



Policy and Guidelines for Service Animals and Emotional Support Animals

(Approved April 24, 2019)

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Introduction

Hood College is committed to providing reasonable services and accommodations for students and employees with identified and federally protected disabilities. The College recognizes the importance of Service Animals as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the Amendments Act of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADAA) of 2008, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as well as Assistance Animals (e.g. Service Animals and Emotional Support Animals) as defined under the Fair Housing Act.

There are differences in the processes required and, in the accommodations, provided to individuals with identified disabilities supported by Service Animals and Emotional Support Animals. These differences are explained in the separate sections of this documents.

All questions and concerns by students or Hood College campus visitors regarding Service Animals or Emotional Support Animals should be forwarded to the Office of Accessibility Services, (phone: 301-696-3421, email: AccessibilityServices@hood.edu). All questions and concerns by Hood College employees regarding Service Animals should be forwarded to Human Resources at 301-696-3592 or wuenschel@hood.edu. (**Hood College Staff Handbook, section 302.5 Service Animals**)

Part I. Laws Governing the Use of Service Animals and Emotional Support Animals on a College Campus

Americans with Disabilities Act(s)

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), and the Amendments Act of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADAA) of 2008 defines a Service Animal as a dog individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability, including physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or mental disability. In the ADAA of 2008, it was clarified that anxiety and seizure disorders are disabilities.

Hood College, as a private college, must provide equal access to postsecondary students with disabilities. Title II of ADA covers a publicly-funded university, community college or vocational program. Title III of ADA covers privately-funded schools. Title I cover employees at Hood College.

The ADA does state that “accommodations and modifications of policies and practices are not required when it would fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program, or activity or give rise to an undue financial or administrative burden.”

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act

Section 504 is a federal law that protects individuals from discrimination based on the student's disability. All public or private colleges and universities that receive federal funding are required under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act to make programs accessible to students with disabilities.

Fair Housing Act

The Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination of protected classes within various housing transactions, including college dwellings. A group of students, in and of themselves, are not considered a protected class; FHA includes a person with a disability as a protected class.

Part II. Definitions

1. Service Animal (“Handler”)

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 defines a Service Animal as a dog individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability, including physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability.

As defined by ADA regulations (35.136(i)), a trained miniature horse may be used as an alternative to a dog; however, beginning in 2011, only dogs are recognized as Service Animals under Titles II and III of the ADA. (Title II: Covers Public/Government Employers and Employees with Disabilities. Title III: Covers Places of Public Accommodation and Public Areas in Commercial Facilities.)

The work the Service Animal has been trained to do must directly relate to the person’s disability.

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Helping a blind or low-vision person with navigation or other tasks
- Alerting a person who is deaf or hard of hearing to the presence of people or sounds
- Pulling a wheelchair
- Alerting and protecting a person with a seizure disorder or other type of acute-onset medical condition
- Alerting a person to the presence of life-threatening allergens
- Calming a person with PTSD during an anxiety attack
- Reminding a person with mental illnesses to take prescribed medications

The College may make limited inquiry to the person regarding a Service Animal. The ADA has approved two questions that may be asked:

- a. Is the animal required because of a disability?
- b. What work or task has the animal been trained to do?

If the individual is in an area of the Hood College campus where the “no-pets” policy applies (e.g. an academic building, dining hall, etc.) and responds in the negative to either of the above questions the individual will be asked to remove the animal from the area that has been designated as a “no-pets” or animals' area. The person cannot be asked to define his or her disability, provide medical documentation, provide proof of training or ask the Service Animal to demonstrate its ability to perform the work or task.

The Department of Justice explicitly states that the following animals are not considered Service Animals under Title II and III of ADA:

- Any animals besides dogs—regardless of whether they are domestic or trained;
- Animals that serve solely to provide a crime deterrent effect; and
- Emotional support, comfort or companionship animals (a clear distinction between Service Animal that are trained to respond to an individual’s needs, and untrained “emotional support” animals whose mere presence may positively affect a person’s disability by serving as a companion).

A “Handler” is defined as an individual with a disability who receives assistance from a Service Animal, or a personal care attendant who handles the Service Animal for an individual with a disability that is not able to independently.

2. Emotional Support Animals / Owner

An Emotional Support Animal (ESA), as defined by the Fair Housing Act (FHA), may provide the person, emotional support, calming, stability, and other kinds of support in a housing environment. An ESA is one that is necessary to

afford the person with a disability an equal opportunity to engage in residential life on the Hood College campus. The presence of the ESA must be necessary to provide the resident with the disability the use and enjoyment of the dwelling. Under FHA, there must be an identifiable relationship between the student's disabilities and the assistance or support the ESA provides in a residential setting.

An ESA is not specifically trained to perform tasks for a person who suffers from disabilities, rather ESA provides comfort and companionship; therefore, ESA's are not qualified as Service Animals under the ADA. An ESA is not limited to just a dog as a Service Animal under ADA.

An "Owner" is defined as an individual with a disability who has requested the reasonable accommodation of an ESA through the Hood College Housing Accommodation Request process and has received approval in writing from the Housing Accommodation Committee to bring an ESA into the student's assigned on-campus residence.

