COLBY COLLEGE
SERVICE & ASSISTANCE ANIMAL POLICY

Definition

A "service animal" is defined differently depending on whether a student wishes to have the assistance of the animal throughout the entire campus, or whether a student wishes to have the assistance of the animal only in the residence halls.

A. For campus-wide assistance, a “service animal” is a dog or miniature horse (Miniature horses generally range in height from 24 inches to 34 inches measured to the shoulders and generally weigh between 70 and 100 pounds.) that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual or other mental disability. Other species of animals, whether wild or domestic, trained or untrained, are not service animals for the purposes of this definition. The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the individual's disability. Examples of such work or tasks include, but are not limited to, assisting an individual who is totally or partially blind with navigation and other tasks, alerting an individual who is deaf or hard of hearing to the presence of people or sounds, providing nonviolent protection or rescue work, pulling a wheelchair, assisting an individual during a seizure, alerting an individual to the presence of allergens, retrieving items such as medicine or a telephone, providing physical support and assistance with balance and stability to an individual with a mobility disability and helping a person with a psychiatric or neurological disability by preventing or interrupting impulsive or destructive behaviors. The crime deterrent effects of an animal's presence and the provision of emotional support, well-being, comfort or companionship do not constitute work or tasks for the purposes of this definition.

B. For assistance only in the residence halls, a “service animal” is (i) an animal other than a dog that has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a physical or mental disability, including, but not limited to, guiding individuals with impaired vision, alerting individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to intruders or sounds, providing reasonable protection or rescue work, pulling a wheelchair or retrieving dropped items, or (ii) any animal that has been determined necessary to mitigate the effects of a physical or mental disability by a physician, psychologist, physician's assistant, nurse practitioner or licensed social worker. This definition includes what are commonly known as “comfort animals.”

C. An “assistance animal” is a companion animal that provides therapeutic benefit to an individual with a mental or psychiatric disability. Assistance animals are prescribed by a licensed
mental health-care professional as necessary in the treatment of a diagnosed condition. These animals are not required to undergo specialized training. Assistance animals are not the same as service animals in that they are not individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability. Unlike a service animal, an assistance animal is not granted access to places of public accommodation. A request to have an assistance animal in the residence halls is considered a request for accommodation and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

**Request Process**

Requests for approval of an assistance animal must be made *prior* to bringing an assistance animal to campus. Requests must be submitted by March 1st for the following academic year (for returning students) and June 1st (for incoming students). All other requests will be reviewed on a rolling basis one month prior to each academic semester.

Requests must be resubmitted each year and be accompanied by updated documentation both for the individual and the assistance/service animal.

**Documentation Needed to Request either a Service or Assistance Animal**

If the student’s disability and/or need for an assistance animal are not obvious, the student must provide written verification from a reliable medical professional that the student has a disability. Verification must include the diagnosis as well as indication that an assistance animal *is necessary* to provide the student an equal opportunity to use and enjoy Colby and that no other form of accommodation would effectively address the student’s disability-related need.

When it is not obvious what service an animal provides, only limited inquiries are allowed. Staff may ask two questions: (1) is the dog a service animal required because of a disability, and (2) what work or task has the dog been trained to perform. Staff cannot ask about the person’s disability, require medical documentation, require a special identification card or training documentation for the dog, or ask that the dog demonstrate its ability to perform the work or task.

**Up-to-date vaccination records:** A veterinarian must inspect an animal before being brought on Campus and into the residence halls. All shots and vaccinations must be up to date. A record of this information must be provided annually and provided prior to the animal moving into the residence hall.

**Licensing:** The student must comply with all Waterville licensing laws and tag laws pertaining to the animal. A record of this information must be provided annually and prior to the animal moving into the residence hall.

**Criteria for Approval of Request**

Residential life at Colby is unique in several ways, including the assignment of roommates for many students and the mandate that individuals must share a room or suite in certain residence halls. To ensure that the presence of service/assistance animals is not an undue administrative
burden or fundamental alteration of College housing, Colby reserves the right to assign an individual with a service/assistance animal to a single room without a roommate.

