

Concordia University Texas

Policy		Effective Date:	09/02/2016
SS02 – Emotional Support Animal in Housing		Last Revision Date:	June 4, 2026
Corporate Owner:	President/Chief of Staff	Operational Owner:	Provost
Post to Website:	Yes	Review by APC:	No
Website Address:	Accessibility Services (concordia.edu)		
Revision Cycle:	Every year	Page No:	Page 1 of 10

I. Purpose

Concordia University Texas (CTX) recognizes the importance of Emotional Support Animals (ESAs), which provide emotional support to individuals with disabilities and are not specifically trained to complete this work. CTX is committed to allowing ESAs necessary to provide individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to reside in University housing. This policy explains the specific requirements applicable to an individual's use of an ESA in University housing. CTX reserves the right to amend this Policy as circumstances require. This policy applies solely to ESAs that may be necessary in University housing.

II. Scope

Individuals may be allowed to have an Emotional Support Animal in their room if the need for an ESA has been established and approved by the Office of Accessibility Services (OAS), confirmed by the Office of Residential Life, and the ESA owner has complied with all terms of this policy.

III. Definitions

Emotional Support Animal (ESA): Emotional Support Animals are a category of animals that provide necessary emotional support to an individual with a mental or psychiatric disability that alleviates one or more identified symptoms of an individual's disability. Emotional Support Animals are not required to have formal training or certification. Any animal may be used as an ESA. If an animal that is not typically kept as a household pet is requested, the requesting individual bears the burden of proving the connection between the disability and the assistance provided.

Each request for an ESA will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, considering the needs of the individual and the concerns of the University Community. A person qualifies for an ESA if:

1. The animal is necessary to afford the person with a disability an equal opportunity to reside in the residence halls
2. There is an identifiable relationship between the disability and the assistance the animal provides.

If the individual with a disability establishes the necessity for an Emotional Support Animal and if the requested animal is approved to live in University housing, the Emotional Support Animal

Concordia University Texas

Policy		Effective Date:	09/02/2016
SS02 – Emotional Support Animal in Housing		Last Revision Date:	June 4, 2026
Corporate Owner:	President/Chief of Staff	Operational Owner:	Provost
Post to Website:	Yes	Review by APC:	No
Website Address:	Accessibility Services (concordia.edu)		
Revision Cycle:	Every year	Page No:	Page 2 of 10

is not permitted in other areas of the University (e.g., dining facilities, libraries, academic buildings, athletic buildings or facilities, classrooms, labs, or other residence hall rooms or common areas, etc.)

Owner: The “owner” is the individual who has requested the accommodation and has received approval to bring an Emotional Support Animal into University housing.

Person with a Disability: The ADA defines a person with a disability as a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. This includes people who have a record of such impairment, even if they do not currently have a disability. It also includes individuals who do not have a disability but are regarded as having a disability.

Office of Accessibility Services: The Office of Accessibility Services (OAS) collaborates with individuals, faculty, and staff to ensure that students with disabilities have equal access to all CTX programs and activities.

Emergency Alternative Caregiver: The individual the Owner selects to be responsible for the animal in the case of an emergency when the Owner and the emotional support animal cannot be together. The emergency alternative caregiver may not live in University housing.

IV. Policy Statement

Although it is the policy of CTX that individuals are generally prohibited from having animals of any type in University housing, CTX will consider a request to allow an Emotional Support Animal (ESA) that is necessary because of a disability. However, no ESA may be kept in University housing at any time prior to the individual receiving approval as a reasonable accommodation pursuant to this Policy.

