



POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Title: Support Animal Policy

Policy No.: 6.3

Department: Student Services

Contact: Student Disability Services Coordinator

Policy

Great Basin College (GBC) is committed to reasonably accommodating individuals with disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and the Fair Housing Act. Although GBC policy does not generally permit animals in campus facilities, the College has established the following policy to ensure students who require service animals due to a disability have equal access to GBC programs and services.

This policy differentiates service animals as defined by the ADA from support animals and pets. Additionally, this policy addresses the requirements for handlers and their service animals and denotes campus locations in which service animals are off-limits.

1.0 Definitions

Disability Resource Center (DRC): GBC office that collaborates with individuals, faculty, and staff to ensure that individuals with disabilities have equal access to all GBC programs and activities.

Handler: A person with a service or emotional support animal.

Pet: A domestic animal kept for pleasure or companionship unrelated to a disability. Pets are not permitted in college facilities.

Service animal: A service animal is a dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for a person with a disability. The service animal does not need to be professionally trained. The work or tasks performed by the service animal must be directly related to the individual's disability. Animals whose sole function is to provide comfort or emotional support do not qualify as service animals under the ADA. Examples of work or tasks done by a service animal include, but are not limited to, guiding people who are blind, alerting people who are deaf, pulling a wheelchair, alerting and protecting a person who is having a seizure, reminding a person to take prescribed medications, calming a person with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) during an anxiety attack or performing other duties. Under particular circumstances set forth in the ADA regulations at 28 CFR 35.136(i), a miniature horse may

qualify as a service animal. If there is a question about whether an animal is a service animal, the Student Disability Services Coordinator should be contacted for clarification.

Trainee: An animal undergoing training to become a service animal. A trainee will be housebroken and fully socialized. To be fully socialized means the animal will not, except under rare occasions, bark, yip, growl or make disruptive noises; will have a good temperament and disposition; will not be aggressive. A trainee will be under control of the handler, who may or may not have a disability. If the trainee begins to show improper behavior, the handler will act immediately to correct the animal or will remove the animal from the premises.

Support animal: A support animal (also sometimes referred to as an assistance animal, therapy animal or comfort animal), is an animal that provides emotional or other support/assistance that alleviates one or more identified symptoms or effects of a person's disability. Unlike a service animal, a support animal may be an animal other than a dog and does not necessarily assist a person with a disability with activities of daily living, nor does it accompany a person with a disability at all times. A support animal is a disability-related accommodation and, if approved by the Disability Resource Center, may be allowed in a student's assigned residence on campus. Unlike a service animal, a support animal is generally only permitted within the student's assigned residence on campus.

2.0 Procedures for Requesting Support Animals in Student Housing

Students requesting to have a Support Animal reside with them in Student Housing are required to follow the general procedures set forth for requesting reasonable accommodations prior to bringing the animal into their assigned living space on campus. In addition, students must submit the animal's necessary veterinary and licensing documentation and provide a picture of the animal. Once the accommodation and the animal are approved, the student must attend a meeting with the Student Disability Services Coordinator and Student Housing Coordinator to discuss implementation specific to the student's housing assignment.

Procedures for requesting reasonable accommodation may be found on the GBC Accessibility web page for Great Basin College: <http://www.gbcnv.edu/disabilities>.

GBC will consider the following factors, among others, as evidence in determining whether the presence of the animal is reasonable or in the making of housing assignments for individuals with emotional support animals:

- The size of the animal is too large for available assigned housing space.
- The animal's presence would force another individual from student housing (e.g. serious allergies).
- The animal's presence otherwise violates any individuals' right to peace and quiet enjoyment of GBC student housing facilities.
- The animal is not housebroken or is unable to live with other residents in a reasonable manner.
- The animal's vaccinations are not up-to-date.
- The animal poses or has posed in the past a direct threat to any individual, such as aggressive behavior towards or injuring an individual.

- The animal causes or has caused excessive damage to housing beyond reasonable wear-and-tear.

3.0 Addressing Concerns Arising from the Presence of support animals

As part of the process for identifying a Student Housing assignment (or if concerns arise after an assignment), the Student Housing Coordinator, Student Disability Services Coordinator, and other pertinent College offices and administrators may be notified as appropriate. The student's roommate(s), suitemate(s) or other nearby neighbors may be notified that the Support Animal will be residing in a shared space or nearby. If a concern arises regarding the presence of the Support Animal, the College will conduct an individualized assessment and Student Housing reassignments may be necessary.

