

How to Request for Emotional Support Animal in Panola College Housing

Process Information

Panola College Residence Life Housing provides reasonable accommodations for a student with a disability who has a verifiable need for an **Emotional Support Animal (ESA)** in Panola College Housing. A reasonable accommodation is an exception to the Panola College Housing rules, policies, practices, or services that a student with a disability may need to have an equal opportunity to use and enjoy Panola College Housing.

This form is to request an ESA, and **NOT** a Service Animal. The differences between an ESA and a Service Animal are:

- **Service Animals are defined as dogs that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities.** These tasks can include things like pulling a wheelchair, guiding a person who is visually impaired, or alerting a person who is having a seizure. The tasks a service dog can perform are not limited to this list. However, the work or task a service dog does must be directly related to the person's disability. Service dogs may accompany persons with disabilities into places that the public normally goes. To request an "Emotional Support Animal in Panola College Housing" form email dss@panola.edu.
- An ESA is an animal (typically a dog or cat though this can include another type of animal) that provides a therapeutic benefit to its owner through companionship. The animal provides emotional support and comfort to individuals with psychiatric disabilities and other mental impairments. The animal is **not** specifically trained to perform tasks for a person who has emotional disabilities. **Unlike a Service Animal, an ESA is not granted access to places of public accommodation; the animal's access is restricted to the student's housing.**

The student must have an accepted Residence Hall Contract to request consideration to have an ESA in Panola College Housing. These steps should be followed to request an ESA:

1. A qualified third-party (e.g., psychiatrist, psychologist, or clinical licensed social worker) who is providing treatment to the student should complete the request for Emotional Support Animal. Only the information requested on this form should be provided, and it must be from a state licensed professional provider who is personally treating the student.
2. The student should submit the completed form to the Panola College Disability Support Services office (DSS).
3. The student will need to schedule an intake appointment with a DSS staff member.
Additional documents may be requested at the time of the appointment.

The information completed on this form will be reviewed to determine:

1. That the student is a person with a documented disability;
2. The ESA being requested is necessary to afford the student, as a person with a disability, an equal opportunity to use and enjoy the on-campus housing facilities; and
3. That there is an identifiable relationship between the disability and the support that the ESA provides.

The student will be informed of the final determination by email within 1-2 weeks after the initial submission of professional verification and completion of an intake appointment. If you do not agree with the determination, the student may follow the Panola College Grievance Procedure in the [Panola College Student Success Handbook](#).

Panola College reserves the right to reassign the student to a space to accommodate the ESA, if there is a potential impact on roommate(s). This move will only accommodate the student, and not roommate(s).

A student who is approved to have an ESA in Panola College Housing **will be required** to acknowledge the ESA Owner's Responsibilities, as outlined on the last page of this document. These responsibilities will be reviewed with the student by Housing and/or Residence Life Staff.