

## Messiah University Campus Pet Policy

### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set expectations and guidance for the presence of pets on University property. In order to ensure a positive living and learning experience as well as maintain a clean and healthy environment that works well for all individuals on campus, community members with pets are expected to follow this policy.

### Scope

This policy applies to all students, faculty, staff, and visitors to the university campus, including all buildings, residential halls, outdoor areas, and recreational spaces.

### Definitions

- **Pet:** Any domesticated animal, including but not limited to dogs, cats, birds, and small mammals, which are not specifically trained to assist individuals with disabilities.
- **Service Animal:** A dog or other animal that is trained to perform specific tasks for an individual with a disability, as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- **Emotional Support Animal (ESA):** An animal that provides emotional support to an individual but is not trained to perform specific tasks for a disability. ESAs are not permitted in areas where pets are restricted unless approved by the Office of Academic Accessibility.

### General Policy Guidelines

#### 1. Prohibited Pets

Pets are not permitted in any campus buildings, including academic buildings, residence halls, dining facilities, libraries, and administrative offices. Only animals clearly identified as service animals or emotional support animals are permitted in University buildings as detailed in the University's policy on Service Animals and Emotional Support Animals. [Assist Animals | Messiah, a private Christian University in PA](#)

#### 2. Residence Directors

Each RLE/ EIR is permitted to own a dog **or** an indoor cat and must be approved by the Dean of Students and follow The Pet Owner's Agreement for REL's and Educators in Residence.

#### 3. Service Animals

Service animals are allowed in all campus buildings and areas where the public is permitted, in accordance with federal laws and regulations. Service animals must be under control at all times, on a leash or harness, and must behave appropriately while on campus. Individuals with service animals are responsible for the care and supervision of their animals. Service animals must be registered with the Office of Academic Accessibility (students) or Human Resources (employees).

#### 4. Emotional Support Animals (ESAs)

Students with approved ESA accommodations through the Office of Academic Success may be permitted to have their animals in campus housing, provided that they comply with all ESA-related guidelines and responsibilities set forth by the office. ESAs are not

permitted in academic buildings, dining areas, or other non-designated spaces unless otherwise authorized.

**5. Outdoor Areas**

With the exception of the Starry Complex, the University permits community members to walk pets on campus. Starry Complex is off limits to pets.

**6. Pet Owner Responsibilities While on Campus**

Pet owners are responsible for ensuring that their pets do not cause disruption or harm to others while on campus. Specifically, the University requires the following:

- Pet owners must clean up after their pets at all times, including waste disposal and any damage caused to University property.
- Pets must be on a leash or in a carrier when outside campus housing unless they are in designated pet-friendly areas.
- Pet owners must ensure that their pets do not disturb the comfort or safety of others. This includes preventing excessive noise, aggression, or unhygienic behavior.
- Pets visiting campus are expected to be healthy, well-groomed, and free of parasites.

**7. Violations**

Any individual violating the pet policy may be asked to remove their pet from campus immediately. Repeated violations may result in disciplinary action, including fines or other sanctions. Pet owners are responsible for any damage caused by their pets to University property.

**8. Exceptions**

Exceptions to this policy may be granted in special circumstances, such as for research purposes or through specific, documented accommodation requests. These requests must be submitted in writing and approved by the appropriate campus office (e.g., Office of Academic Accessibility, Human Resource, or Safety).

**Policy Enforcement**

The University reserves the right to monitor adherence to this policy through regular inspections, community reports, and campus safety patrols. Students, faculty, and staff concerned about violations to this policy may report these concerns to the Department of Safety.

**Effective Date**

This policy is effective starting January 9, 2025, and will be reviewed annually for necessary updates and revisions.

**Approved by:** President's cabinet

**Policy Owner:** Office of Vice President for Operations