Students with medical condition(s) that are affected by animals due to a medical condition or other disability as defined by the ADA must contact the DRC if they have a health or safety related concern about exposure to a service animal. The student raising a concern about the support animal will be asked to provide documentation that identifies the condition(s) as a disability and register with the Disability Resource Center; a determination will be made on whether there is need for an accommodation. GBC will provide reasonable accommodations to individuals as needed.

If a student or staff member is concerned about the presence or behavior of a student's support animal on campus, they should contact the DRC.

In cases of immediate danger, which may occur when the support animal is out of control or poses a threat of serious injury, observers should contact GBC Campus Security 775-934-4923.

4.0 Requirements for Handlers with Support Animals when Residing in Student Housing

Handlers who reside in GBC Student Housing are responsible for the following:

- **Assuring that the support animal does not disrupt Student Housing operations.** Such disruptions include an support animal unduly interfering with the routine activities of the College or causing difficulties (such as by excessive noise, for example) for students who reside there.
- **Ensuring that the support animal remains within the handler's privately assigned individual living accommodations (e.g., room, suite, or apartment) while on campus.** An exception is made for taking the animal out for natural relief in approved areas. When a support animal is outside the private individual living accommodations, it must be in an animal carrier or controlled by a leash or harness. Support animals are not allowed in any college facilities other than the handler's assigned living space.
- **Providing the support animal with care and supervision.** Care and supervision of the approved animal are the sole responsibility of the handler. This includes, but is not limited to, removal of the animal during emergency evacuation for events such as a fire alarm. Emergency personnel

will determine whether to remove the animal and may not be held responsible for the care, damage to, or loss of the animal

- **Maintaining control of the support animal at all times, including following all leash laws.** handlers must not let the support animal go loose or run at large. If an animal is found running at large, the animal is subject to capture, confinement, and immediate removal from Student Housing.
- **Ensuring the prompt cleanup of the support animal's waste and, when appropriate, toileting the animal in areas designated by the College.** Indoor animal waste must be placed in a sturdy plastic bag and securely tied before being disposed of in an outside trash dumpster.
- **Containing the support animal and be present in the event of the College's response to a service request in the handler's Student Housing unit.** If handler does not contain the support animal and is not present during the visit, College staff or contractors will not enter to complete the repair, unless other arrangements have been agreed upon in advance.
- **Covering any expenses incurred for required cleaning above and beyond a standard cleaning or for repairs or replacements assessed at the time of the repair or after the student and animal vacate the student housing unit.** This includes (without limitation) replacement of furniture, carpet, window, wall covering, etc. The handler is expected to cover these costs at the time of repair and/or move-out. The handler shall have no claim against the College for any financial obligations resulting from the actions of the support animal. The College shall have the right to bill the handler for unmet obligations.
- **Overseeing all aspects of the support animal's health and well-being and following all local ordinances including the following:**
 - **Vaccination:** In accordance with local ordinances and regulations, the animal must be immunized against diseases common to that type of animal. Dogs must have current vaccination against rabies and wear a rabies vaccination tag. Cats should have the normal shots required for a healthy animal. The handler should be prepared to provide documentation showing proof of vaccination upon request.
 - **Licensing:** The handler must comply with any applicable licensing requirements. It is the handler's responsibility to know and understand these ordinances, laws, and regulations. The College reserves the right to request documentation showing that the animal has been licensed in accordance with local licensing requirements.
 - **Training:** support animals must be housebroken, as applicable.
 - **Leashing/Control of the support animal:** If appropriate, the animal must be on a leash as required by County Ordinance unless the leash would inhibit an support animals ability to provide service.
 - **Inspection:** The handler's residence may be inspected for fleas, ticks or other pests once a quarter or as needed. The Student Housing Coordinator will schedule the inspection. If fleas, ticks or other pests are detected through inspection, the residence will be treated using approved fumigation methods by a GBC-approved pest control service.
 - **No Abandonment or Mistreatment:** support animals must not be left unattended overnight in Student Housing. If the handler leaves campus overnight, the support animal should accompany the handler. Students will not be issued additional keys or access cards for caretakers. Support animals must not be subjected to abuse or neglect.

- **Notifying the Student Disability Services Coordinator if a support animal is no longer required to ensure equal access and enjoyment of Student Housing or if the support animal is no longer in residence.**
 - The support animal is allowed to reside in the GBC student housing facility only as long as it is necessary because of the handler's disability. The handler must notify the DRC in writing if the support animal is no longer needed or is no longer in residence.
 - To replace an support animal, the new animal must be necessary because of the handler's disability and the handler must follow the procedures in this policy and the Reasonable Accommodation Policy when requesting a different Support Animal.

