

## **Service Animal Policy Frequently Asked Questions**

The University of Georgia has become the home to several hundred service animals over the last few years. In an effort to preserve the rights of Handlers and Partners at UGA, to promote the wellness and safety of the service animals on campus, and to remain in compliance with federal and state laws, the “Policy Regarding Service Animals Access to University of Georgia Facilities, Programs, Services and Activities” has been created.

The following questions and answers serve as a tool to allow for greater understanding of the policy and a resource to links for additional information. If you have additional questions, please see the [Policy](#) directly or contact the Equal Opportunity Office.

### **Q1: Why is UGA instituting a policy for service animals?**

**A:** A recent Georgia state law change requires trained service animals and service animals in training to be treated with the same rights. In order to preserve the rights of Handlers and Partners and to promote the safety of service animals, the Service Animal Policy has been created and is being implemented at UGA.

### **Q2: What is a Handler? What is a Partner?**

**A:** A Handler is someone who uses a service animal to assist them with a disability as defined by federal law. A Partner is someone who accompanies dogs being trained to be service animals for Handlers.

### **Q3: What animals must be registered?**

**A:** All current student Partners must register their service animal in training through the Disability Resource Center (DRC). The registration process is free.

Student Handlers may choose to register their service animal with the DRC. Employee Handlers may choose to register their service animal with the Office of Faculty and Staff Relations.

### **Q4: What is the process for registering a service animal on campus?**

**A:** Student Partners must register their service animals through the Disability Resource Center (DRC). The process will include completing the [Service Animal and Partner Registration Form](#) and submitting it to the DRC. When all of the paperwork has been completed and received by the DRC the DRC will contact the student to set up an appointment to review the Service Animal Policy and answer any questions the student may have. When these steps are completed the student will receive a tag to be placed on the animal’s collar to show that the animal has been registered.

- Faculty, Staff and Administrators may register their trained service animals through the [Office of Faculty and Staff Relations \(FASR\)](#). They will complete a process similar to the one listed above for students.

Employees serving as Partners are not permitted to have their service animals with them while they are working on campus. This applies to students, faculty, staff, and administrators. If you have any questions about this please contact the Equal Opportunity Office.

Handler/Partner Type (all UGA campuses and locations)	Link to Form or Policy
Student	<a href="https://drc.uga.edu/connect/service-animal-registratiohr.uga.edun/registering-service-animals-training">https://drc.uga.edu/connect/service-animal-registratiohr.uga.edun/registering-service-animals-training</a>
Student (residential - on campus)	<a href="http://www.uga.edu/housing/staff/assignments/service-animal-agreement-form.pdf">http://www.uga.edu/housing/staff/assignments/service-animal-agreement-form.pdf</a>
UGA employee	<a href="http://www.hr.uga.edu/disability-services-accommodations">http://www.hr.uga.edu/disability-services-accommodations</a>
Retiree (UGA or USG institution)	<a href="http://www.hr.uga.edu/disability-services-accommodations">http://www.hr.uga.edu/disability-services-accommodations</a>
For Policy Questions or Concerns	<a href="http://www.uga.edu/eoo/policies/pdfs/ServiceAnimalPolicy.pdf">http://www.uga.edu/eoo/policies/pdfs/ServiceAnimalPolicy.pdf</a>

**Q5: How would I know if a Handler or Partner registered their animal?**

**A:** Partners will be required to show identification from the agency assigning their service animal. When this happens, the service animal will receive a tag to wear on their collar. Members of the UGA Community (including faculty, staff, students, etc.) may request that the Handler/Partner show the dog tag as proof of registration at UGA. The registration process through the DRC or FASR ensures that the animal has been assigned to the Partner through a qualified service animal agency. In addition, Partners may also be asked to show proof of identification and should do so upon demand or reasonable request by an official of the University of Georgia.

In the event that a service animal will no longer be utilized on campus, the Partner should return the tag to either the DRC or the FASR.

