



Emotional Support Animal Resources

How to request ESA accommodations

Requesting ESA accommodations for campus housing

An emotional support animal (ESA) is an animal that alleviates one or more identified symptoms or effects of a person's disability.

Qualified individuals with disabilities may request a reasonable modification to Cornell's policy prohibiting pets in residential communities to allow them to have their ESA live with them in campus housing. *(ESAs are distinct from service animals, which are subject to a separate Cornell policy.)*

How to request ESA accommodations: Students must submit ESA requests through Student Disability Services (SDS). An ESA request will be approved with clear evidence that the ESA will ameliorate the symptoms of a disability (note that only certain types of animals qualify). Learn more at sds.cornell.edu/accommodations-services/animals-campus.

Requests for documentation from Cornell Health providers: SDS does not require third-party documentation of a mental health condition to consider or approve an ESA request. However, if you are currently receiving mental health care from Cornell Health, or have in the recent past, and would like to include documentation of that care and/or relevant diagnoses as part of a request for SDS accommodations (including requests for ESAs), please speak about this directly with your provider.

Over

While our providers may be able to provide documentation of your care/treatment here at Cornell Health, we are not able to recommend or suggest any specific accommodations to SDS. Please be aware that inclusion of documentation of care received at Cornell Health does not guarantee approval of an accommodation.

Formal ESA evaluations for off-campus accommodations

If you are seeking off-campus ESA accommodations (i.e., for housing or air transportation) a formal ESA evaluation may be required. This specialty service is not provided by Student Disability Services. However, there are a variety of off-campus providers who offer this service. To receive referral support, contact our CAPS Referral Manager by calling 607-255-5155 or logging in to mycornellhealth.health.cornell.edu and selecting “Messages.”

The cost for a formal ESA evaluation may or may not be covered by your health insurance. For information about Cornell’s Access Fund, which can help cover health care costs not covered by your insurance, visit scl.cornell.edu and search “Access Fund.”