EMOTIONAL SUPPORT
ANIMAL POLICY

Policy 3.85

I. Purpose

Glen Oaks Community College is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to persons with mental or psychiatric disabilities and fulfilling obligations under State and Federal law and the Fair Housing Act. This policy governs the use of emotional support animals on campus and in student housing.

II. Policy Statement

Persons with verifiable mental or psychiatric disabilities may seek an emotional support animal consistent with the provisions of this policy.

III. Definitions

Emotional support animal: a companion animal that provides therapeutic benefit to an individual with a disability. Unlike service animals, emotional support animals are not individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability.

IV. Emotional Support Animals on Campus

Unlike a service animal, an emotional support animal is not granted access to places of public accommodation. Under the federal Fair Housing Act (FHA), however, an emotional support animal is viewed as a reasonable accommodation in a housing unit that has a "no pets" rule for its residents.

Students who wish to request the use of an emotional support animal to help alleviate the symptoms of a disability must make the request in writing to the Support Services for Students with Disabilities Office (SSSD), located in Student Services. Students must complete a DSS Student Application at least 30 days in advance of the desired occupancy of the animal. Applications will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Students must explain how the reasonable accommodation helps or mitigates symptoms of the disability. While the student is not required to disclose the disability, he or she is required to provide acceptable documentation from a doctor or other health professional. This documentation, the Disability Verification form for Emotional Support Animals, must state that the animal indeed provides emotional support that alleviates one or more of the identified symptoms or effects of an existing disability. Documentation must be provided for each support animal requested. A new DSS Student Application and a Disability Verification Form for Emotional Support Animals must be submitted to the SSSD Office each academic year.

V. General Requirements

Emotional support animals on campus must comply with all state and local licensure and vaccination requirements. Animals must be harnessed, leashed, or tethered. Emotional support animals cannot be juveniles and will need to be altered before they are able to live in housing. Animals are not to be on college property until the application is approved.

Due to the size of the campus suites, the weight limit for the animal will be 50 lbs. to ensure space for the animal and the other students living in the suite.