

<b>Title</b>	: Service and Assistance Animals	
<b>Number</b>	:	2075.03
<b>Approved</b>	:	03/13/25
<b>Last Reviewed:</b>		03/13/25
<b>Reference</b>	: Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA); A.R.S. § 11-1024; Fair Housing Act; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Affairs Service and Assistance Animals Notice	

The Graham County Community College District (GCCCD or the College) is committed to providing accommodations to persons with disabilities and to fulfilling its responsibilities under federal and state laws and regulations. The purpose of this policy is to provide rules regarding individuals bringing animals onto College property. In addition, the College aims to foster a healthy, safe, and supportive environment that respects the rights of all individuals while enhancing their educational experience. Finally, the College strives to maintain the integrity and cleanliness of its property and campus environment. EAC reserves the right to amend this policy as circumstances require.

Students and visitors with disabilities may be accompanied by Service Animals in the College’s public areas and where fellow participants in College programs or activities are allowed. Service Animals may be excluded from a limited number of areas under certain circumstances. Employees may seek an accommodation to have a Service Animal in the workplace through the College’s Director of Human Resources.

Students with disabilities wishing to have an Assistance Animal on campus may request an accommodation through the College’s Section 504/ADA Coordinator. However, no Assistance Animal may be permitted on College property or in College housing at any time prior to the individual receiving approval for an accommodation. Proper documentation of an individual’s disability will be required. With limited exceptions, animals other than Service Animals are not permitted in non-residential College buildings or facilities.

**DEFINITIONS**

**Assistance Animal:** any animal that may work, provide assistance, or perform physical tasks for an individual with a disability and/or provide necessary emotional support to an individual with a mental or psychiatric disability that is directly related to and alleviates one or more identified symptoms or effects of an individual’s disability. Assistance Animals are sometimes informally referred to as therapy or emotional support animals (ESA). Assistance Animals may have but do not require formal training or certification, are not required to wear any type of identification, and are not considered to be pets for purposes of this regulation. Assistance Animals are not capable of serving as Service Animals, may not accompany a person with a disability at all times, and are generally not allowed in non-residential College spaces such as classrooms, libraries, or dining facilities.

**College Property:** all property controlled, owned, operated, or leased by the College.

**Section 504/ADA Coordinator:** collaborates with individuals, faculty, and staff to assure compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and other federal and state laws and regulations pertaining to persons with disabilities to ensure individuals with disabilities have equal access to all EAC programs and activities.

**Handler:** the student who is utilizing a service animal or an approved assistance animal.

**Reliable Third-Party:** a trained professional, including but not limited to a doctor, nurse practitioner, physician assistant, psychiatrist, psychologist, or social worker who provides medical care, therapy, or counseling services to persons with disabilities, who by virtue of their expertise and familiarity with a person with a disability is able to verify the accommodation request is directly related to the disability, that it would alleviate one or more of the identified symptoms or effects of the disability, and the accommodation is necessary to provide the individual with an equal opportunity to use and enjoy campus housing or to perform essential job functions.

**Service Animal:** by law, any dog individually trained to do work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability. The work or tasks performed by a Service Animal must be directly related to the individual's disability. Animals other than dogs are not Service Animals, with the



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exception that on a case-by-case basis, the College may permit miniature horses on campus that have been individually trained to serve as Service Animals. Service Animals are not required to wear any type of identification and may accompany a person with a disability anywhere the individual is allowed to go, including work, class, eating establishments, and public transportation. A Service Animal may provide therapeutic support or may otherwise perform like an Assistance Animal, but a Service Animal, unlike an Assistance Animal, is individually trained to take specific action when recognizing the need to assist the individual with a disability. The crime deterrent effects of an animal’s presence or the provision of emotional support, comfort, or companionship do not constitute a Service Animal’s work or tasks.

Section I. Service Animals

A. Students, Employees and Visitors

Students, employees, and visitors with disabilities may be accompanied by Service Animals in all public areas on all property owned, leased, or otherwise under the College’s control. Students, employees, and visitors may be accompanied by Service Animals in all locations where fellow participants in College programs, activities, or services are allowed, except where the presence of a Service Animal would fundamentally alter a program or activity. A Service Animal’s work or task must be directly related to its handler’s disability.

Examples of Service Animal work or tasks include, without limitation to, assisting individuals with low vision or hearing to navigate or become aware of the presence of objects or people; pulling a wheelchair; performing medical alerts of various types such as the onset of seizures, high or low blood sugar, or the presence of an allergen; turning lights on or off; retrieving items; opening and closing cabinets or drawers; or providing physical support and assistance with balance and stability to individuals with mobility disabilities. Service Animals can also support persons with psychiatric and neurological disabilities by helping to prevent or interrupt impulsive or self-destructive behaviors.