3. Assistance Animals

Under the Fair Housing Act (FHA), an animal requested to live in a residence that has a "no-pets" policy, must request the animal's presence as a reasonable accommodation as an Assistance Animal.

An Assistance Animal, as defined in a 2013 joint guidance letter by the Department of Justice (DOJ) and the Department of Housing and Development (HUD), includes a Service Animal as qualified under ADA, and an ESA.

Following the terminology used in the DOJ and HUD guidance letter, when referencing an animal in Part VII. Animals in Hood College Housing Facilities only, the use of Assistance Animal will be used as it encompasses both a Service Animal and ESA. Since there are different legal requirements outside a residence hall, to differentiate the two, the terminology of Service Animal and ESA will be used in the remainder of this document since the document policy and guidelines covers all areas of the Hood College campus, including the grounds, where Hood College's Pet Policy applies.

Part III. General Responsibilities of Handlers (Service Animals) and Owners (Emotional Support Animals) on Hood College Grounds

Any person (commuter students, resident students, visitors, Hood College employees or community members) that has a Service Animal on Hood College campus or any enrolled residential student (only) that has been approved for an ESA as an Assistance Animal in a residence hall must abide by current local, state and federal ordinance, laws, and/or regulations pertaining to licensing, vaccinations, and other requirements for those animals. It is the individual person's responsibility to know and understand these requirements for Frederick City and Frederick County, as well as the state of Maryland.

Hood College has the right to require documentation of compliance, which may include vaccination and licensing records for all animals attending academic classes or living in a resident hall.

It is highly recommended that once a student has been accepted and intends to bring a Service Animal or ESA to campus, to contact the Office of Accessibility Services immediately to receive guidance on the process and requirements. No student may move into a residence hall with an Assistance Animal (e.g. Service Animal or ESA) without approval from the Housing Accommodation Committee and submitting all required vaccination and licensing documents to the Office of Accessibility Services. No exceptions.

The Service Animal and ESA must be properly cared for and nourished by the Handler / Owner, respectively. Hood College has no responsibility to feed or provide medical care for Service Animals and/or ESA's.

All Handlers (Service Animals) or Owners (ESA's) in the Hood College housing facility (e.g. residence halls, duplexes) with a Housing Accommodation Committee approved Assistance Animal **may not** transfer daily care responsibilities for their animal to another person. These responsibilities include:

- Feeding
- Exercising / walking
- Waste clean-up
- Supervision (animal sitting)

For more information on consequences for transferring responsibilities to another person, please see Part VI. Hood College Process for Handling Policy Violations.

The Assistance Animal (e.g. Service Animal or ESA) must never be released from the residence hall without being tended and under control of the Handler / Owner. This means the Service Animal or ESA must be leashed or in a carrier or cage. The Handler / Owner is liable for all actions of the Service Animal or ESA and should always be in control and restraint of the animal. Hood College is not responsible to ensure the safety of the animal.

A Service Animal, **only**, may be off leash if the use of a harness, leash or other tether would interfere with the Service Animal's safe, effective performance of work or tasks. When a leash or tether is not in use, the Service Animal must be otherwise under the Handler's control (e.g. voice control, signals, or other effective measures) always. When the Service Animal is not working a task, the Service Animal should be harnessed, leashed or tethered.

A Service Animal can be brought to campus by an enrolled commuter or residential student following all policy and guidelines explained in this document, specifically, Part X. Service Animals at Hood College and Part VII. Assistance Animals in Hood College Housing Facilities.

An ESA can only be brought to Hood College campus by a resident student as it is only legally permitted as a reasonable accommodation under the Fair Housing Act which only applies to "dwellings". (Part I. Laws Governing the Use of Service Animals and Emotional Support Animals on a College Campus, Part II. Definitions, and Part VII. Animals in Hood College Housing Facilities)

A Hood College visitor or community member is not permitted to bring an ESA into Hood College facility buildings (see Appendix A, Part I. Laws Governing the Use of Service Animals and Emotional Support Animals on a College Campus, Part II. Definitions) An ESA on campus by a commuter or visitor must be kept outside and must adhere to the Hood College Pet Policy.

A Housing Accommodation Committee approved Assistance Animal that is an ESA for a resident student, is under no circumstances permitted to bring the animal into any Hood College building except the approved Hood College residence. (See Part VI. Hood College Process for Handling Disruptions, Student Conduct or Removal of a Service Animal or Emotional Support Animal)

Part IV. Animal Waste Clean-Up Policy for Service Animals and Emotional Support Animals on Hood College Campus

Cleaning up the waste of a Service Animal or an ESA is the sole responsibility of its Handler / Owner, respectively. A Service Animal or an ESA may be excluded or removed from the College facilities if not housebroken or has

relieved itself on artificial turf. On outside campus grounds, the animal's feces must be removed immediately by placing the waste in a closed container or bag and depositing it in an appropriate outdoor waste receptacle.

In the case of a Handler whose disability prevents or impairs the ability to comply with these requirements, the Handler must have an alternative way to collect and dispose of all animal waste by the Service Animal; a Handler cannot expect Hood College students or members of Hood College staff to assist with or disposing of waste. The College staff is not responsible for cleaning up after any animal.