Other Conditions:

- GBC reserves the right to place other reasonable conditions or restrictions on support animals, e.g., to balance with the needs of other individuals with disabilities.

Recommendations:

- While it is not required, GBC strongly encourages handlers to maintain liability insurance coverage for the support animal, in order to protect the handler and family from risk of significant legal and financial liability. The handler will in all cases be held financially responsible for the actions of the support animal, including any incident where the support animal causes bodily injury to another person, regardless of whether the handler has obtained insurance coverage. The handler is solely responsible for any bodily injury to others caused by the support animal and will defend, indemnify and hold the Board of Regents of the Nevada System of Higher Education and GBC harmless for any liability or damages imposed or sought to be imposed as a result of any such bodily injury.

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| 5.0 Removal of a Support Animal |
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A handler of a support animal may be asked to remove the animal from Student Housing under the following circumstances:

- **Out of control behavior/direct threat:** If the support animal's behavior is out of control and the handler does not take immediate and effective action to control it, the handler may be asked to remove the animal from college facilities. Examples of an out of control behavior include excessive noise (such as frequent or loud barking), running around unrestrained, damaging College property, making unwanted contact with others, or aggressive conduct such as growling, biting or threatening others. Repetitive instances of out of control behavior or behavior that poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others may result in the handler being asked to remove the animal from Student Housing until the handler takes significant steps to mitigate the behavior.
- **Unreasonable dirtiness:** An handler of an support animal that is unreasonably dirty may be asked to remove the animal from Student Housing until action is taken to restore the animal to reasonable cleanliness. Animals that are normally well-groomed, but messy in appearance due

to seasonal shedding or becoming wet from weather or weather-related incidents are to be considered reasonably clean.

- **Failure to follow handler requirements:** If the handler fails to comply with handler's Responsibilities as provided in this Policy, the handler may be asked to remove the animal.
- **Fundamental alteration to services provided by student housing:** When an animal's presence results in a fundamental alteration of the essential nature of the goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages, or accommodations offered by Student Housing, the handler may be asked to remove the animal.

If a handler is asked to remove their service animal for any of the above reasons, the handler is welcome to return to campus, but the service animal may not return to campus until the reason for removal is effectively addressed.

In the event a service animal is not permitted to return, the DRC will work with the student to provide the handler a reasonable accommodation in place of the service animal. Should the service animal be removed from Student Housing, the handler is still expected to fulfill their obligations for the remainder of the housing contract.

6.0 Violations

A violation of this policy is considered to be a violation of the GBC Student Housing Agreement. Appropriate administrative action may be taken in the form of requiring the removal of an support animal, or terminating an individual from Housing.

In certain circumstances (e.g., misrepresenting the need for a Service or Support Animal), a violation of this policy may be considered to be a violation of the Great Basin College Student Conduct Policy and the matter referred to the Office of the Vice President of Student Affairs for consideration

7.0 Grievances

Students who believe they have been subjected to unlawful discrimination on the basis of disability, or have been denied access to services or accommodations required by law, have the right to use this grievance procedure. Student ADA/Section 504 Grievance Policy found at: https://www.gbcnv.edu/disabilities/docs/Appeal_Protocol.pdf

For questions regarding the procedure contact Arysta Brick, Student Disability Services Coordinator at 775-327-2336 or email arysta.brick@gbcnv.edu.

8.0 Relevant College Offices

GBC Disability Resource Center (DRC) is responsible for providing academic and housing accommodations to GBC students. Individuals with questions about accommodations should contact Arysta Brick, DRC Student Disability Services Coordinator at 775-327-2336 or email arysta.brick@gbcnv.edu.

GBC Student Housing is responsible for identifying appropriate housing for GBC students. Individuals with questions about Student Housing should contact Ryan Hathaway, Student Housing Coordinator at 775-327-2395 or email housing@gbcnv.edu.

GBC Office of Student and Academic Affairs is responsible for services, programs, and events available to students at GBC. Individuals with questions about student affairs or academic affairs should contact Eleanor O'Donnell, Assistant to the Vice President for Student Affairs at 775-327-2112 or email eleanor.odonnell@gbcnv.edu.

GBC Campus Safety is responsible for providing a safe and secure environment for all staff, faculty, students, and visitors at GBC. Individuals with questions or concerns about campus safety should contact Campus Safety at 775-934-4923 or email campus.security@gbcnv.edu.