

Safety Manual

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Animals on campus

North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University (NC A&T) recognizes the importance of *Assistance Animals* for individuals with disabilities. The University is committed to providing equal access to its classrooms, research facilities, public spaces, and housing for all its community members, including students, employees, and visitors.

In accordance with applicable federal and state law, individuals with disabilities may be accompanied by their *Service Animals* on all NC A&T premises where members of the public or participants in services, programs, or activities can go.

Additionally, NC A&T is committed to minimizing disruptions animals may cause on campus that could be detrimental to instructional or research objectives. Animals, if not properly controlled, pose the risk of offensive odors, excrement, fleas, biological agents, and other hazards that may pose a threat to campus operations.

This policy is primarily intended to apply to animals, including but not limited to, *Assistance Animals* (*Service* or *Support*) and *Pets*. This policy does not apply to animals used during University business, such as University Police Department working dogs; animals permitted in residence halls by Department of Housing and Residential Education (DHRE) policy; or research animals.

Definitions

Assistance animals: An "*Assistance Animal*" is an animal lawfully permitted for use by individuals with disabilities at NC A&T. The term *Assistance Animal* is the overarching term that refers to both *Service Animals* as well as *Support Animals* as defined below.

a. Service Animals

- i. A "*Service Animal*" is any animal that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability. A disability may be physical, sensory, psychiatric, or intellectual, and may not be apparent from visual observation. The work or tasks performed by a *Service Animal* must be directly related to the person's disability. The mere provision of emotional support, well-being, comfort, or companionship by the animal's presence does not constitute work or tasks for this definition. Federal law defines *Service Animals* as dogs or in some cases, miniature horses. Species other than dogs are generally not considered *Service Animals*.
- ii. Animals in Training to Become *Service Animals* that are properly identified, i.e. vest or harness, as such may have the same access to campus as the public. Excluded areas include, for example, research labs, sterile environments and University Housing. As with members of the public, Animals in Training to Become *Service Animals* may be asked to leave if they are disruptive to University business.

b. Support Animals

- i. “*Support Animal*” is an animal that provides emotional or other support to an individual with a disability. *Support Animals* are not required to be trained to perform work or tasks. They may include species other than dogs and miniature horses.

Pets: A “*Pet*” is any animal kept for ordinary use and companionship. *Assistance Animals* (*Service* and *Support Animals*), as defined above, are not considered *Pets*.

Pets are prohibited in NC A&T buildings, unless exempted from this policy as stated above in the policy introduction. Individuals bringing *Pets* to the NC A&T campus are expected to comply with all state and local regulations concerning *Pets*.

Therapy animals: A “*Therapy Animal*” is an animal trained to provide a health benefit to a particular population, such as hospital patients. *Therapy Animals* are permitted on campus where a unit determines their presence may be beneficial during University business and must be approved by the head of that unit. The head of the unit should seek approval of their supervisor and other appropriate administrators prior to approving a therapy animal.

Therapy Animals are not required to be formally certified, although units wishing to use *Therapy Animals* to provide a benefit to the University community should use their judgment in selecting animals that will not disrupt University business.

Rights of access for assistance animals: *Assistance Animals* have different rights of access to campus in accordance with federal and state laws.

Service Animals will be permitted to accompany people with disabilities in all areas of NC A&T’s facilities, including University Housing, where students, members of the public, and other participants in services, programs or activities can go. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, NC A&T does not require documentation, such as proof that the animal has been certified, trained, or licensed as a *Service Animal*. Individuals accompanied by a *Service Animal* on campus but who do not need any disability-related accommodations are not required to register the animal. However, individuals are highly encouraged to let Accessibility Resources & Service (ARS) or Equal Opportunity and Compliance (EOC) know they are planning to use a *Service Animal* to help the University address any logistical issues with the animal’s presence, such as access to restricted areas and ensuring appropriate space for the animal. Employees needing to bring a *Service Animal* must request its use as a reasonable accommodation through EOC.

In very limited circumstances, arrangements may need to be made to assure the integrity of the University’s research enterprise due to the potential hazards a *Service Animal* poses that a human being does not. Employees and students who work in certain laboratory or other sterile environments may need to work with the unit and ARS or EOC to determine if the *Service Animal* can be accommodated in these unique spaces. Due to the presence of research animals, certain buildings may also pose limitations to the presence of *Service Animals*. Additionally, health code regulations prevent *Service Animals* from entering the water of swimming pools.

The University will not ask about the nature or extent of a person’s disability to determine whether a person’s animal qualifies as a *Service Animal*. However, when it is not readily apparent that an animal is a *Service Animal*, NC A&T staff may make two inquiries to determine whether the animal qualifies as a *Service Animal*, which are:

1. Is the animal required because of a disability?

2. What work or task has the animal been trained to perform?

A *Service Animal* must be housebroken (i.e., trained so that it controls its waste elimination, absent of illness or accident) and must be kept under control by a harness, leash, or other tether, unless the person is unable to hold those, or such use would interfere with the *Service Animal's* performance of work or tasks. In such instances, the *Service Animal* must be kept under control by voice, signals, or other effective means.