The waste and materials (e.g. litterbox or cage material such as wood chips) of an ESA, approved in the residence facilities as an Assistance Animal is the sole responsibility of the Owner. The animal's feces must be removed immediately by placing the waste in a closed container or bag and depositing it in an appropriate outdoor waste receptacle. The litter and/or cage material must be cleaned frequently to contain the odor.

The College may charge an individual for damage caused by the animal (Service Animal or ESA) in the event of damages made to College grounds (including artificial turf), carpeting or furnishings from pet waste. In the event the Service Animal or Emotional Support Animal relieves themselves inside a building, it must be disposed of properly (not an interior trash can) and the area must be sanitized. The Office of Accessibility Services must be notified by the Handler/Owner when this occurs to have facilities determine if additional cleaning is required. If applicable, cleaning charges would be applied to the student's account.

Part V. Hood College Policy on Damages and Cleaning Needs Due to Service Animals and Emotional Support Animals

A Handler or Owner may be charged for any damage caused by the Service Animal or ESA that is beyond reasonable wear and tear to the same extent the College charges other individuals for damages beyond reasonable wear and tear caused by any other type of method or incident.

Handlers and Owners of the animal are solely responsible for any damages to College property caused by the animal. This includes any cleaning of the residence room (or any interior area of the residence hall) required beyond the normal routine cleaning after the Handler / Owner vacates the premises.

Cleaning services outside those routinely performed may include, but are not limited to, steam cleaning of carpets, costs incurred in the abatement of fleas or other pests, and odors. If the furniture or flooring requires replacement, all costs shall also be the responsibility of the Handler / Owner. Any such fees will be posted to the Handler's / Owner's individual student account.

Part VI. Hood College Process for Handling Violations

1. Service Animals and ESAs:

- All animals, Service Animals or ESA's must always be under the control of the Handler / Owner. No exceptions.
- If an instance occurs where the animal poses an immediate physical threat to any person, the animal will be removed immediately, Service Animal or an ESA.
- An animal may be removed if it poses a direct threat to the health of other individuals or animals
- An animal may be removed if involved in situations where the animal was in an altercation or physical attack with another animal on campus

- An animal may be removed from a building if it is not housebroken
- An animal may be removed if it becomes ill or because of a substantial lack of cleanliness

2. **Service Animals Only:**

- A Service Animal may be asked to leave a sensitive area of campus (e.g. Science lab, etc.) or a restricted area of campus (e.g. maintenance or mechanical areas, dining hall food preparation areas, etc.). This does not include a residence hall common area where a kitchen may be located or the food dining areas.
- A Service Animal may be asked to leave an athletic facility (e.g. artificial turf fields, weight room, swimming pool deck, tennis courts, personal trainer's office or basketball gym, etc.) if the Service Animal relieves itself or is causing damage to the facility (e.g. scratching the basketball court floors with its nails, in the pool water, etc.)
- A Service Animal may enter a Hood College bathroom facility with the Handler in a campus public building (e.g. academic building, student center, etc.). In a residence hall shared bathroom facility, the Service Animal can enter to support the Handler with required tasks. A Service Animal should not be bathed or groomed in a Hood College residential bathroom facility.
- Barking by a Service Animal only does not necessarily qualify as “out of control” behavior unless considered excessive, unruly or disruptive. It is recommended (not required) to let necessary Hood College personnel (e.g. a course faculty member, a resident Area Coordinator, etc.) know if the Service Animal task is to bark.)

3. **ESAs Only:**

- An ESA must be leashed, caged or crated every time it is released from the Owner’s residence room. Failure to do so will be considered a violation of the policy.
- An ESA cannot enter any bathroom facility on a residence hall. An ESA cannot be bathed or groomed in a residential bathroom facility.
- An ESA may be removed if found in an unauthorized area of campus (e.g. an academic building, dining hall, the athletic artificial turf fields, etc.), and the Owner will be reported to the Office of Accessibility Services for a policy violation.
- Barking by an ESA may be considered as “out of control” and will be discussed with the Owner if it becomes a disruption to the residence hall residents.

The Process for Handling Violations to the Community is as Follows:

1. The Handler / Owner will receive a written warning from the Office of Accessibility Services if a complaint(s) is received regarding the animal that would be considered a violation of Hood College policy noted in this document. An immediate threat to safety or health of a person or animal will not result in a warning but the animal will be asked to leave immediately.
2. Following the first written warning, the Handler/Owner will have the opportunity to rectify the situation and correct the behavior.
3. If a second complaint is received, the Office of Accessibility Services will conduct a further assessment of the situation and the extent of impact to the community.
4. Following the second complaint assessment, the Handler/Owner may be asked to meet with the Office of Accessibility Services and other appropriate Hood College staff (e.g. director of residence life, dean of students, and/or the provost) to review the assessment and discuss any possible recommendations (e.g. requesting to change rooms if there is availability or another corrective solution to rectify the disruption to the community.
5. Following a third complaint or incident, and/or if previously discussed solutions from the second complaint were not followed, the animal will be removed from campus.

