Housing Accommodation Policy

SUNY Geneseo

In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (amended in 2008), SUNY Geneseo will provide equal access to the campus living environment for students with documented disabilities. The Office of Accessibility will engage in an interactive process with students to determine reasonable accommodations in the Residence Halls. The College reserves the right to alter the Housing policy as deemed fit.

# Requesting Housing Accommodations

To request housing accommodations, students will follow the steps to request housing accommodations as outlined on the [Office of Accessibility Services webpage](https://www.geneseo.edu/accessibility-office/steps-requesting-housing-accommodations), which includes completion of a housing accommodation request form by the student and a qualified mental health or medical treatment provider, providing documentation as requested by the Assistant Dean, and participation in an interactive discussion with the Assistant Dean regarding the request. Students do not make housing accommodation requests or send documentation to the Office of Residence Life. Letters from treatment providers will not be accepted. Treatment providers must complete the correct Housing or ESA Request Form for the request to be processed.

When the documentation shows that a private room or other room modification is a necessary method of meeting the housing needs of a student with a disability, SUNY Geneseo will consider exceptions to its general room rate structure unless doing so would result in a fundamental alteration to the housing program, imposes an undue financial and/or administrative burden, or poses a direct threat to the health and safety of others, including university property. Requests are reviewed on the basis of ensuring access to the campus living environment rather than preference or ensuring success (e.g., private study space).

# Process for Determining Reasonable Accommodations

Housing Accommodation Requests are reviewed by the Housing & ESA Committee, which is composed of representatives from the Office of Accessibility Services, the Office of Residential Life, Department for Student Health and Counseling, and Student Affairs. The Assistant Dean of Accessibility makes the final determination in housing accommodation approvals and denials.

Housing Accommodation Requests are accepted and reviewed throughout the academic year. Requests for a single room for the following academic year must be submitted per the Residential Life housing application deadlines. Requests are not determined based on class standing or earned credits. Returning students who are requesting housing accommodations for the following academic year must submit a request by April 1, prior to the housing selection process. New, incoming students requesting housing accommodations must submit a request by June 1. Requests are processed within approximately 14 business days after a meeting with the Assistant Dean takes place. Mid-semester requests for housing accommodations will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. The College cannot guarantee it will be able to meet the accommodation needs the same semester in which the request is received.

If the Housing & ESA Committee determines that the housing accommodation request is reasonable and necessary to ensure access to the campus living environment, the student will be notified via their Geneseo email. The Office of Residence Life will work with the student on logistics of the implementation of the accommodations. If the Housing & ESA Committee determines that the accommodation request was unreasonable, or if the documentation and information was insufficient in establishing a disability-related need for the accommodation in order to ensure access at the university, the student will be notified of the decision via their Geneseo email. The Office of Accessibility Services will work with the student in identifying an alternate accommodation or arrangement with Residence Life that may meet the student’s needs and preferences.

# Emotional Support Animals (ESA)

An “emotional support animal" (or comfort animal) is an animal that provides emotional or other support that ameliorates one or more identified symptoms or effects of a person's disability. Unlike service animals, support animals are not required to be trained to perform work or tasks, and they include species other than dogs and miniature horses. The laws pertaining to ESAs fall under the Fair Housing Act and are restricted to on-campus housing as a reasonable accommodation. Emotional Support Animals are generally not allowed to accompany persons with disabilities in all public areas of Geneseo as a service animal is allowed to do.

Students wishing to submit a request for an Emotional Support Animal (ESA) in the residential halls must complete an ESA Request Form and make an appointment with the Assistant Dean for Accessibility. Returning students who are requesting ESAs for the following academic year must submit a request by April 1. New, incoming students requesting housing accommodations must submit a request by June 1. The ESA form must be completed by a qualified, licensed mental health provider who has a history of treating the student and can attest to the student’s current functioning in the college environment. Falsified ESA letters or documentation from fake providers will not be accepted and it is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct to submit a falsified ESA letter.

If an ESA is approved, students must be prepared to meet the Office of Residence Life guidelines regarding ESAs. Students may not have an ESA in their residential hall unless approved by the Office of Accessibility Services and the Office of Residence Life. If students are found to have a non-approved animal in the Residence Halls, it is a violation to the Student Code of Conduct and the animal must be removed within 24 hours. Students are limited to one ESA per student. More information on Service Animal and Emotional Support Animal (ESA) in the Residential Halls can be found on the [Office of Residence Life webpage](https://www.geneseo.edu/residence-life/service-dogs-comfort-animals).

# Process for Appealing Determinations

If the student wishes to appeal the Housing & ESA Committee decision after the student does not accept an alternate accommodation or arrangement, they may submit additional documentation and schedule another appointment with the Assistant Dean for Accessibility. The Housing & ESA Committee will reconvene and will notify the student of the appeal outcome within 14 business days.

Students reserve the right to file internal and external appeals or grievances. Please refer to the Office of Accessibility webpage on [Appeals or Grievances.](https://www.geneseo.edu/accessibility-office/appeals-grievances)

Students may contact the Office of Accessibility Services with questions regarding the Housing & ESA Policy via email at [access@geneseo.edu](mailto:access@geneseo.edu), or calling 585-245-5091.