Support Animals are generally not allowed to accompany persons with disabilities throughout campus. A *Support Animal* may reside in University Housing, including accompanying such individual in all public or common use areas of University Housing, when it may be necessary to afford the person with a disability an equal opportunity to use and enjoy University Housing. Before a *Support Animal* can move into University Housing with a person with a disability, a request must be submitted to ARS and approval must be granted (preferably at least 30 days prior to move in).

In accordance with the University's commitment to accessibility, *Support Animals* may be permitted with advance approval in other campus interior spaces as a reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities. People with disabilities must request approval from ARS, if students, or EOC, if staff, program participant, or member of the general public, to have the *Support Animal* accompany them to interior campus spaces. Such requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis consistent with applicable laws.

To comply with federal and state laws, the University may house *Assistance Animals* in residential buildings or allow them in public spaces. Individuals who are allergic to animals or any other circumstances that may restrict them from cohabiting with or near animals should contact either the ARS or EOC to prevent a room assignment near an assistance animal.

In public areas, persons using *Assistance Animals* and persons prevented from being near animals should be courteous of one another and find mutually acceptable solutions. Responsible University staff may be contacted if these individuals cannot come to a mutually acceptable solution or if, for whatever reason, an individual does not feel comfortable addressing the issue.

Responsibilities of people with disabilities using assistance animals: NC A&T is not responsible for the care or supervision of *Assistance Animals*. People using *Assistance Animals* are responsible for the cost, care, and supervision of the animal, including:

- compliance with all county and state laws including but not limited to animal license requirements, vaccination, and identification tags;
- keeping the animal under control and taking effective action when it is out of control;
- feeding and exercising the animal;
- disposing of its waste and cleaning and/or costs associated with repair or replacement for any damage caused by the animal aside from ordinary wear and tear

An *Assistance Animal* may need to leave campus if:

- it is out of control and effective action is not taken to control it;
- its waste is not being properly disposed of or the animal is damaging campus property;
- it poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others;

- it is not being properly cared for.

If removal of an *Assistance Animal* is determined to be necessary, the person with a disability will still be given the opportunity to participate in the service, program, or activity without having the *Assistance Animal* present.

Guidelines for members of the NCAT Community: To ensure equal access and nondiscrimination of people with disabilities, members of the NC A&T community should abide by the following practices:

- Do not ask for details about a person’s disabilities;
- Do not pet, feed or otherwise interfere with an *Assistance Animal*, as that may distract the animal from its work;
- Do not deliberately startle, tease, or taunt an *Assistance Animal*; and
- Do not separate or attempt to separate a person and that person’s *Assistance Animal*.
- Do not falsely present an animal, including a *Pet*, as an *Assistance Animal*. Such actions are in violation of North Carolina law.

NC A&T is committed to ensuring that the needs of all people who require accommodations are met and will determine how to resolve any conflicts or problems as expeditiously as possible.

Where to get help:

Students	Should Contact
...bringing an <i>Assistance Animal</i> to campus	Office
	Phone
	Website/link
...bringing an <i>Assistance Animal</i> to University Housing	Office
	Phone
	Website/link
...reporting a concern about disability discrimination or harassment	Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office
	Phone
	Website/link
Faculty/Staff	Should contact
...bringing an <i>Assistance Animal</i> to campus or reporting a concern about disability discrimination or harassment	Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office
	Phone
	Website/link
Anyone	Should Contact
. . .without a University affiliation with questions about bringing an <i>Assistance Animal</i> to campus or reporting discrimination or harassment	Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office
	Phone

	Website/link
. . . experiencing an emergency, such as an animal that poses an immediate danger to health and safety.	911
...reporting any animal <i>in University Housing</i> that is disruptive, out of control, or may pose a threat to safety.	Department of Housing and Residential Education
	Phone
	Website/link
...reporting any animal <i>elsewhere on campus</i> that is disruptive, out of control or may pose a threat to safety.	NC A&T Public Safety
	Phone
	Website/link

Grievance procedure: A student or employee who wishes to file a disability discrimination complaint should contact the Office of Equal Opportunity and Compliance at 919-966-3576. The website for the Office of Equal Opportunity and Compliance is at [link](#)

Students with concerns about potential discrimination may also contact the United States Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, District of Columbia Office, 400 Maryland Avenue, S.W., Washington, DC 20202-1475, Telephone: 202-453-6020, Fax: 202-453-6021, Email: OCR.DC@ed.gov; the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development by phone at 800-877-0246, or on the web at https://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/complaints_home (and click on “Housing Discrimination”); or the United States Department of Justice, Disability Rights Section by email at ADA.complaint@usdoj.gov, or on the web at <https://www.ada.gov/>.

NC A&T will not retaliate against any individual because they have requested or received a reasonable accommodation, including a request for an *Assistance Animal*.