The individualized assessment of each incident may lead to escalation of this process, up to and including removal of an animal from campus after a first complaint depending on the severity of any incident involving the Handler/Owner and/or the animal. The Removal process is detailed in Part XII. Removal of Service Animals and Emotional Support Animals, Appeals and Grievances.

Students that are accompanied by a Service Animal or have been approved for an ESA in a residence hall must comply with the same College code of conduct as all students, including but not limited to, noise, safety, disruption and cleanliness.

Part VII. Service Animals and Emotional Support Animals in Hood College Housing Facilities

This section applies to a student that is requesting an animal that is needed because of a disability to reside in a Hood College residence hall. This process does not apply to a student requesting a pet, which is not allowed, except for the approved pets in the Hood College Pet Policy.

An individual with a Service Animal that is visiting a person in a residence hall is permitted without making a reasonable accommodation housing request. The Service Animal shall not stay overnight in a residence hall.

The Hood College Office of Residence Life, in partnership with the Office of Accessibility Services, provides reasonable accommodations for a student with a documented disability who has a verifiable need in the residential environment. There are multiple state and federal laws that come into play; it is important to understand the differences in laws, specifically regarding Service Animals and ESA's.

It is highly recommended to contact the Office of Accessibility Services with any questions, and always consult with your treating medical professional to determine the recommended reasonable accommodations, specifically an Assistance Animal, as soon as possible.

Under FHA, an animal requested to live in a residence that has a "no-pets" policy must request the animal's presence as a reasonable accommodation, as an Assistance Animal (includes both a Service Animal and an ESA). As stipulated under FHA, a person may keep an Assistance Animal as a housing reasonable accommodation if:

1. The person has a disability;
2. The animal is necessary to afford the person with a disability an equal opportunity to use and enjoy a dwelling; and
3. There is an identifiable relationship or nexus between the disability and the assistance the animal provides.

FHA has defined an Assistance Animal as one that has been determined by a medical professional (not a relative) that can mitigate the effects of a physical or mental disability or an animal that has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of the individual with a mental or physical disability. These tasks can include but are not limited to: guiding individuals with impaired vision, alerting individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to intruders or sounds, providing reasonable protection, retrieving dropped items, or reminding an individual to take required medication.

Under FHA, a housing provider (which includes Hood College), can require documentation to support the reasonable accommodation request of an Assistance Animal. Assistance Animal documentation can request the following information:

1. That the disability substantially limits a major life activity;
2. That the animal is necessary for the student specifically in a residence hall; and

3. That there is a nexus between the student's disability and the relief that the animal provides.

However, under ADA, if it is readily apparent the animal is a Service Animal, for example, the dog is leading a blind or visually-impaired student or pulling a wheelchair, the College cannot require any documentation for the Service Animal to reside in a Hood College residence hall. However, College policy can request all vaccination and licensing documentation, as well as verification of understanding of this document must be provided to the Office of Accessibility Services prior to moving into the residence hall.

A housing provider can deny an Assistance Animal (including a Service Animal) if the reasonable accommodation is unnecessary in a residence hall or that would pose a direct threat to the health and safety of others. Thus, if the animal requested by the individual with a disability has a history of dangerous behavior, the housing provider does not have to accept the animal into the housing environment.

The Housing Accommodation Committee does not approve Assistance Animal requests for Hood College students residing in residence facilities not owned, rented or maintained by Hood College. Further, the Housing Accommodation Committee will not provide documentation or verify the existence of a student's disability with a landlord at an off-campus residence.

The care, cost, arrangements, responsibilities and well-being of the Assistance Animal (Service Animal and ESA) are always the sole responsibility of the Handler/Owner.

Assistance Animal Presence Notification

Hood College reserves the right to notify specific individuals who may be impacted by the presence of an approved Assistance Animal (Service Animal and ESA) in a Hood College residence hall, including, but not limited to: College facilities personnel, potential/actual roommate(s), area coordinators and residential assistants, the fire marshal, and the director of campus safety. Such information will be limited to information related to the animal and shall not disclose information about the student's disability.

In the event College personnel staff needs to enter a residence room, the resident student will be notified, and the Handler/Owner must be present, have properly removed the Assistance Animal or have crated or caged the Assistance Animal. A roommate or another person may not be asked to be responsible and will not be liable in the event the Assistance Animal is harmed, harms another person/animal or gets loose. The liability will always be with the approved Handler/Owner.

Part VIII. Emergency Situations: Service Animals and Emotional Support Animals

Review the Emergency Procedures and Preventions information provided on the Hood College Campus Safety webpage.

Hood College staff, including campus safety officials are not responsible for removing animals during an emergency, and may not be held responsible for the care, damage to, or loss of the animal. The Office of Accessibility Services and director of residence life maintain and provide a list of all approved Assistance Animals living in a residence hall to the Chief of Campus Safety. In the event of emergency, outside emergency responders will be provided the emergency list of a student with a disability and if they have an Assistance Animal (and any other accommodations).