A. Requesting Emotional Support Animals in University Housing

Emotional Support Animals (ESA) may be permitted to live with their owner in University housing on a case-by-case basis. The requesting individual must contact the Office of Accessibility Services (OAS) and provide appropriate documentation of a disability in support of an ESA to begin the process. The requesting individual must submit documentation about the need for the ESA from a licensed medical or mental health provider with whom they have an established, therapeutic relationship. Individuals are discouraged from meeting with providers

Concordia University Texas

Policy		Effective Date:	09/02/2016
SS02 – Emotional Support Animal in Housing		Last Revision Date:	June 4, 2026
Corporate Owner:	President/Chief of Staff	Operational Owner:	Provost
Post to Website:	Yes	Review by APC:	No
Website Address:	Accessibility Services (concordia.edu)		
Revision Cycle:	Every year	Page No:	Page 3 of 10

solely to obtain this documentation or purchasing documentation from an online source. Documentation may be denied if there is not enough evidence to support the necessity of the ESA or the relationship with the provider.

The review process and arrangements for an ESA may take up to or more than thirty (30) days. Students should contact the OAS and provide appropriate documentation at least thirty (30) days prior to the date the student would like to bring the animal into University housing, preferably at the start of the semester. This timeframe will allow for the Office of Residential Life, in collaboration with the OAS, to make the appropriate arrangements for the requesting students. While applications submitted at any time will be accepted and considered, there is no guarantee that CTX will be able to meet applicants' accommodation requests once a semester has started, including any needs that develop during the semester.

B. Criteria for Determining if Presence of the Emotional Support Animal is Reasonable

1. University housing is unique in several aspects, including the mandatory assignment of roommates for most individuals. To ensure that the presence of Emotional Support Animals (ESAs) is not an undue administrative burden or fundamental alteration of University housing, CTX reserves the right to change the rooming assignment of an owner and their animal to best meet the needs of all members of the University community, including room or roommate changes or assignments to a room without a roommate.
2. When reviewing requests, the Office of Accessibility Services (OAS) may consult with the Office of Residential Life in deciding whether the presence of an ESA is reasonable. A request for an ESA may be denied as unreasonable if the presence of the animal: (1) imposes an undue financial and/or administrative burden; (2) fundamentally alters University housing policies; (3) poses a direct threat to the health and safety of others; or (4) would cause substantial property damage to the property of others, including University property.
3. Once the animal is approved, the Owner must meet with the Office of Residential Life for an animal health and safety screening prior to moving the animal on campus. This meeting reviews the policies regarding having an ESA in University housing, ensures the requested animal appears healthy enough to live in University housing, and checks that the Owner is prepared with all necessary supplies for safely caring for the animal, including enclosure systems. The Office of Residential Life will notify the student and

Concordia University Texas

Policy		Effective Date:	09/02/2016
SS02 – Emotional Support Animal in Housing		Last Revision Date:	June 4, 2026
Corporate Owner:	President/Chief of Staff	Operational Owner:	Provost
Post to Website:	Yes	Review by APC:	No
Website Address:	Accessibility Services (concordia.edu)		
Revision Cycle:	Every year	Page No:	Page 4 of 10

the OAS via email of any concerns that would result in re-evaluation or a denial of the requested animal.

4. CTX may consider the following factors, among others, as evidence in determining whether the presence of the requested animal is reasonable or in making housing assignments for individuals with an ESA:
 - The size of the animal or its enclosure is too large for the available assigned housing space;
 - The animal's presence would force another individual from an individual's housing (e.g. serious allergies).

C. Housing Requirements and Restrictions**Emotional Support Animals**

An Emotional Support Animal (ESA) must be contained within the Owner's assigned residence hall room except to the extent the individual is taking the animal out for natural relief. The Owner is responsible for ensuring that the animal is contained within an appropriate enclosure at all times when the Owner is not present. This will allow any roommate(s) or University staff access to the space without posing any risks. University staff need access to residence hall rooms for maintenance and other routine tasks.

ESAs should be kept within the residence hall. They are not to be taken to other students' rooms, hallways, or common areas, and are not allowed in other campus buildings, including other residence halls. When an ESA needs to exit the private individual room (e.g., for natural relief, veterinary appointments, etc.), it must be in an animal carrier or be controlled with a leash or harness.

