



Center for Accessibility Resources & Disability Services

BARNARD COLLEGE

Support Animal Policy

Barnard College has established the following policy regarding Support Animals to assist individuals with disabilities. Being mindful of health and safety concerns of the campus community, Barnard College generally prohibits the presence of privately-owned animals on campus. However, the College will reasonably accommodate persons with disabilities who require the assistance of Support Animals, as appropriate. The Center for Accessibility Resources & Disability Services (CARDS) is responsible for implementing this policy and for guiding students with disabilities in documenting their specific request for a necessary accommodation. Each request will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, considering the needs of the individual and the concerns of the College community. The successful implementation of this policy requires the cooperation of all students, faculty, staff and visitors of the Barnard community. Barnard College reserves the right to amend this policy as circumstances require.

Definitions

Approved Animal: an Animal that has been granted as an accommodation under this policy.

Disability: defined as a physical or mental condition or impairment that is medically recognizable and diagnosable, and substantially limits one or more of a person's major life activities. These limitations may include, but are not limited to, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, working, and learning. A person is substantially limited in major life activities if the individual is unable to perform the activity, or is significantly restricted as to the manner in which he or she can perform that activity when compared to the average person. Acceptable documentation of a disability can be from either a licensed medical or mental health provider and should verify the disability as well as describe the need for a Support Animal.

Owner: the owner is the student or person who is responsible for any type of Approved Animal on campus.

Pet: a domesticated animal that serves a role in providing leisure companionship to its owner. Pets are not the same as Service or Support Animals and are generally not permitted inside College facilities. The only pets permitted in the residence halls are fish that can be kept in a tabletop aquarium no larger than five gallons, in compliance with the policies of Residential Life and Housing.

Service Animal: an animal, usually a dog, individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability. Dogs whose sole function is to provide emotional support do not qualify as Service Animals.

Support Animal: an animal that is prescribed or otherwise documented by a healthcare or mental health professional as treatment for an individual with a disability and is beneficial in alleviating one or more identifiable symptoms or effects of that individual's disability. Support Animals are permitted within the owner's on-campus specific housing assignment room. Support Animals are generally not permitted to be in common suite areas or in rooms or suites of other students or other campus locations without prior approval through the College's reasonable accommodation process.

Support Animals

A Support Animal is a dog or other common domestic animal that provides therapeutic support to an individual with an identified disability. Support Animals may not be brought to College housing without prior approval from CARDS. Approved Support Animals are permitted within the student's room in assigned on-campus housing. Any requests for additional access will be reviewed on a case by case basis through the College's reasonable accommodation process and may require documentation as outlined in this policy.

Procedures for Approval of Support Animals in College Housing

Incoming residential students must submit their Disability Housing Accommodation Request Form for the accommodation of a Support Animal in college housing to CARDS in addition to their initial housing application (by the posted deadlines indicated on the CARDS website). The Disability Housing Accommodation Request Form is available on the Center for Accessibility Resources & Disability Services webpage. Existing residential students must submit requests by the deadline posted on the CARDS website for the following academic year. Spring semester requests have a priority deadline of November 1st. Requests received after this date will be reviewed and will be considered on a space-available basis. All requests are subject to review and require current documentation as outlined in this policy. While requests made after the designated deadline will be accepted and considered, there is no guarantee that Barnard will be able to meet late applicants' accommodation request, including any needs that develop during the semester. Requests received outside of the Pre-Lottery Room Selection Request in the Spring Semester are reviewed once a month with the Disability Housing Committee. To make a request, students must contact their CARDS case manager to conduct a meeting to discuss the request and provide appropriate and timely documentation as outlined in this policy. This policy will be carefully reviewed with the person at that time.

Documentation for Support Animal

Requests for a Support Animal in housing require complete documentation to be submitted before review and rendering of a decision and/or recommendation. Documentation must be dated within the last 6 months and detailed documentation requirements are available on Barnard College's Center for Accessibility Resources & Disability Services website. Documentation of the need for a Support Animal should follow the Center for Accessibility Resources & Disability Services guidelines for documentation of disability and include the following information:

- The credentials and contact information of the evaluator(s); CARDS will request a signed Release of Information Form from the student to discuss the evaluator's recommendation for the Support Animal by telephone.
- A diagnostic statement dated within the last six months identifying the disability; A description of the diagnostic methodology used; A description of the current functional limitations; A description of the expected progression or stability of the disability; description of current and past accommodations, services, and/or medications; Statement dated within the last six months on how the Support Animal serves as an accommodation for the verified disability as a part of the resident's/student's treatment plan; Statement dated within the last six months on how the need for the Support Animal relates to the ability of the resident/student to use and enjoy the living arrangements provided by the College. Additional documentation may be requested as necessary.

