Southeastern is welcoming of individuals with disabilities who use service or assistance animals because of a disability. In regard to permitting service and assistance animals, Southeastern Oklahoma State University complies with state and federal laws regarding individuals with disabilities. The University does not generally permit animals in campus buildings except as this policy accommodates.

Service Animals

Only dogs and miniature horses may be service animals. A service animal is an animal that has been trained to perform specific work or tasks for a person with a disability. The mere provision of emotional support by the animal’s presence does not make an animal a service animal. Common service animal training might include guiding people who are blind or deaf, notifying a person of an imminent seizure, intentionally pawing or nuzzling a person with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder to calm anxiety, reminding a person to take medication, or intentionally applying calming pressure to a person prone to anxiety or panic attacks.

Service animals are permitted everywhere on campus that the animal may reasonably accompany a person with a disability. This includes University transportation, classrooms, offices, residence halls, lounges, and common areas. The University may on a case by case basis exclude the animal from laboratories or other areas where the presence of the animal may cause an unavoidable hazard, health risk, or where the animal’s presence would fundamentally interfere with the service or instruction provided.

When it is not obvious what service an animal provides, or when there is a reasonable basis to conclude that the animal might not be a service animal, staff may make limited inquiries. Staff may ask only two questions: (1) is the dog a service animal required because of a disability, and (2) what work or task has the dog been trained to perform.

The University will not require individuals with service animals to receive permission to have their animal with them on campus, nor will there be any pre-clearance requirement for the presence of the animal on campus. However, pursuant to the two-part inquiry above, reasonable documentation and/or demonstration of the animal’s training may be requested.

1 Department of Justice Guidance on Service Animals: http://www.ada.gov/service_animals_2010.htm
2 The ADA Amendments Act: http://www.ada.gov/pubs/adastatute08.htm
4 Unless the animal is present for the purpose of academic instruction, University services, or University-hosted programs.
5 Including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, cognitive, medical, or other mental disability.
The University will not charge a surcharge for deposit for having a service animal in campus housing, but reserves the ability to make appropriate assessments of charges to the owner for any damage or cleaning costs for which the animal is responsible. Students with service animals shall never be segregated from the general population of students or campus visitors.

**Assistance Animals**

Assistance Animals are not service animals. Assistance animals provide emotional support that alleviates the symptoms or effects of a person’s disability, but might not be specifically trained to perform any task or function, or otherwise meet the limited definition of a Service Animal. The University permits Assistance Animals only within residential facilities and outdoors, and not within the remainder of the campus buildings. An individual may keep an assistance animal in a residence hall if (1) the individual has a disability, (2) the animal is necessary to permit that individual to use and find comfort in their residential space, and (3) if there is an actual relationship between the disability and the assistance or emotional support that the animal provides to the person. Assistance animals are considered an accommodation, and all accommodation requests for the possession of assistance animals should be made through the Office of Disability Services. Certain wild animals or animals prone to community health or safety risk, which cannot perform the role of assistance animal in a reasonable manner may not be permitted.

**Responsibilities of the Owner:**

- Service dogs or other animals must be kept near the person with a disability and not be permitted to run free.
- The animal must be compliant with applicable vaccination laws. Students, faculty, and staff who intend, in conformance to this policy, to have an animal with them in campus buildings on a regular basis shall submit to the Office of Disability Services a copy of the animal’s vaccination history from a Veterinarian or other authorized person to verify compliance with local ordinances.
- Students intending on having an animal in campus housing must provide the Office of Disability Services with an up to date vaccination record for the animal, and must provide notice of this intent prior to the housing application deadline for the applicable semester so that appropriate planning and arrangements can be made, and so that proper notice can be provided to potential roommates and suitemates.
- The animal must be clearly labeled as a service animal or assistance animal and restrained with a harness, leash, or tether of some kind unless the nature of the disability and the animal’s training precludes such physical restriction.
  - If this is the case, the animal must be reliably controlled by voice or a substitute method of restriction.

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6 Assistance animals are also sometimes called comfort animals, therapy animals, or emotional support animals.

7 And/or miniature horses.

8 Applicable ordinances for the City of Durant are § 96.025 and § 96.040 of the Durant Municipal Code.
The animal’s excrement or other refuse must be disposed of by the owner in a prompt and hygienic manner. Owners are expected to control the volume of their animal and quell any unreasonable loudness or excitableness. Animals may not under any circumstances be permitted to jump on, lick, nudge, growl at, or otherwise engage another member of the campus community. Animals must be properly cared for, fed, and be maintained in reasonable health with due diligence. The University will not be responsible for cleaning up after an animal, feeding an animal, or watching the animal for any amount of time under any circumstance.

Exceptions:
The University may ask an individual to remove an animal from a campus building or from University property if

- The animal is disruptive to instruction, services, or the use of facilities.
- The animal poses a health or safety risk, or a direct threat.
- The animal does not have acceptable hygiene or is not housebroken.
- The animal is not kept under control.
- The animal is no longer performing a role of disability related service or assistance.
- The presence of the animal would fundamentally alter the nature of a program or activity.
- The animal’s owner does not clean up after the animal.
- The University reasonably concludes that the animal is not a service or assistance animal.
- The owner does not comply with any other element of this policy.\(^9\)

Approved by Legal Counsel 7/30/02
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Revised 12/1/14 by Committee and approved by Legal Counsel 12/8/14

\(^9\) Students who feel that they have been asked to remove their animal arbitrarily or otherwise feel this policy has been enforced against them unfairly may file a grievance. [http://www.se.edu/ada/grievance-procedure-for-students-with-disabilities/](http://www.se.edu/ada/grievance-procedure-for-students-with-disabilities/)