**Q6: Where can I find the Service Animal Policy?**

**A:** The UGA Service Animal Policy can be found [here](#).

**Q7: As a faculty member, what should I do if a service animal is disrupting my class?**

**A:** Please address your concern with the student Handler or Partner requesting that they address the disruptive behavior. If the student is unable to control the animal, faculty and staff members may ask the student to remove the animal. The policy states “Handlers and Partners are required to remove a Service Animal that is unruly or disruptive (e.g. biting or attempting to bite, barking, running around, jumping at or up on people or other excessive physical activity that goes beyond repositioning itself on the down stay), or may be directed to do so by any UGA faculty or staff member...”

In addition, the policy states that “A Handler or Partner with a Service Animal that appears to be ill may be asked to remove the Service Animal from UGA Facilities by UGA faculty or staff”.

If you have discussed your concern with the Handler/Partner and the issue persists, you may wish to contact the Equal Opportunity Office (EEO) to determine the most appropriate next steps or to report a policy violation.

**Q8: What should I do if I observe a service animal urinate, defecate or vomit in a building and their handler/partner does not clean it up?**

**A:** If you observe a Handler or Partner not clean up after their service animal, please bring your concern to their attention. The policy states that “the Handler or Partner is responsible for immediately and properly cleaning up and disposing of any bodily fluids or solid waste from the Service Animal whether indoors or outdoors”.

The policy goes on to state that Handlers and Partners are responsible for the removal of any “liquid and solid wastes and disposal of the same”. Finally, “Handlers and Partners are required to have in their possession at all times when accompanied by their Service Animals appropriate and sufficient cleaning materials and disposal bags whenever their Service Animals are present on UGA Facilities”.

Handlers and Partners are required to carry disposal bags and may wish to carry disposable absorbent pads.

As a point of clarification, service animals are trained to relieve themselves on pavement in the event that they are assigned to a Handler that lives in a city or other area where there is little or no green space available to the animal.

If you find bodily fluids or waste from an animal but the Handler/Partner is not present, please report it to a building manager or the custodial staff for cleanup.

Also, if the incident happens repeatedly with a Handler/Partner, or repeatedly in the same location, you may wish to report this through the [EOO Online Form](#).

**Q9: As a handler/partner, is there someone I can talk with if I feel I am being mistreated due to having a service animal?**

**A:** Handlers who are also members of the Faculty, Staff or Administrators can contact the Office of Faculty and Staff Relations or the Equal Opportunity Office for consultation and support.

Student Handlers and Partners can contact the Disability Resource Center or the Equal Opportunity Office for consultation and support.

**Q10: As a handler/partner, can I appeal the prohibition of my service animal in a specific location? If so, how?**

**A:** If you believe that your service animal should receive access to a location prohibited by the policy or by a specific department or building, please contact the Equal Opportunity Office. Please plan to discuss the location, reason you and the service animal should receive access to the location, and the ways in which neither you nor the service animal are in danger or face concerns about safety or hygiene.

You may also wish to complete the [EOO Online Form](#) to request access. You can provide the information specified in the paragraph above on the form.

**Q11: What can I do if I observe an aggressive service animal? (dog fight, biting, growling, etc.)**

**A:** You can report the name of the Handler or Partner or the registration number for the service animal to the Equal Opportunity Office, the Office of Faculty and Staff Relations, or the Disability Resource Center. The registration number for the service animal is located on the UGA tag attached to the animal’s collar or can be requested from the Handler or Partner. You may also report the incident through the EOO Online Reporting form.

**Q12: What can I do if I observe a service animal being mistreated?**

**A:** If you believe that a registered service animal is being mistreated, you can report that to the Disability Resource Center or through the [EOO Online Reporting Form](#). You will need the name of the Handler or Partner or the animal’s registration number and be able to describe how you believe the animal is being mistreated. The registration number for the service animal is located on the UGA tag attached to the animal’s collar or can be requested from the Handler or Partner.