Animals other than dogs are not Service Animals, with the exception that on a case-by-case basis, the College may permit miniature horses on campus that have been individually trained to serve as Service Animals.

In considering such miniature horse requests, the College will assess:

- i) whether the miniature horse is housebroken.
- ii) whether the miniature horse is under the handler’s control.
- iii) whether the facilities the individual wishes to access can accommodate the miniature horse’s type, size, and weight.
- iv) and whether the miniature horse’s presence will compromise legitimate requirements for the safe operation of the facility.

Persons with disabilities may contact the Section 504/ADA Coordinator for more information about miniature horse Service Animal approval.

1. Service Animal Verification, Documentation, Identification, and Permitted Inquiries

An individual with a disability is not required to provide documentation for their dog (or in limited cases a miniature horse) has been individually trained as a Service Animal.

Student or visitor handlers are not required to have an accommodation on file with the Section 504/ADA Coordinator, however it is encouraged the student notify the Section 504/ADA Coordinator of the Service Animal on campus. If notified, the Coordinator can give a copy of this policy to the student as well as notify the student’s instructors that the Service Animal will be on campus. If housing is needed, students with a Service Animal will be housed in the Residence Towers.



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Employees must request the Service Animal be present as an accommodation for their disability.

The College will not ask about the nature or extent of an individual’s disability. However, when it is not readily apparent that the animal identified by the individual with a disability is trained to do work or perform tasks for the handler, the following two questions may be asked:

- i) Is the animal required because of a disability?
- ii) What work or task has the animal been trained to perform?

No other questions about the Service Animal are allowed. If the handler answers no to the first question or is unable to answer either question, the animal may not be a Service Animal. The animal may fall within one of the other definitions found within this policy. College employees should make every effort not to repeatedly ask an individual the questions listed. Please contact and refer the student to the Section 504/ADA Coordinator.

## 2. Exclusion or Removal of a Service Animal

The College may exclude or ask the individual with a disability to remove a Service Animal if the Service Animal:

- i) causes a potential fundamental alteration of a program or activity.
- ii) poses or has posed in the past, a direct threat to the individual or others such as aggressive behavior towards or injuring the individual or others.
- iii) causes substantial damage to College property or the private property of a College community member.
- iv) causes excessive disruption.
- v) is out of control, aggressive or creates an unmanageable disturbance or interference with the College community.
- vi) is not housebroken.
- vii) or if the handler refuses to comply with their responsibilities as outlined in this policy and applicable law.

At any time, the College may remove a Service Animal that is mistreated or appears to be suffering from a health issue or injury. The College may also require an unclean or unkept Service Animal to be removed until the issue is resolved. If abuse is suspected, the proper authorities will be notified.

The handler may request reconsideration of a decision to remove a Service Animal from College property as outlined in Section III(D).

### B. Service Animals in Training

A Service Animal trainer or an individual with a disability who is training an animal to perform as a Service Animal may take the animal into the same public spaces that Service Animals may access for the purpose of training. This policy applies to animals being trained as Service Animals and their trainers or handlers in the same manner as it applies to Service Animals and their handlers.

### C. Misrepresentation

Arizona law prohibits fraudulently misrepresenting a pet or other animal as a Service Animal or a Service Animal in training. Persons committing this violation may be subject to a civil fine of up to \$250. If a handler is found to be falsely characterizing their animal as a Service Animal, the animal will be immediately removed at the handler’s



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expense. Should the College require that a Service Animal be removed from College property for any reason, the handler remains bound by and responsible for fulfilling their housing contract obligations.

## Section II. Assistance Animals

### A. Students

#### 1. Student Assistance Animal Accommodation Requests

An approved accommodation, granted in advance, through the Section 504/ADA Coordinator is required before a handler is permitted to bring an Assistance Animal onto College property, including College housing. If an animal is brought onto College property before the accommodation is approved, the student will be asked to immediately remove the animal and will be responsible to arrange for housing for the animal at the student's personal expense. Students with disabilities who wish to live with an Assistance Animal in campus housing must contact the Section 504/ADA Coordinator to request an accommodation. Proper documentation of the individual's disability and the directly related need for the Assistance Animal, completion of all required forms, and accommodation approval is required at the beginning of each school year or the beginning of a new student's enrollment. During the first term of occupancy, the College cannot guarantee it will be possible to meet new student accommodation requests submitted less than 30 days prior to moving into campus housing. Therefore, new students are strongly encouraged to submit an accommodation request as early as possible.

Approved Assistance Animals must be contained within the student's privately assigned individual living accommodations except to the extent necessary to access or traverse hallways, corridors, elevators, stairwells, and central lobbies and only for purposes of entry, exit and taking the animal out for natural relief. Students with an Assistance Animal accommodation will be housed in the Residence Towers. Assistance Animals are not permitted in other facilities on campus such as academic spaces or dining facilities.