Part IX. Conflicting Disabilities

Allergic reactions to animals are common. The person impacted by the presence of the animal must provide verifiable medical documentation to support their claim. The needs of both persons will be considered to resolve the issue. A Service Animal is legally permitted to enter public spaces that on campus can include common populated buildings such as the Whitaker Student Center and the Beneficial-Hodson Library; it is not reasonable to request that the Service Animal not be permitted in those buildings due to a conflicting disability.

If a person using an Assistance Animal (Service Animal or ESA) was assigned to a residence hall before the person with the conflicting disability, the person utilizing the Assistance Animal will not be removed to accommodate the second person. The second person would have to submit the housing accommodation request for a reasonable accommodation.

Students or visitors who have asthma, allergies, or other medical conditions effected by the presence of animals are asked to contact the Office of Accessibility Services at 301-696-3421 or accessibilityservices@hood.edu.

Employees with disability-related concerns should contact Carol Wuenschel, executive director of human resources at 301-696-3592 or wuenschel@hood.edu. The "Individuals with Disabilities" section of the Staff Manual, available under Forms and Resources on the Hood College Human Resources website, further details general policies and procedures related to employee accommodations.

Part X. Service Animals at Hood College

1. Commuter Students and Visitors to Campus with Service Animals

Hood College encourages, but does not require, all community members to notify the Office of Accessibility Services, to contact the Office of Accessibility Services should an individual bring a Service Animal to campus. Exceptions include a student that is requesting to live in Hood College housing or an individual (other than a student) that needs to enter a Hood College Science Lab.

An enrolled commuter student that will be bringing a Service Animal to classes should contact the Office of Accessibility Services and provide vaccinations/licensing records. The commuter student will not be required to provide medical documentation or proof that the Service Animal has been certified, trained or licensed as a Service Animal.

All commuter students and visitors with Service Animals must adhere to the policy and guidelines outlined in this document.

2. Service Animal-in-Training

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act, a Service Animal must already be trained before it can be taken into public areas. However, Maryland law states if accompanied by the trainer, it is permitted in public spaces.

3. Hood College Employees with Service Animals

A Hood College employee must adhere to the policy and guidelines outlined in this document. An employee that will be accompanied to work by a Service Animal should reach out to Carol Wuenschel, executive director of human resources at 301-696-3592 or wuenschel@hood.edu. The "Individuals with Disabilities" section of the Staff Manual, available under Forms and Resources on the Hood College Human Resources website, further details general policies and procedures related to employee accommodations.

4. Service Animals in Science Labs

A student or campus visitor with a Service Animal must contact the Office of Accessibility Services prior to bringing a Service Animal into a science lab. If a student or visitor with a Service Animal has not contacted the Office of Accessibility Services, the faculty member may dismiss the student, and the Service Animal from lab until a safety plan has been discussed and documented. This is to ensure the safety of the Service Animal, as well as all students in the lab course. **An ESA is never allowed in a science lab or any academic building.**

A “visitor” refers to a person, not a student registered in the lab course, such as a guest speaker invited to the class by the faculty or an adjunct.

To ensure that a Handler (student/visitor) is ready for the start of the class, it is recommended the following steps be completed **a minimum of five weeks before the start of the semester**. If the request is delinquent, a student's progression in the lab course may be delayed.

- a. Handler (student/visitor) notifies the Office of Accessibility Services that a Service Animal is being requested to attend a science lab.
- b. A meeting will be held between the Handler (student/visitor) and Office of Accessibility Services to discuss the tasks the Service Animal is trained to do, whether the student/visitor would be able to participate in the science lab without the Service Animal (with other reasonable accommodations), and what the Handler (student/visitor) responsibilities will be if the Service Animal does attend the lab class (e.g. purchasing safety gear for the Service Animal).
- c. Office of Accessibility Services will reach out to the faculty member, department chair and science lab safety officer to discuss all concerns, options for accommodations, alternatives (e.g. core requirement, major required course, can this lab be fulfilled another way, etc.).
- d. Office of Accessibility Services will formalize a written request that includes information from the student meeting and faculty meeting and schedule a meeting with the Dean of Academic Services.
- e. Office of Accessibility Services and the Dean of Academic Services will review the request to make sure the “reasonable accommodation” is met, but also the safety of all students is considered. The review will ensure the Service Animal and accommodations for the Service Animal do not “fundamentally alter the nature of the programs or result in an undue burden, and do not compromise the essential elements of the course or curriculum or weaken the academic standards or integrity of a course.
- f. Once the review is complete, Office of Accessibility Services and the Dean of Academic Services will meet with the Handler (student/visitor) to review the requirements for the student to attend the lab course or the alternative, if applicable (e.g. substituting for a different course)
- g. The faculty member will be notified of the discussion and review and provided the agreement in writing.
- h. If the Handler (student/visitor) is to bring the Service Animal to the lab, all requirements must be in place prior to the Handler (student/visitor) attending (e.g. Service Animal safety gear)

All Service Animal safety equipment, floor mats, or other necessary equipment is the financial responsibility of the Handler (student/visitor). Hood College is not required to purchase materials or equipment needed for a Service Animal.

As stated in Part V. Hood College Policy on Damages and Cleaning Needs Due to Service Animals and Emotional Support Animals, all damages are the responsibility of the Handler (student/visitor).