**Q13: What can I do if a service animal is bothering me?**

**A:** It is important to understand that service animals have a job to do aiding people who have a physical disability. Legally the animals are allowed to be on campus, in restaurants, shopping malls, on buses, and other locations where they can be of most use to their Handler. While in training, it is important for the service animal to experience many different settings, moving vehicles, loud and quiet environments, and many types of people. The more experience the dog gains while in training, the more effective they will be for a future Handler.

If you find that you are unable to tolerate the behavior of the service animal, please discuss your concern with the Handler or Partner and determine what solution(s) can be found.

**Q14: What do I do if I find out that a service animal is not registered on campus? (Or I want to report another Service Animal Policy violation?)**

**A:** If you believe that a service animal has not been registered on campus, please encourage the Handler or Partner to contact either the Disability Resource Center (for students) or the Office of Faculty and Staff Relations (for faculty, staff and administrators) in order to get registered. If you are uncomfortable approaching the Handler or Partner, contact the Equal Opportunity Office.

If you are aware of an animal that is being portrayed as a service animal in order to obtain access to UGA facilities, programs, services and activities but is not a true service animal, please contact the Equal Opportunity Office or fill out the [Online Reporting Form](#). If it is found that the policy has been violated the Human Resource Office or the Office of Student Conduct may be notified.

**Q15: What department(s) serves as resources for the Service Animal Policy?**

**A:** There are a few offices that serve as resources regarding the Service Animal Policy. If you are an employee of UGA and you have questions about registering your service animal, please contact the Office of Faculty and Staff Relations (<http://www.hr.uga.edu/disability-services-accommodations>) or the Equal Opportunity Office (<https://eoo.uga.edu/>). If you are a student who has questions about registering a service animal, you may contact the Disability Resource Center (<http://drc.uga.edu/>) or the Equal Opportunity Office (<https://eoo.uga.edu/>). Anyone may contact the Equal Opportunity Office with questions about the policy, an animal’s access to facilities, a Handler or Partner’s rights and responsibilities with regard to having a service animal or any other general question.

<b>Handler/Partner Type (all UGA campuses and locations)</b>	<b>UGA Resource Unit</b>
Student	Disability Resource Center
Student (residential - on campus)	Department of Housing
UGA employee	Office of Faculty and Staff Relations
Retiree (UGA or USG institution)	Office of Faculty and Staff Relations
For Policy Questions or Concerns	Equal Opportunity Office

**Q16: Are there other departments that have policies related to service animals?**

**A:** Yes, there are a few additional policies and procedures to be aware of:

The Department of Housing has a Service Animal Policy which can be found at: Page 21 of the [Community Guide](https://housing.uga.edu/uploads/documents/community_guide_2016-2017.pdf). [https://housing.uga.edu/uploads/documents/community\\_guide\\_2016-2017.pdf](https://housing.uga.edu/uploads/documents/community_guide_2016-2017.pdf)

The University Health Center also has a [Service Animal Policy](https://www.uhs.uga.edu/info/service-animal-policy). <https://www.uhs.uga.edu/info/service-animal-policy>

The College of Veterinary Medicine Teaching Hospital has a [Service Animal Policy](http://vet.uga.edu/hospital/client_guidelines/service_animals/) which can be found at: [http://vet.uga.edu/hospital/client\\_guidelines/service\\_animals/](http://vet.uga.edu/hospital/client_guidelines/service_animals/)

The Food Services Department has also created a policy. Please contact them directly with questions.

**Q17: Does the Service Animal Policy apply to research animals?**

**A:** No. The [policy regarding research animals](http://www.ovpr.uga.edu/oacu/) is overseen by the Office of the Vice President for Research at the University of Georgia. For more information about this policy, please go to <http://www.ovpr.uga.edu/oacu/>.