#### 2. Verification, Documentation and Criteria

When considering Assistance Animal accommodation requests, the Section 504/ADA Coordinator will only require information necessary to verify whether an individual has a disability and that the use of an Assistance Animal is directly related to and alleviates one or more identified symptoms or effects of an individual's disability. The Section 504/ADA Coordinator will evaluate whether the requested accommodation may be necessary to afford the individual an equal opportunity to use and enjoy campus housing.

EAC may consider the following factors, among others, as evidence when determining the appropriateness of housing arrangements:

- i) the size of the animal is too large for available assigned housing space.
- ii) the animal's presence would force another individual from individual housing (e.g., serious allergies).
- iii) the animal's presence otherwise violates individuals' right to peace and quiet enjoyment.
- iv) the animal is not housebroken
- v) the animal is unable to live with others in a reasonable manner.
- vi) the animal's vaccinations are not current.
- vii) the animal's spay/neuter status has not been confirmed.
- viii) or the animal poses or has posed in the past a direct threat to the individual or others such as aggressive behavior towards or injuring the individual or others.



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Assistance Animal accommodation requests may also be denied if, in the opinion of the Section 504/ADA Coordinator, the documentation is inadequate, or the presence of the animal would impose an undue financial or administrative burden on the College, would fundamentally alter the residential or professional environment or related services or programs, would pose an undue threat to personal or public health or safety, or would generate substantial risk to College property or the personal property of others.

**B. Misrepresentation**

If a handler is found to be falsely characterizing their animal as an Assistance Animal, the animal will be immediately removed at the handler’s expense. Should the college require that an Assistance Animal be removed from College property for any reason, the handler remains bound by and responsible for fulfilling their housing contract obligations.

**C. Student Campus Housing Rules, Restrictions and Responsibilities**

The following rules, restrictions and responsibilities apply to Assistance Animals:

- i) An Assistance Animal must be contained within the privately assigned individual living accommodations except to the extent necessary to access or traverse hallways, corridors, elevators, stairwells, and central lobbies and only for purposes of entry, exit and taking the animal out for natural relief.
- ii) Assistance Animals are not permitted in other facilities on campus such as academic spaces or dining facilities.
- iii) When away from their residence during the day, the handler must ensure the Assistance Animal is properly contained in a kennel.
- iv) Assistance Animals may not be left unattended in a vehicle.
- v) If an Assistance Animal’s handler is to be absent overnight or longer from their campus residence, the animal must accompany the handler. Assistance Animals may not be left unattended overnight in campus housing, nor may they be cared for overnight or longer in campus housing by any individual other than the animal’s handler. If a handler must be absent overnight and cannot take the animal with them, the handler must arrange for off-campus accommodations at his/her own expense. Assistance animals will not be allowed to travel on college-sponsored trips for liability reasons.
- vi) Assistance Animals may not interfere with routine residence facility operations or activities, or cause difficulties or disturbances for other residents.
- vii) Assistance Animals are only allowed in campus housing for as long as they are necessary to help alleviate or mitigate specific symptoms of their handler’s disability.
- viii) If a handler wishes to replace an approved Assistance Animal with a new Assistance Animal, a new accommodation is required.
- ix) Handlers must perform checks on the welfare of Assistance Animals at regular time intervals throughout each day.
- x) Handler must comply with responsibilities as outlined in this policy and applicable law.

If rules, restrictions, and responsibilities are not adhered to, the College reserves the right, depending on the severity of the incident, to immediately exclude and/or remove the animal without permitting steps 1 or 2 listed below:



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1. Verbal Warning
2. Written Warning
3. Removal of Assistance Animal

Housing and other College staff members are required to notify the Section 504/ADA Coordinator if they witness rules, restrictions and/or responsibilities not being adhered to or if an incident is reported to them. Verbal and written warnings will be placed in the student’s file. The student will be required to meet with the 504/ADA Coordinator to discuss and sign an infraction report.

If abuse is suspected, the proper authorities will be notified. The 504/ADA Coordinator, Director of Residence Life and Dean of Student Life will collaborate to investigate the infraction. The Section 504/ADA Coordinator will make the final decision on the incident. A student may also be removed from campus housing. The Director of Residence Life will make the final decision on student removal. If a student’s animal is removed, the student may not reapply for another animal accommodation.

**D. Exclusion or Removal**

The College may ask the individual with a disability to remove an Assistance Animal if the Assistance Animal:

- i) causes a potential fundamental alteration of a program or activity.
- ii) poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others.
- iii) causes substantial damage to College property or the private property of a College community member.
- iv) causes excessive disruption.
- v) is out of control, aggressive or creates an unmanageable disturbance or interference with the College community.
- vi) is not housebroken.
- vii) is not current on vaccinations.
- viii) or if the handler refuses to comply with their responsibilities as outlined in this policy, including campus housing rules and restrictions, as well as applicable law.

