

# **Assistance Animals Policy for (Service Animals & ESAs)**

## **Reasonable Accommodation Policy + Resident Expectations**

Effective Date: February 1, 2026

Applies To: All residents of CRDC Housing.

### **1) Purpose**

We consider reasonable accommodation, including Assistance Animals, when necessary to provide a person with a disability and an equal opportunity to use and enjoy housing.

### **2) Definitions**

Assistance Animal (including Service Animals and ESAs): An animal that does work, performs tasks, provides assistance, *and/or provides emotional support* that alleviates one or more effects of a person's disability. Note: Assistance animals are not pets.

### **3) Key Policy Points**

- No pet fees, pet rent, or pet deposits apply to an approved assistance animal.
- Residents remain responsible for actual damage caused by the animal and reasonable cleaning for damage beyond ordinary wear/tear.
- We do not apply pet breed/weight rules to Assistance Animals. Requests are evaluated case-by-case.

### **4) Request Timing (Expectation)**

- Residents should submit a request, by using the form S/ESA-01, before bringing an animal to live on the property whenever feasible to avoid delays in processing and the possibility of having to make alternative arrangements for the animal if the accommodation cannot be approved, helping prevent unnecessary hardship for the animal.
- If the animal is already present, the resident must submit the request promptly. We will not deny a request solely because the animal arrived before paperwork, but rules on control/sanitation apply immediately.

### **5) How to Request (Resident)**

A request may be made in writing using the Assistance Animal (ESA/Service Animal) Reasonable Accommodations Request Form, available in our Housing Office located at 509 Lisa Lane, Bono Arkansas.

### **6) Documentation (Only if Need Is Not Obvious or Already Known)**

If the disability-related need is not obvious or already known, management may request reliable information supporting using form S/ESA-02:

1. the person has a disability (diagnosis disclosure is optional), and
2. the animal is needed due to the disability (the "nexus").

Acceptable documentation: Form S/ESA -03, Assistance Animal Provider Verification form, must be completed by a licensed health care professional with personal knowledge sufficient to support the request (provider must include credentials/license info that can be verified).

Not sufficient by itself: online registrations, certificates, or ID cards purchased online.

Please note that failure to submit appropriate paperwork for reasonable accommodation in advance of bringing animals to live with you will result in an infraction. Additionally, certifications are updated Annually for Emotional Support Animals/Service Animals.

## 7) Staff Processing Timeline

Step 1 – Receive Request: date-stamp and log.

Step 2 – Acknowledge within 2 business days:

- Approve if obvious/known or send documentation request with a deadline (recommended: 10 calendar days), using form S/ESA-04.

Step 3 – Decide within 5 business days after receiving complete information: approve, request missing items, or issue denial with reason, using form S/ESA-05.

## 8) Resident Expectations (Applies to All Approved Assistance Animals)

Residents agree that the assistance animal will:

- Always Be under control (leash/harness/effective control appropriate to the animal and situation).
- Not be left unattended in common areas.
- Follow sanitation rules: waste picked up promptly and disposed of properly.
- Not create a nuisance (excessive noise, repeated disruptions) and not display aggressive behavior (biting, lunging, threatening).
- Comply with local licensing/vaccination laws (as required).
- Residents will pay for actual damage caused by the animal.

Approval applies only to the approved animal(s). Any additional or replacement animal requires a new request and approval.

## 9) When a Request May Be Denied or an Animal May Be Required to Be Removed

A request may be denied, or an approved animal may be required to be removed, only after an individualized review shows the specific animal would:

- pose a direct threat that cannot be reduced by another reasonable accommodation, or
- cause significant property damage that cannot be reduced by another reasonable accommodation, or
- create an undue financial/administrative burden, or
- fundamentally alter operations.

When issues arise, management will provide written notice and an opportunity for reasonable corrective actions when appropriate.

**SECTION 504 / ACCESSIBILITY NOTICE:** We do not discriminate based on disability. If you need a **reasonable accommodation**, to communicate effectively, or to participate in our housing program, please contact:

**Delisa Balentine**

**Phone#:** (870) 333.5124

**Email:** [dlisa@crdenea.com](mailto:dlisa@crdenea.com)