Dominion and Control

Notwithstanding the restrictions set forth herein, the ESA must be properly housed and restrained or otherwise under the dominion and control of the Owner at all times. Roommate(s), Residential Life staff, or University staff shall not be expected or required to care for an ESA. No Owner shall permit the animal to go loose or run at large. If an animal is found running at large, the animal is subject to capture and confinement and immediate removal from University housing.

Concordia University Texas

Policy		Effective Date:	09/02/2016
SS02 – Emotional Support Animal in Housing		Last Revision Date:	June 4, 2026
Corporate Owner:	President/Chief of Staff	Operational Owner:	Provost
Post to Website:	Yes	Review by APC:	No
Website Address:	Accessibility Services (concordia.edu)		
Revision Cycle:	Every year	Page No:	Page 5 of 10

Room Assignments

CTX will not limit room assignments for individuals with Emotional Support Animals to any building or buildings because the individual needs an Emotional Support Animal.

D. Owner's Responsibilities for Emotional Support Animals

If the University grants an Owner's request to live with an Emotional Support Animal (ESA), the Owner is solely responsible for the custody and care of the Emotional Support Animal and must meet the following requirements:

Animal Requirements and Compliance

- Dogs, cats, and rabbits must be spayed or neutered prior to entering the residence hall and must wear collars with identification tags at all times.
- ESAs must be housebroken; therefore, any requested dogs should be at least 24 months old, and cats should be at least 12 months old.
- The Owner must abide by current city, county, and state ordinances, laws, and/or regulations pertaining to vaccination, and other requirements for animals. It is the Owner's responsibility to know and understand these ordinances, laws, and regulations. The University has the right to require documentation of compliance with such ordinances, laws, and/or regulations, which may include a vaccination certificate or animal health records.
- The Owner must fully cooperate with university personnel with regard to meeting the terms of this Policy and developing procedures for care of the animal (e.g., cleaning the animal, feeding/watering the animal, designating an outdoor relief area, disposing of feces, etc.).
- The Owner agrees to abide by all other residential policies.

Animal Care and Wellbeing

- The Owner is required to clean up after and properly dispose of the animal's waste in a safe and sanitary manner. Owners must dispose of feces by placing it in a plastic bag and then placing the bag inside the garbage dumpsters outside of the residence halls. The use of outdoor trash cans is not acceptable. Clean up must

Concordia University Texas

Policy		Effective Date:	09/02/2016
SS02 – Emotional Support Animal in Housing		Last Revision Date:	June 4, 2026
Corporate Owner:	President/Chief of Staff	Operational Owner:	Provost
Post to Website:	Yes	Review by APC:	No
Website Address:	Accessibility Services (concordia.edu)		
Revision Cycle:	Every year	Page No:	Page 6 of 10

occur immediately. Animal feces may not be disposed of in any other trash receptacle or through the sewer system inside any building at CTX.

- Animal accidents within CTX residence hall rooms and hallways must be promptly cleaned up using cleaning products. Accidents involving bodily fluids in a carpeted area should be reported to residential hall staff immediately.
- Owners with cats must properly maintain litter boxes. In consideration of the health of the cat and occupants of the residence room, cat litter box contents must be disposed of regularly. Cat litter must be placed in a sturdy plastic bag and securely tied up before being disposed of in trash dumpsters. Litter boxes should be placed on mats, so that waste is not tracked onto carpeted surfaces or around the room.
- Owners of animals that reside in cages or terrariums must ensure that their enclosures are properly maintained and cleaned. Any soiled bedding or substrate must be properly disposed of by collecting it in a plastic bag and placing it in a trash dumpster. When placing these habitats on university-owned furniture, owners should protect the furniture with plastic sheeting or fabric under the enclosure.
- Regular and routine cleaning of the residence hall room, including floors, kennels, cages, and litter boxes, must occur. The odor of an animal emanating from the residence hall is not acceptable.
- The Owner is required to ensure the animal is well cared for at all times. The University has authority to direct that the animal receive veterinary care. Animals housed in the residence hall must have an annual clean bill of health from a licensed veterinarian. Any evidence of mistreatment or abuse may result in immediate removal of the ESA and/or discipline for the responsible individual.

