days. Within those 10 business days, Student Disability Services may reach out to ask for clarifying information if needed. The need for clarifying information may extend the timeline for a decision.
- ii. If the request is approved:
  1. Residence Education and Residential Living are notified of the approval. Their offices will then need to provide Student Disability Services with the student's roommate assignment as soon as possible. If the student's roommate assignment is not yet known, Student Disability Services will let the student know that once an assignment is known, a staff member will reach out to the roommate.
  2. A staff member will reach out to the roommate(s) of the approved student to discuss any concerns they may have regarding the ESA approval, provide information about the expectations of the roommate and their ESA, and process to alert staff if issues arise with the student and their ESA.
    - a. For incoming students: Staff have up to 30 calendar days to make contact with assigned roommate(s).
    - b. For current students: Staff have up to 10 business days to make contact with assigned roommate(s).
  3. If issues arise with either the physical space or roommate assignments of a student with an approved ESA, Student Disability Services will coordinate with Residence Education, Residential Living, and General Counsel to find a solution.
- iii. If the request is denied:
  1. Students may write an appeal to the Executive Director of the Waino Wahtera Center for Student Success, supervisor of Student Disability Services, by emailing [deanofstudents@mtu.edu](mailto:deanofstudents@mtu.edu). This appeal will be considered within 10 business days.
  2. The appeal is considered by the Director of the Waino Wahtera Center for Student Success and the Dean of Students.