Part XI. Emotional Support Animals at Hood College

1. Requirements for an Emotional Support Animal at Hood College

For an ESA to reside as an Assistance Animal in a Hood College residence, a student (**only**) must:

- a. Have completed a Hood College Housing Contract
- b. Request a meeting with the Office of Accessibility Services to review the requirements and necessary steps
- a. Provide a letter from an appropriate medical professional to verify the need of the Assistance Animal (ESA) and/or completed the Housing Accommodation Request form.
- b. Be approved for the Assistance Animal by the Housing Accommodation Committee
- c. Meet with the Office of Accessibility Services and Director of Residence Life prior to move-in date
- d. Provide all vaccination and licensing records for the animal to the Office of Accessibility Services prior to move-in date
- e. Confirm receipt and understanding of the policies and guidelines in this document in writing

Review Part VII. Service Animals and Emotional Support Animals in Hood College Housing Facilities for all requirements, processes and student responsibilities. Under no circumstances may a commuter student or community visitor bring an ESA to Hood College campus and enter a building or campus area (See Appendix A). A commuter student or community visitor that brings an ESA may be on the outside grounds and follow the Hood College Pet Policy.

Part XII. Removal of Service Animals and Emotional Support Animals, Appeals and Grievances

A student (resident or commuter) that is found to be in violation of the Hood College Policy and Guidelines for Service Animals and Emotional Support Animals and/or the Hood College Pet Policy (see Hood College Student Handbook) may be subject to a Student Code of Conduct referral in addition to removal procedures detailed below.

Per Part VI. Hood College Process for Handling Violations, each reported violation will be assessed by the Office of Accessibility Services on an individualized basis. The violations process may vary depending on the reported incident, and some may lead to escalation of this process, up to and including removal of an animal from campus after a first complaint or incident.

A perceived violation of policy can be reported by any person, student, faculty, staff, or community member. If a report has been made that is viewed as discriminatory, retaliatory, or in any way violates the Student Code of Conduct, the reporter could be subject to a referral to Student Conduct or Human Resources. The violation should be reported to Campus Safety, Residence Life staff (i.e. director of residence life, area coordinators and/or resident assistants "RA") or the Office of Accessibility Services. The report can be a verbal report, or sent via email or letter to an appropriate office. All violation reports made to Residence Life or Campus Safety (or another person/office) will be forwarded immediately to the Office of Accessibility Services. The Office of Accessibility Services will review the complaint and contact necessary staff, offices, or persons to receive further information or feedback. In situations when it is determined a violation has not occurred, neither follow-up with the Owner/Handler is warranted nor is a written report of the violation submitted to the Owner/Handler.

In the event it is recommended by the Office of Accessibility Services, Residence Life, Campus Safety, or the Housing Accommodation Committee that an Assistance Animal be removed from a residence hall and/or campus due to violation(s), a review will be conducted by a panel consisting of representation from each of these four offices/committees: the Housing Accommodation Committee, the Office of Accessibility Services, Residence Life and Campus Safety. A final decision made by the panel whether to remove the animal will be provided to the student in writing.

Appeals of Housing Accommodation Committee Decisions or Removal of Assistance Animals:

If a student would like to appeal the denial of an Assistance Animal by the Housing Accommodation Committee or the panel's removal of an Assistance Animal following violations, the Handler/Owner must submit a written appeal request to Jen Schum, PhD., dean of academic services at schum@hood.edu within five days of the received written denial statement.

A decision may be appealed on the following grounds:

- a. Substantive new medical documentation that was unknown to the Housing Accommodation Committee or panel at the time of the review that may have had an impact on the decision, or
- b. Procedural error of fairness.

A decision of the appeal will be provided to the student within five business days of the received appeal requests. The appeal decision will be final. The student may request the Assistance Animal for the next school year, following the Hood College Policy and Guidelines for Service Animals and Emotional Support Animals.

Grievances:

It is recommended to reach out to the appropriate resources on Hood College campus to assist you with any grievances.

Ombudsperson

The Office of the Ombudsperson supports the values of personal integrity, responsibility, civility, respect, equity, diversity, and community that enable the College to advance its mission of preparing its students to excel in meeting the personal, professional and global challenges of the future while also preparing them for lives of responsibility, leadership and service.

The Ombudsperson's Office can assist you in several ways by:

- Providing a welcoming environment where you can voice your concerns
- Assisting you in evaluating available options
- Providing information on Hood's policies and practices
- Providing guidance on how to make the College aware of an issue
- Referring you to the proper place to begin resolving the issue
- Facilitating a constructive dialogue about the issue
- Providing mediation as needed
- Alerting the appropriate (within the limits of confidentiality) administrator when a systemic issue is identified

Contact

Jolene Sanders
Ombudsperson and Associate Professor of Sociology
301-696-3295
Confidential email: ombuds@hood.edu

Or you can reach out to any personnel found in Part XIII. Hood College Personnel Contact Information Related to Service Animals and Emotional Support Animals.

