

ANIMAL FRIENDLY POLICY

Housing and Residence Life is piloting an Animal Friendly Policy for the 2023-24 academic year. This new policy is separate from the Emotional Support Animal/Service Animal process and guidelines.

ANIMAL OWNERSHIP

Owning an animal is a luxury. Animal ownership requires a considerable time commitment and financial responsibility. Residents should carefully consider if the campus environment will provide a positive experience for their individual animal. Students unsure they are ready to take on the care of an animal along with academic responsibilities are encouraged to volunteer for a local animal rescue to gain experience in the care of animals.

Housing and Residence Life recognizes three categories of animal ownership:

- Pet
- Emotional Support Animal (ESA)
- Service Animal (SA)

APPROVED ANIMALS AS PETS

Housing and Residence Life defines approved animals as pets to include:

- Non-predatory fish (tanks no larger than 20 gallons)*
- Small, caged animal (rabbit, hamster, gerbil, chinchilla, guinea pig, rat, mouse, hedgehog)
- Cats
- Dogs under 50 lbs.

**Students wishing to bring fish to campus do not need to apply for Animal Friendly housing.*

Animals not permitted as pets include, but are not limited to the following:

- Amphibians
- Reptiles
- Ferrets
- Birds
- Dogs over 50 lbs.
- Wildlife
- Poisonous or endangered species
- Snakes
- Farm, lab or production animals
- Animals that have to be fed a live animal for survival
- Pregnant animals - Should an animal become pregnant, the animal will not be permitted to stay on campus.

ANIMAL ELIGIBILITY

- One animal is permitted per bedroom in the designated Animal Friendly buildings.
- Animals that can be spayed or neutered must have documented proof of procedure prior to arrival to campus.
- Cats and dogs must be vaccinated for rabies and documentation provided.
- Cats and dogs must be a minimum of a year old and must be house trained.
- Animal owners are strongly encouraged to microchip their animals.

ANIMAL FRIENDLY BUILDINGS

For the 2023-24 pilot program, Branch will be the designated Animal Friendly building for new freshmen and Orr is the designated building for returning residents. Each apartment is four person/two bedroom. Students may opt to buy out a bedroom side in an Animal Friendly building.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Students interested in living in an Animal Friendly building must complete the application on the Housing Portal. The application deadline for returning residents to apply is Friday, March 3, 2023, and deadline for new freshmen is Thursday, June 1, 2023.

Students with completed applications and required documentation will be notified by email that they are eligible to live in Animal Friendly Housing. Students with incomplete applications will not be eligible to live Animal Friendly Housing.

Approval for an animal is only valid for the academic year in which the documentation is submitted. Students must apply each year that they would like to live on campus with an animal.

A complete animal application will include the following:

- Details about animal including name, age, type
- Clear photo of the animal (full body)
- Altering (spay or neuter) certificate (if applicable to animal)
- Documentation of current rabies vaccination (dogs and cats only)
- Backup handler contact information (A backup handler is someone who can take the animal should the animal owner become unable to care for it. The backup handler may be a roommate or suitemate only if such an arrangement is agreed upon in the Animal Friendly Roommate Agreement. If a roommate or suitemate is not identified as a backup handler, then the handler should live within a reasonable distance from campus and be able to travel to campus within 24 hours to retrieve the animal in the event of an emergency/the owner is unable to care for the animal. Housing residents not living with the animal owner may not be a backup handler.

ROOM SELECTION PROCESS

Students who are approved to have an animal on campus through the Animal Friendly Housing policy will be assigned by HRL staff. This is first come, first serve basis, and based on contract signature date. A waitlist will be used once all spaces are filled.

ROOM CHANGES

Should a resident wish to change rooms outside of an Animal Friendly building their application to have an animal in housing will be voided and the animal will be required to leave campus. Residents wishing to keep their animal on campus will only be able to reside within Animal Friendly buildings.

FEES AND DAMAGE CHARGES

Students approved to have an animal in Animal Friendly housing will be charged a \$75 non-refundable cleaning fee per semester that they are living in the building. Please note that at the time the animal owner moves out, if damages and cleaning exceed that fee the student may be charged additional costs.

ANIMAL ROOMMATE AGREEMENT

While many roommates/suitemates live successfully in their assigned spaces with no significant conflicts, adding an animal can, at times, introduce challenges. It is important for students to communicate the expectations of ownership and care of the animal. The University expects that the approved animal owner is in full responsibility of the animal at all times while on campus or in their assigned campus space.

To ensure students have a conversation about expectations, each resident will be required at the beginning of the semester to create an Animal Friendly Roommate Agreement with the others in the room. The agreement allows each resident to share their thoughts and develop expectations associated with living with an animal. Students should request a meeting with their resident assistant to revise the agreement should changes need to be made during the academic year.