At any time, the College may remove an Assistance Animal that is mistreated or appears to be suffering from a health issue or injury. The College may also require an unclean or unkept Assistance Animal to be removed until the issue is resolved. If abuse is suspected, the proper authorities will be notified. Should the College require that an Assistance Animal be removed from College property for any reason, the handler remains bound by and responsible for fulfilling their housing contract obligations.

The handler may request reconsideration of a decision to remove an Assistance Animal from College property as outlined in Section III(D).

**Section III. Service and Assistance Animal General Requirements**

**A. Handler Responsibilities**

The following responsibilities apply to handlers. The handler must:

- i) Properly control and care for the animal.
- ii) Be responsible for any damage or injury caused by the animal.



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- iii) Properly clean and dispose of discharged animal waste in an appropriate manner in garbage receptacles located in outdoor areas away from building entrances and exits.
- iv) Clean, groom and maintain the animal’s physical condition and living environment in a manner that minimizes nuisances such as fleas, ticks, foul odors, and related hygiene concerns and mitigates health risks associated with animal-born allergens and disease.
- v) Prevent and/or promptly and fully address behavioral nuisances such as excessive or uncontrolled barking, meowing, growling, hissing, snarling, aggressive posturing, snapping, scratching, or related behaviors that generate trepidation or alarm among other persons in relation to the animal.
- vi) Restrain the animal with a harness, leash, or other tether unless an individual’s disability precludes the use of such devices or if such devices would unreasonably hinder or interfere with the animal’s safe and effective performance of its work or task. If not tethered, the animal must otherwise be under the control of its handler, whether by voice, signals, or other effective means.
- vii) Maintain appropriate and regular proximity and supervision of the animal.
- viii) And comply with College policy, as well as all applicable laws and regulations including licensure, vaccination, and leash requirements.

**B. Conflicting Disabilities or Health Conditions**

Students with a health condition (e.g., allergies, asthma), phobia, or disability that conflicts with or is adversely affected by exposure to a Service or Assistance Animal should contact the Section 504/ADA Coordinator to resolve the matter. Employees shall contact Human Resources. The individual raising the concern may be asked to provide documentation that identifies the impacts of their condition to allow the Section 504/ADA Coordinator or Human Resources to determine if there is a need for an accommodation. The College will make a reasonable effort to resolve any conflicts that arise due to the presence of a Service or Assistance Animal by considering the needs or accommodations of all persons involved.

**C. Interference**

Intentionally or maliciously disrupting or distracting a Service Animal’s work or task, attempting to, or separating a Service or Assistance Animal from its handler, or petting, feeding, deliberately startling, or otherwise interfering with a Service or Assistance Animal after being directed not to do so by its handler is considered misconduct subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

**D. Complaints and Dispute Resolution**

Students and visitors may contact the Section 504/ADA Coordinator located in the College’s Academic Advising Department in the Student Services Building on the Thatcher Campus to request assistance with resolving disputes or complaints involving the presence of a Service or Assistance Animal on College property. Employees should contact Human Resources to request assistance with resolving disputes or complaints involving the presence of a Service Animal on College property. In particular, discriminatory behavior involving, or related to, or stemming from the presence of a Service or Assistance Animal is a violation of College policy and should be immediately reported. The Section 504/ADA Coordinator or Human Resources will assist with informal or formal complaint investigation and resolution in this regard. For issues related to Service or Assistance Animal accommodations, or to request reconsideration of a denial or scope of an approved accommodation, students and visitors may contact the Section 504/ADA Coordinator to request informal assistance or to initiate the formal Section 504/ADA (Civil Rights) Complaint Process. Employees should contact Human Resources.



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**PROCEDURES**

Students:

To request a disability accommodation or file a complaint or dispute, please find contact information below:

Candace Lines  
 Section 504/ADA Coordinator  
 (928) 428-8335 (voice)  
[candace.lines@eac.edu](mailto:candace.lines@eac.edu)

Eastern Arizona College - Thatcher Campus  
 Student Services Building – Academic Advising Department  
 Disability Resource Services, Room 139  
 615 N. Stadium Avenue  
 Thatcher, Arizona 85552

Employees:

To request a disability accommodation or file a complaint or dispute, please find contact information below:

Lydia Newkirk  
 Director, Human Resources  
 (928) 428-8915  
[lydia.newkirk@eac.edu](mailto:lydia.newkirk@eac.edu)

Eastern Arizona College – Thatcher Campus  
 Student Services Building  
 Human Resources, Room 208  
 615 N. Stadium Avenue  
 Thatcher, Arizona 85552