A request for a service/assistance animal may be denied as unreasonable if the presence of the animal imposes an undue financial and/or administrative burden; fundamentally alters College housing policies; and/or poses a direct threat to the health and safety of others or would cause substantial property damage to the property of others, including Colby property, or accommodating the service/assistance animal would be otherwise unreasonable. Colby does not limit room assignments for individuals with service/assistance animals to any particular building or buildings.

Colby may consider the following factors, among others, as evidence in determining whether the presence of an assistance animal is reasonable and in the making of housing assignments for individuals with assistance animals:

1. The presence of the service/assistance animal imposes an undue financial and/or administrative burden (or whether the facility can accommodate the miniature horse’s type, size, and weight);
2. The presence of the service/assistance animal fundamentally alters the College’s educational or housing programs (including, but not limited to, excessive barking in a residence hall or classroom);
3. The service/assistance animal poses a direct threat to the health and safety of others or would cause substantial property damage to the property of others, including Colby property;
4. The service/assistance animal is not housebroken or is unable to live with others in a reasonable manner;
5. Vaccinations are not up-to-date or the service/assistance animal is not licensed as required by law
6. Access to a particular area of the campus would present a legitimate safety risk to the individual with a disability, the dog, others or the facility. Examples of such restricted areas may include but are not limited to the following:
   a. Areas of food preparation (versus dining areas)
   b. Research areas where a dog’s presence may compromise the research
   c. Science laboratories if evidence supports a danger of harm to the animal due to exposure to chemicals or other hazardous elements/equipment

Removal of Assistance Animal

Colby may require the student-owner to remove the assistance animal from Colby housing if the animal poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others or causes substantial property damage to the property of others; the animal’s presence results in a fundamental alteration of a
College program; the student-owner does not comply with the Student-Owner’s Responsibilities set forth above and/or with the agreement s/he must sign as a condition of having an assistance animal; or the animal or its presence creates an unmanageable disturbance or interference with the Colby community.

**The student-owner is solely responsible for the custody and care of the assistance animal.**

**The student-owner:**

1. Must properly house and restrain or otherwise maintain control of the service/assistance animal at all times. No student-owner shall permit the animal to go loose or run at large. If an animal is found running at large, the animal is subject to capture and confinement and immediate removal from College housing.

2. Must abide by current city, county, and state ordinances, laws, and/or regulations pertaining to licensing, vaccination, and other requirements for animals. Colby has the right to require documentation of compliance with such ordinances, laws, and/or regulations, which may include a vaccination certificate and licensing by the City of Waterville or the student-owner’s municipality of residence.

3. Is required to clean up after and properly dispose of the animal’s waste in a safe and sanitary manner.

4. Is required to ensure the animal is well cared for at all times. Evidence of mistreatment or abuse may result in immediate removal of the assistance animal. Mistreatment or abuse of an assistance animal is also a violation of the Colby Code of Student Conduct.

5. Will be charged for any damage caused by the assistance animal beyond reasonable wear and tear to the same extent that it charges other individuals for damages beyond reasonable wear and tear.

6. Is subject to inspection of his/her living accommodation for fleas, ticks or other pests if necessary. If fleas, ticks or other pests are detected through inspection, the residence will be treated using approved fumigation methods by a College-approved pest control service. The student-owner will be billed for the expense of any pest treatment above and beyond standard pest management in the residence halls.

7. Is responsible for ensuring the assistance animal is contained as appropriate when the student-owner is not present in the residence hall during the day, and may not leave the animal overnight in the living accommodation to be cared for by another; the animal must accompany the student-owner away from campus overnight. **IMPORTANT:** Students who wish to participate in extracurricular activities in which staying away overnight may be an element should carefully consider what arrangements for the animal’s off-campus care can be made while the student is away.
8. Acknowledges that the assistance animal is allowed in College housing only as long as necessary because of the student-owner’s disability, and will notify Campus Life in writing if the assistance animal is no longer needed or is no longer in residence.