Dominion and Control

- ESAs may not be left in the care of any individual other than the Owner.
- If the Owner is to be absent from his/her residence hall overnight or longer:
 - A dog or cat must accompany the Owner off campus.
 - A caged rodent, lizard, bird, or other small, caged animal can be left for 36 hours. Unsupervised animals in this category should be reported to Residential Life staff via email twenty-four (24) hours before the owner leaves.

Concordia University Texas

Policy		Effective Date:	09/02/2016
SS02 – Emotional Support Animal in Housing		Last Revision Date:	June 4, 2026
Corporate Owner:	President/Chief of Staff	Operational Owner:	Provost
Post to Website:	Yes	Review by APC:	No
Website Address:	Accessibility Services (concordia.edu)		
Revision Cycle:	Every year	Page No:	Page 7 of 10

- All uncaged but leashed animals must be transported to the main level of the Residential Halls via the stairs. No uncaged animal should be in the elevator at any time. Owners who have accessibility accommodations for a service animal are exempt from this rule.
 - The Owner must notify the Office of Residential Life via email if the animal has escaped its confines and is unable to be located within one (1) hour.
- Emergency Procedures
- Owners are responsible for identifying an Alternate Caregiver. This individual, who is not living in University housing, can care for the animal on an emergency basis when the Owner and ESA cannot be together. The Owner will submit the Alternate Caregiver's information to the Office of Residential Life by completing the appropriate forms.
 - If the animal is left unattended and reasonable attempts to reach the Owner or the Owner's Alternate Caregiver have failed, the University reserves the right to take the animal to an animal shelter. Any expenses incurred by the University would be charged to the Owner.
 - During an emergency situation requiring individuals to move to a secondary location (e.g., evacuation or sheltering in place), ESAs are not permitted at these gathering points. These spaces are limited to humans and approved service animals only, to ensure the safety, security, and accountability of all individuals. ESAs should remain contained in the Owner's residence hall room.
 - Due to limited space, health and safety considerations, and the nature of emergency sheltering operations, the University does not have designated or alternative areas available to accommodate ESAs during a sheltering-in-place event.
 - The Owner is encouraged to develop a plan for emergency situations, seeking support from the Office of Accessibility Services or Residential Life staff for questions or concerns. Generally, students are advised to use their enclosure system (e.g., kennel, crate, cage, etc.) and, if conditions allow, move it to a safer location, either into the bathroom or under a bed.
 - If the Owner and animal were out of the room when the alert was issued, and it would be unsafe to return to the Residence hall, University personnel will partner with the Owner to find a suitable room to contain the animal before joining the rest of the people at the gathering point.

Concordia University Texas

Policy		Effective Date:	09/02/2016
SS02 – Emotional Support Animal in Housing		Last Revision Date:	June 4, 2026
Corporate Owner:	President/Chief of Staff	Operational Owner:	Provost
Post to Website:	Yes	Review by APC:	No
Website Address:	Accessibility Services (concordia.edu)		
Revision Cycle:	Every year	Page No:	Page 8 of 10

- University personnel shall not be required to remove the animal during an emergency evacuation (e.g., fire alarm, tornado warning, etc.). Emergency personnel will determine whether to remove the animal and are not responsible for any injury to or loss of the animal. University personnel shall not be held responsible for caring for the animal after the event has resolved.
- The Owner is responsible, in the unlikely event of the animal's death, to remove the animal from campus immediately. Any expenses incurred by the university in the cleanup or removal of a dead animal will be charged to the Owner.