OWNER EXPECTATIONS

Before Arrival to Campus

- All dogs and cats must be housebroken before arriving on campus.
- If an animal has a history of dangerous behavior, it will not be permitted to reside in campus housing.
- You agree to review and abide by all policies and procedures outlined in this Animal Friendly Policy Guide.
- It is strongly recommended that animal owners have insurance covering damages, incidents, or accidents that the animal may be involved with while living on campus. As stated in the Housing Contract Terms and Conditions: All residents of University Housing shall be responsible for maintaining renter's insurance for all personal property. Insurance of your personal property is solely your responsibility. USI is not responsible for the loss or damage to any personal possession and/or property.

While on Campus

- Animal owners are responsible for the actions of their animal at all times.
- Animals must reside in the owner's assigned space in the Animal Friendly building.
- Animal owners are responsible for keeping up to date records with Housing and Residence Life.
- Animal owners and their roommate/suitemates must complete an Animal Friendly roommate agreement.
- Animal owners should ensure their animal wears proper identification at all times unless the pet permanently resides in a cage.
- Animal owners should have a pet carrier in their possession and accessible in the event of evacuation, emergency, or staff request.
- If a fire alarm sounds in the Animal Friendly building (whether or not there is a fire) and the animal owner is present, it is the animal owner's responsibility to take their animal with them when evacuating the building. If the animal owner is not present, a roommate or suitemate may assist only if such an arrangement is agreed upon in the Animal Friendly Roommate Agreement. The animal must be on a leash or in a portable cage/carrier during evacuation.
- Abandonment, neglect, or mistreatment of any animal by any member of the USI community will not be tolerated. These actions may result in disciplinary action, removal of animal, or other measures to ensure the safety of the animal.

Animal Care

- Animal owners are responsible for making sure that reasonable sanitary standards are maintained everywhere the animal is present. This includes regular cleaning of the room and crate or cage.
- Animal owners are responsible for feeding and watering the animal within all living areas. If the animal vomits or becomes incontinent, it is the owner's responsibility to clean waste immediately.

- Animal owners are responsible for providing appropriate veterinary medical care on both an ongoing and an emergency basis.
- Animal owners are responsible for being knowledgeable of state and local immunization and licensing requirements for their animal and complying with those requirements.
- Animal owners are expected to use maintenance flea prevention year-round (if applicable for animal type). If an animal is found to have fleas, the animal owner should submit a Fix My Home request for pest control. Should flea treatment of the living space become necessary, the animal owner will be responsible for the cost of treatment, resulting in a charge added to the owner's account.
- Should an animal owner be unavailable to care for their animal, Housing and Residence Life will contact their backup handler to provide care. If the backup handler is unable to take the animal, the animal may be released to an animal shelter.

Away from Room or Campus

- Animal owners of cats, dogs and small caged animals must keep the animals crated while owner is away from the room. Animals not properly crated will delay Facility Operations and Planning staff from responding to requested and scheduled maintenance in a timely manner and provide unnecessary issues for emergency personnel.
- Animal owners who are leaving campus for a period exceeding twelve (12) consecutive hours must make prior arrangements to take the animal with them or to board it off-campus for the duration of their absence. This includes being away for weekends, holidays, or University break periods.
- Animal owners are not allowed to give another student access to their room to sit for their animal.
- A roommate or suitemates are not responsible for the care of the animal in the absence of the animal owner unless there is an agreed upon expectation included in the Animal Friendly Roommate Agreement.

Animal Waste

- Animals may be exercised on the campus exterior grounds as long as they are under the control of the owner at all times. Animals must be leashed when on exterior grounds. The animal owner is responsible for promptly picking up and properly disposing of all animal waste by immediately disposing of the waste in outdoor dumpsters. Animal waste is not to be disposed of in indoor trash receptacles. Owners failing to do so may be referred for disciplinary action or may have their Animal Friendly application voided.
- All cage and litter box waste should be removed as often as necessary to maintain an odor-free, clean-living environment for the animal and residents. Waste should be disposed of in an outdoor dumpster.

Campus Community

- No animal may become a disruption to members of the USI campus. A disruption includes but not limited to, excessive noise, physical harm to humans or other animals, destruction of property and other acts deemed a disruption by Housing and Residence Life.
- Animals approved for Animal Friendly housing may not visit other housing or campus buildings.
- Housing residents are not allowed to pet sit for other animals whether they are approved animals on campus or pets from off campus.

POLICY VIOLATIONS

Failure to follow the guidelines and procedures governing the Animal Friendly Housing Policy may result in disciplinary action and students may have their Animal Friendly application revoked.

EMOTIONAL SUPPORT ANIMALS/SERVICE ANIMALS

Students approved through USI Disability Resources for an Emotional Support Animal (ESA) or Service Animal (SA) are not required to live in designated Animal Friendly buildings. Students approved for an ESA or SA are not eligible to have additional animals through the Animal Friendly Policy. Students with an ESA or SA must follow the University policy regarding animals.

Students with emotional support animals or service animals will not be charged the \$75 non-refundable cleaning fee per semester. Students may be charged for damages or excessive cleaning caused by their emotional support animal or service animal at the time they move out.