

Assistance Animals Policy

One common type of reasonable accommodation is allowing a person with a disability to keep assistance animal. An assistance animal is any animal that works, provides assistance, performs tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability, or provides emotional support that alleviates one or more identified symptoms or effects of a person's disability, VP Management is committed to ensuring that individuals with disabilities may keep such animals in their dwelling to the extent required by federal, state and local law.

An animal that is trained to do work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability is known as a service animal. It is often readily apparent that an animal is trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability, such as a dog that guides an individual with visual impairment. Where it is readily apparent that an animal is a trained service animal, for example, a dog trained to guide an individual with a visual impairment, VP Management will not inquire about the individual's disability or the animal's training.

In the case of a resident who requests a reasonable accommodation for an assistance animal that provides emotional or other assistance that ameliorates one or more symptoms or effects of the resident's disability, VP Management may require a statement from a health or social service professional¹ indicating:

- i. That the applicant has a disability, and
- ii. That the animal would provide emotional support or other assistance that would ameliorate one or more symptoms or effects of the disability.

In the case of a resident who requests a reasonable accommodation for an assistance animal that does work or performs tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability, VP Management may require that the resident provide:

- i. A statement from a health or social service professional indicating that the person has a disability, and
- ii. Information that the animal has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks that would ameliorate one or more symptoms or effects of the disability, or information that the animal, despite lack of individual training, is able to do work or perform tasks that would ameliorate one or more symptoms or effects of the disability.

If an assistance animal both provides emotional support or other assistance that ameliorates one or more effects of a disability and does work or performs tasks for the benefit of a person with a physical disability, VP Management may require compliance with either of the two preceding paragraphs, but not both.

¹ "Health or social service professional" means a person who provides medical care, therapy or counseling to persons with disabilities, including, but not limited to, doctors, physicians assistants, psychiatrists, psychologists, or social workers.