Procedures to have Support Animals on Campus

The individual approved for a Support Animal accommodation on Campus must:

- Follow all established College policies (including the Code of Conduct);
- Register the Approved Support Animal with the Center for Accessibility Resources & Disability Services prior to moving into campus housing each year through applying for a Disability Housing Accommodation each Spring. Student must follow all posted procedures to apply, fill out the Disability Housing Accommodation Request Form, and supply documentation to be reviewed for approval.
- Students who are not approved by the Center for Accessibility Resources & Disability Services for a Support Animal may not move into campus housing with a pet.
- Provide documentation at the start of each academic year with proof the animal is licensed (pursuant to applicable laws), vaccinated and in good health, a recent photograph of the animal and owner, description of the animal, and an emergency contact form for the animal.
- Review and sign appropriate forms as requested at the start of each academic year.
- Attend a Support Animal Orientation Meeting with the Center for Accessibility Resources & Disability Services.

Conflicting Needs/Health Concerns

The Center for Accessibility Resources & Disability Services and Residential Life and Housing will make a reasonable effort to notify residents in the suite or room where the Support Animal will be located. Individuals who have medical issues and are affected by animals (e.g., asthma, severe allergies) should contact the Resident Assistant or Center for Accessibility Resources & Disability Services as soon as possible. The person may be required to provide verifiable medical documentation to support such claim. Reasonable accommodations may be made to consider the needs of both persons to resolve the problem as efficiently and effectively as possible. A solution may mean either party is subject to move.

If there is an allergy/animal conflict elsewhere on campus, such as in a classroom, that cannot be resolved between the two parties, then the Center for Accessibility Resources & Disability Services will collaborate on a solution.

Responsibilities of Owners Using Support Animals

- A. Annual CARDS Registration.** Students with disabilities who are approved for Support Animals must register annually with the Center for Accessibility Resources & Disability Services through applying for a Disability Housing Accommodation. Students who are seeking College residential housing must complete the appropriate housing request form in addition to submitting their housing application to Residential Life. Students who are approved to have Support Animals are required to attend a Support Animal Orientation Meeting with CARDS staff. Failure to attend the meeting will be considered a violation of policy.
- B. Up to date Health Statement.** In accordance with New York State law, the animal must have a current health statement, including vaccination record, from a licensed veterinarian dated within the past year. Proof of good health must be provided on an annual basis.
- C. Licensure.** The animal must meet legal requirements. All licensure requirements of the town of the animal's residence must be met. Proof of such license must be provided to the Center for Accessibility Resources & Disability Services (e.g. – New York law requires that every dog be licensed. Service dogs are exempt from the license fee).
- D. Managing Undue Interference.** The Owner is responsible for assuring that the Approved Animal does not unduly interfere with the routine activities of the residence or cause difficulties for students who reside there.
- E. Leash or Tether Requirement.** The Support Animal shall have a harness or other tether and leash which connects the animal to the owner unless the disability of the owner would preclude the use of such devices when outside the owner's room. If unable to use a leash or tether due to owner's disability then the owner must maintain control of the animal at all times in another manner.
- F. Roommate Notification.** For students with roommates: Following notice to CARDS and the College of a student's intent to bring a Support Animal into College Housing, notice will be provided to roommates and/or suitemates. In the event that one or more roommates or suitemates subsequently raise concerns about living with the Support Animal, either the owner and Support Animal or the roommates or suitemates, as determined by the Center for Accessibility Resources & Disability Services and Residential Life and Housing, may be moved to a different location.