If there is no resolution to grievances after following the recommended procedures, a student may file the grievance with the Department of Justice:
Disability Rights Section
Civil Rights Division

U.S. Department of Justice
P.O. Box 66738
Washington, D.C. 20035-6738

Part XIII. Hood College Personnel Contact Information Related to Service Animals and Emotional Support Animals

<p>Office of Accessibility Services, Title IX Resource for Students with Disabilities and Section 504 Resource for Student Services Kate Gmuer 301-696-3421 Gmuer@hood.edu AccessibilityServices@hood.edu</p>	<p>Director of Residence Life and Student Conduct Matt Troutman 301-696-3577 Troutman@hood.edu</p>	<p>Director and Chief of Campus Safety Thurmond Maynard 301-696-3546 Maynard@hood.edu</p> <p>Assistant Director and Captain of Campus Safety Willie Ollie 301-696-3543 Ollie@hood.edu</p>
<p>Vice President of Student Life and Dean of Students Olivia White, Ph.D. 301-696-3573 Owhite@hood.edu</p>	<p>Dean of Academic Services Jen Schum, Ph.D. 301-696-3550 schum@hood.edu</p>	<p>Executive Director of Human Resources, Equal Employment Officer/Title IX and Section 504 Coordinator Contact for Employee Accommodations Carol Wuenschel 301-696-3592 Wuenschel@hood.edu</p>

Appendix A. Hood College Process for Requesting an Assistance Animal in the Residence Hall

Hood College Pet Policy:

Fish (excluding carnivorous or poisonous varieties) and hermit crabs may be kept in tanks of 10 gallons or less in resident rooms, provided the tanks are kept clean and the fish and hermit crabs are removed during the times the residence halls are closed. No heat lamps are allowed. A Request does not need to be made for a fish or a hermit crab that meets this pet policy requirement.

An Emotional Support Animal may not enter the following locations on the Hood College campus:

Admissions House, Alumnae Hall, Alumnae House, Beneficial-Hodson Library and Technology Center, Broadbeck Music Hall, Carson Cottage, Coblenz Hall (dining hall and basement floor common space), Coffman Chapel, Gambrell Gymnasium, French, German and Spanish Houses, Hodson Annex (Ceramics Studio), Hodson Science and Technology Center, Huntsinger Aquatics Center, Joseph Henry Apple Academic Resource Center, Joseph Pastore Facilities Center, Marx Center, Nicodermus Athletic Complex, Ronald J. Volpe Athletic Center, Rosenstock Hall, Strawn Cottage, Tatem Hall, Whitaker Student Center and the Williams Observatory.

Hood College Process for Requesting an Assistance Animal:

A request for an animal as a reasonable accommodation should be provided to the Office of Accessibility Services in accordance with the Housing Accommodation Request timeline. It is recommended to request a reasonable accommodation, if past the Housing Accommodation Request timeline, at least 30 days before the move-in date so that the College can best accommodate the student. An accommodation request will not be reviewed until all required documentation is provided in its entirety. **The request for an Assistance Animal is an annual process.**

Before any student can request an Assistance Animal as a reasonable housing accommodation, a Hood College Housing Contract must be completed.

1. Contact the Office of Accessibility Services offices to initiate a housing accommodations intake meeting. Contact can be made by email or by completing the Accommodations request intake form on the Office of Accessibility Services website page.
2. Submit the required documentation:
 - a. If only requesting an Assistance Animal (Service Animal or ESA) for the residence, a letter from your treating medical provider (not a relative even if a qualified medical practitioner) that is on professional letterhead and includes the treating professional's name (signed documents from office staff are not permitted), license number and state, and (1) that the disability substantially limits a major life activity; (2) that the animal is necessary for the student specifically in a residence hall; (3) and there is a nexus between the student's disability and the relief that the animal provides.
 - b. If requesting additional housing accommodations, a Housing Accommodation Request form must be completed. The Assistance Animal request can be included on the Housing Accommodation Request form and an additional medical letter is not required.
3. Once all documentation is received, the Housing Accommodation Committee will review all reasonable accommodation requests. Allow two weeks for a decision to be made once all required documentation has been confirmed as received by the Office of Accessibility Services in writing. If a request comes after the requested Housing Accommodation timeline, especially after the start of a semester, no guarantee that an accommodation request can be met at the time of the request, including an Assistance Animal, due to space limitations.

If approved for a reasonable accommodation for an Assistance Animal:

- a. The student will be notified in writing by a member of the Housing Accommodation Committee.
- b. A meeting with the student will be required.

- c. Verification of the student's understanding of this document is required.
- d. Vaccinations and licensing documentation are required.

If denied an accommodation request for an Assistance Animal:

- a. The student will be notified in writing by a member of the Housing Accommodation Committee.
- b. A meeting will be requested with the student and the Housing Accommodation Committee to discuss the denied request and possible alternative reasonable accommodations to meet the student's needs.

A denial of an Assistance Animal does not prevent a student from making another request at another time.