Coordination of Services and Consent for Disclosure

- The Owner must provide written consent for Residential Life to disclose information regarding the request for and presence of the Emotional Support Animal to those individuals who may be impacted by the presence of the animal, including, but not limited to, Residential Life staff and any potential and/or actual roommate(s)/ neighbor(s). Such information shall be limited to information related to the animal and shall not include information related to the individual's disability.

Fees and Charges

- CTX will not ask for or require an individual with a disability to pay a fee or surcharge for having an approved ESA in University Housing.
- An individual with a disability may be charged for any damage caused by his or her ESA beyond reasonable wear and tear to the same extent that it charges other individuals for damages beyond reasonable wear and tear.
- The Owner's living accommodations may also be inspected for fleas, ticks, or other pests, if necessary, as part of the University's standard or routine inspections. 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 for which the Owner will be financially responsible. The Owner will be billed for the cost of any pest treatment above and beyond standard pest management in the residence halls. The University shall have the right to bill the Owner's account for unmet obligations under this provision. Animals shown to have fleas/ticks, or other pestilence, must be removed from campus immediately.

Concordia University Texas

Policy		Effective Date:	09/02/2016
SS02 – Emotional Support Animal in Housing		Last Revision Date:	June 4, 2026
Corporate Owner:	President/Chief of Staff	Operational Owner:	Provost
Post to Website:	Yes	Review by APC:	No
Website Address:	Accessibility Services (concordia.edu)		
Revision Cycle:	Every year	Page No:	Page 9 of 10

The animal can return to campus once a letter from a licensed veterinarian shows that the animal has been effectively treated.

Continuation or Termination Procedures

- The animal is allowed in University housing only as long as it is necessary because of the Owner's disability. The Owner should remain in contact with the Office of Accessibility Services (OAS) regarding any requirements for updated documentation from one academic year to the next.
 - Documentation may be requested to verify the continued need for an ESA or the animal's health.
- To replace an ESA, the new animal must be necessary because of the Owner's disability, and the Owner must follow the procedures in this Policy when requesting a different animal.
- If the Owner and their medical provider has determined that the presence of an ESA is no longer required, the Owner will notify the OAS in writing that the animal is no longer in University Housing.

E. Removal of an Emotional Support Animal

The University may require the individual to remove an Emotional Support Animal (ESA) from University housing if:

- the animal poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others or causes substantial property damage to the property of the University or others;
- the animal's presence results in a fundamental alteration of a University program or policies;
- the Owner does not comply with the Owner's Responsibilities set forth above;
- the animal or its presence creates an unmanageable disturbance or interference with the University community; or
- the animal itself is under undue stress due to living in the residential community.

The University will base such determinations upon the consideration of the behavior of the animal at issue, and not on speculation or fear about the harm or damages an animal may cause.

Concordia University Texas

Policy		Effective Date:	09/02/2016
SS02 – Emotional Support Animal in Housing		Last Revision Date:	June 4, 2026
Corporate Owner:	President/Chief of Staff	Operational Owner:	Provost
Post to Website:	Yes	Review by APC:	No
Website Address:	Accessibility Services (concordia.edu)		
Revision Cycle:	Every year	Page No:	Page 10 of 10

First offenses will typically result in a warning to the owner regarding the concerns or policy violations identified by the Office of Residential Life or conduct processes. Additional violations or severe concerns may result in further action from the University, including the removal of the animal from University housing. Any decisions regarding the removal of the animal will be made in consultation with the Office of Accessibility Services, the Office of Residential Life, and representatives from the conduct processes used to investigate concerns. Any decisions may be appealed to Concordia University Texas's ADA/Section 504 Compliance Officer in accordance with the Grievance Procedures for Disability Complaints. The Owner will be afforded all rights of due process and appeal as outlined in that process.

In some cases, the removal of an animal will be reported to CTX Campus Police and Austin Animal Control.

Should the ESA be removed from the premises for any reason, the Owner is expected to fulfill his/her housing obligations for the remainder of the housing contract.

V. Additional References

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), Section 12102. Definition of disability

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 104.3 Definitions