- G. Containment in Housing Assignment.** Support Animals must be contained within the owner's housing assignment at all times, except when being transported in or out of owner's assigned room in an animal carrier or controlled by leash or harness. Support Animals are generally not permitted to visit rooms of any other students in College housing, campus housing common spaces, or other areas of the College without prior approval through the College's reasonable accommodation process.
- H. Damages.** The owner is financially responsible for any and all damage caused by their Support animal and must take appropriate precautions to prevent property damage or injury. The cost of care, arrangements and responsibilities for the well-being of an authorized animal are the sole responsibility of their owner at all times. If a Support Animal damages the assigned residence hall room or other College property, the cost of the damage will be assessed and assigned to the student's account. The owner is responsible for insuring cleanliness and proper care and treatment of the Support Animal and its environment.
- I. Grooming.** The animal must be groomed, and measures taken at all times for flea and odor control. The residence may be inspected for fleas, ticks and other pests once a semester or as needed. If necessary, College approved pest control services will be utilized and the animal owner will be billed for the expense of any necessary pest treatment.
- J. Waste Removal.** The owner is responsible for removal and proper disposal of the animal's waste. Removal must be immediate. The animal's waste must be removed into a proper receptacle located off-campus. Individuals unable to clean up after their animals or who need assistance should notify Center for Accessibility Resources & Disability Services staff so that alternative arrangements may be agreed upon. If an animal urinates or defecates inside of a building, or in another area that requires cleaning or maintenance, the owner must notify staff, and will be responsible for the cost of such cleaning.
- K. Leaving Support Animal on Campus Overnight.** Support Animals may not to be left overnight in campus housing or left to be cared for by another student. If the owner leaves the campus for a prolonged period of time, the animal must accompany the owner.
- L. Maintenance of Control by Owner.** The Support Animal must be under the control of the owner at all times. Reasonable behavior is expected from Support Animals while on campus. If a Support Animal exhibits unacceptable behavior, the owner may be required to employ appropriate training techniques to correct the situation. If a Support Animal is determined to be out of control, the infraction will be decided on an individual basis. The owner is fully responsible for the actions of the Support Animal at all times. The owner is held to this policy and the College's Code of Conduct in relation to any behavior caused by the animal. Consequences for misconduct may include, but are not limited to, a plan for correction of disruption (e.g. muzzling a barking dog), and training for the animal and owner, or exclusion from College facilities. Failure to maintain control of the Support Animal at all times may be grounds for removal from campus housing.
- M. Removal from Campus.** Any violation of the above rules may result in immediate removal of the Support Animal from the College, pending disciplinary action. The College may remove an authorized animal when the animal poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others, the animal's presence results in a fundamental alteration of the College's program, the owner does not comply with the responsibilities outlined in this policy, or the animal or its presence creates an unmanageable disturbance or interference with the Barnard community. The owner may be

directed to remove a Support Animal that is unruly or disruptive (e.g. barking, jumping on people). If the improper behavior happens repeatedly or if the Support Animal exhibits aggressive or unsafe behavior, it may be prohibited from College housing.

- N. Fulfilling Housing Contract Obligations.** Should the Support Animal be removed from the premises for any reason, the owner is expected to fulfill her housing obligations for the remainder of the housing contract, including but not limited to paying applicable housing fees.
- O. Adherence to College Policies and Procedures.** The Owner agrees to continue to abide by all other residential life and other College policies. Reasonable accommodation which may constitute an exception to a policy that otherwise would prohibit having a Support Animal does not constitute an exception to any other policy.
- P. Other Restrictions.** The College reserves the right to place other reasonable conditions or restrictions on the Support Animal depending upon the nature and characteristics of the animal. If an individual feels he or she is unable to comply with any of the requirements contained in the policy she or he should contact a member of the Center for Accessibility Resources and Disability Services staff to address the matter.

Grievance Procedures

If the decision is made to deny a request or remove a Support Animal, the owner may request an appeal of the determination in writing, per the Student Disability Accommodation Grievance Procedure. Grievances alleging discrimination on the basis of disability will be overseen by the Executive Director for Equity and Title IX Coordinator. See <https://www.barnard.edu/policy/discriminationprocedure>

Contacts: questions or concerns related to Support Animals, or other accommodation information, should be directed to the Center for Accessibility Resources & Disability Services, 212-854-4634.

By my signature below, I verify that I have read, understand and will abide by the guidelines in this policy. I am only to sign the below lines upon request by the Center for Accessibility Resources & Disability Services after being approved for a Support Animal on Campus.

Student Signature and Date: _____

CARDS Staff Signature and Date: _____