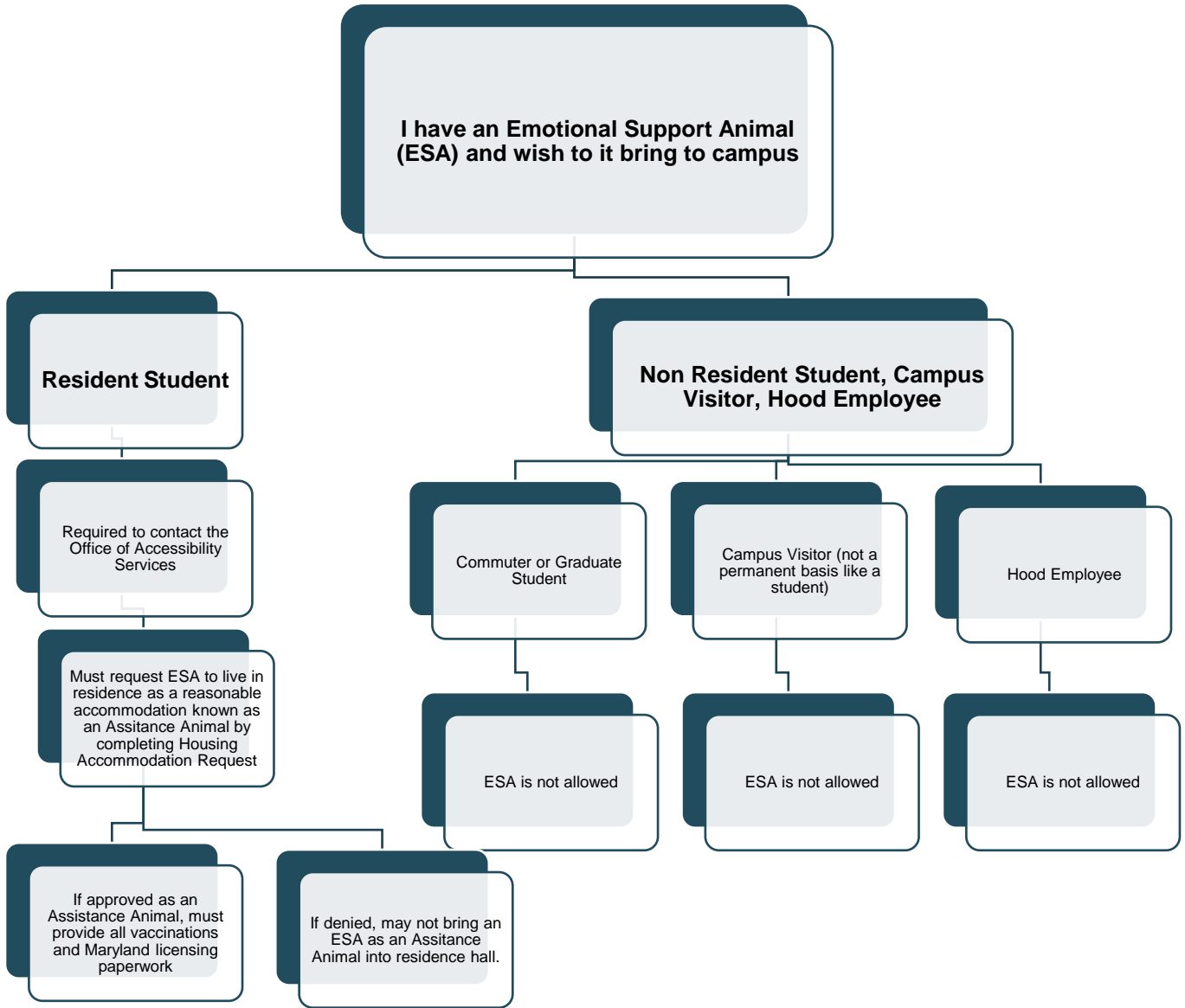
Once approved, a Handler / Owner cannot replace one Assistance Animal (Service Animal or ESA) with another animal without notifying and seeking approval from the Housing Accommodation Committee. A resident student must notify the Office of Accessibility Services if the need arises to replace an Assistance Animal before the Assistance Animal is changed to begin the review process. Additional documentation may be required, including but not limited to: medical letter, student statement in writing, new vaccination and licensing records.

Change of an Assistance Animal without notification will result in the removal of the unauthorized Assistance Animal immediately. No exceptions. The student's actions will be considered by the Housing Accommodation Committee during the review process for approval. For violating this policy, the student is subject to a Student Code of Conduct Referral.

Any student that brings an unauthorized Assistance Animal (Service Animal or ESA) to reside in College housing without following the above registration policy is in violation of the Hood College Policy and Guidelines for Service Animals and Emotional Support Animals and is subject to a Student Code of Conduct Referral. Under these circumstances, the student will be required to remove the unauthorized Animal from the residence building and may be subject to dismissal.

Any student that allows another student or community visitor to bring an unauthorized ESA or pet not included in the Hood College Pet Policy into a residence hall for any period (e.g. a few minutes to visit to overnight stay) is in violation of the Hood College Pet Policy and the Hood College Policy and Guidelines for Service Animals and Emotional Support Animals and is subject to a Student Code of Conduct Referral. Under these circumstances, the student will be required to remove the animal/pet from the residence building and may be subject to dismissal.

Emotional Support Animal (ESA) Request Flow Chart



Service Animal (SA) Request Flow Chart

