

Limestone College Emotional Support Animal Guidelines

Limestone College follows the most recent guidance from the Department of Urban Housing (HUD) regarding emotional support animals (ESAs). The following guidance has been established regarding the presence of ESAs on campus for students with disabilities. This guidance pertains to ESAs only, not to service animals or pets.

Definition of an Emotional Support Animal

An emotional support animal “provides emotional support that alleviates one or more of the identified symptoms or effects of an existing disability.” A “pet” is defined as an animal kept for companionship or pleasure. Pets are not allowed in Limestone College housing or on campus.

Emotional support animals may not be brought into Limestone College housing without expressed written approval from The Office for Accessibility. Information submitted will be reviewed by Accessibility and Student Housing. In most cases, the presence of the ESA is approved only for housing and does not include other college buildings (e.g., the library, classrooms, labs, student center, dining hall, etc.).

Process for Requesting an Emotional Support Animal

A student requesting permission to keep an ESA in college housing should complete the steps below. Approval of an ESA is determined on a case-by-case basis and students must reapply each academic semester to have an ESA in college housing.

1. The student must meet with Accessibility staff to discuss the student’s request for an ESA in college housing.
2. The student should submit a *Registration and Release* form available in Accessibility.
3. The student should submit current documentation of disability from a licensed mental health professional. The documentation should include verification of disability, a description of why the animal is necessary for the student to use or enjoy college housing, and a description of the relationship between the disability and the support the animal provides. Professional licensure information of the provider, including state(s) where the provider is licensed. For the purposes of this documentation, practitioners must be licensed either in South Carolina or in the student’s home state, if that is where the treatment is occurring.

If the request for an ESA is denied, students may follow the Grievance Procedures listed on the Accessibility webpage (<http://my.limestone.edu/admissions-day-student-admissions/accessibility/grievance-policy>).

Upon approval, the student will meet with Accessibility and Student Housing to carefully review the student’s responsibilities pertaining to having an ESA in college housing. The student’s roommates and housemates will be notified, as appropriate, to obtain their agreement to have the ESA housed in the shared living environment. Should there be conflicting considerations

between the student approved for an ESA and the needs of others in living environment, either the student with the ESA or the non-approving roommate or housemate may be moved to a different location based on space availability. Accessibility and Student Housing will respond in a timely manner and will carefully consider options for all involved students.

Responsibilities of Students Approved for Emotional Support Animals

1. Waste cleanup is the sole responsibility of the student. Service animal waste must be properly disposed of in an appropriate container (i.e., an outside receptacle).
2. At all times, the cost and care of maintenance and health of the service animal is the sole responsibility of the student. The student must abide by local ordinances regarding vaccinations and proper licensure of the service animal.
3. The student will provide contact information for an alternate caregiver who lives off campus who can provide care for the animal if the approved student is not capable of doing so. Limestone College assumes no responsibility or liability for the care of a student's ESA.
4. The student is responsible for ensuring that the ESA does not interfere with routine activities of the residence or cause difficulties to other residents.
5. When transported outside of the living environment, the animal must be on a leash or transported in a carrier.
6. Accessibility and Student Housing may place reasonable conditions or restrictions on approved ESAs, depending on the nature and characteristics of the animal.
7. Maintenance will work to provide a 24 hour notice of entrance into rooms with an ESA. All ESA (caged and non-caged) must be placed in a crate or cage when maintenance staff are completing work orders.
8. The student is financially responsible for the actions of the approved ESA. These actions include bodily injury and/or property damage and handlers must take appropriate precautions to prevent injury and/or property damage. Any damage to Limestone College property caused by the animal or above and beyond normal maintenance cleaning will be charged to the student's account.
9. Student will provide an emergency contact should the student be unable to care for the ESA.

Removal of an Emotional Support Animal

ESAs may be removed from Limestone College premises if there are any violations of student responsibilities, the animal poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others, or other situations that arise that negatively impact the college environment.