



**University of Pittsburgh**  
**Service and Emotional Support Animals Policy Committee Charter**

**I. Preamble**

This body is called the Service and Emotional Support Animals Policy Committee (Committee). It is authorized by the Chancellor and will serve at the Chancellor's discretion. The Chancellor has authorized the Senior Vice Chancellor for Engagement and Secretary of the Board of Trustees (SVC-E) to direct the operations of this Committee, consistent with the terms of this Charter. This Charter outlines the purpose, relevant background, scope, responsibilities, composition, and operations of the Committee, as well as the review process for any proposals generated by this group.

This document should be read in conjunction with Policy AO 01, Establishing University Policies, and all other applicable University policies, protocols, and procedures.

**II. Purpose**

The Committee is created for the purpose of proposing a new University Policy and supporting documents (e.g., procedures or standards) which will establish expectations and responsibilities for the use of service and emotional support animals on campuses.

**III. Background**

A new University Policy governing the use of service and emotional support animals on campus would provide necessary requirements for the safe use and care of these animals on campus. Specifically, the policy will aim to provide: (1) support to members of the University Community who use service and emotional support animals; (2) help students, faculty, and staff understand the rights and responsibilities of individuals with disabilities who use or train those animals; and (3) help avoid inconsistent, unfair, or discriminatory actions when interacting with those needing the service of these animals.

Additionally, the Americans with Disabilities Act, ADA Amendments Act of 2008, the Fair Housing Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act each have requirements regarding the use of these animals, which the University must implement. To address these requirements, the University currently has Guidance on Service and Emotional Support Animals, which is available on the Disability Resources and Services [website](#). This University Policy will clarify how the University is complying with these authorities and will emphasize their importance, as well as serve to avoid confusion as to their application across campus.

#### **IV. Scope and Authority**

The Committee will develop a new Service and Emotional Support Animal Policy as well as documents that will support its implementation (e.g., procedures or standards). In doing so, the Committee's deliberations must address the following topics:

- Compliance. The Committee will identify statutory and regulatory requirements, including those mentioned in the Section above, and will ensure the new Policy and associated procedures comply with those requirements.
- Authorization. The Committee will propose an authorization process that is easily used by those who require the use of, or will be training, service or emotional support animals.
- Impact. The Committee will consider the impact of this Policy on faculty, staff, and students.
- Transparency. The Committee will ensure that the Policy, and associated documents, are easily accessible and understandable to the University community to support compliance.
- Consistency. The Committee will ensure the new Policy and associated documents are consistent with other relevant University Policies, including those governing the use of University facilities and those who demonstrate the University's commitment to providing access to resources and services.
- Best practices. The Committee will consider and incorporate into the Policy, when appropriate, best practices found at peer institutions.
- Facilities. The Committee will consider Pitt owned and leased spaces as well as other spaces at the University.
- Safety. The Committee will consider safety and safety of the service and emotional support animal in providing guidance for access to University facilities, including those inside and outside the classroom. (e.g., labs, office space, research spaces, libraries, etc.)

#### **V. Responsibilities**

As provided above, the Committee is created to propose a new Policy on the use of service and emotional support animals. To perform this function, the Committee has the responsibility to:

- Review and analyze relevant statutory and regulatory requirements.
- Review and analyze any current departmental policies, procedures, or processes, including Guidance on Service and Emotional Support Animals provided by Disability Resources and Services.
- Research and discuss best practices for similar policies implemented by peer Universities.
- Discuss proposals with interested stakeholders in the University community, in a manner consistent with this Charter and as authorized by the Committee.
- Recommend a draft policy for review pursuant to the process described in Section VIII below and consider feedback received during that review.
- Develop any supporting documents needed for the effective and efficient implementation of the proposed policy.

- Consistent with the terms of this Charter, consult with a small animal veterinarian for thoughts on humane treatment.

It is expected that the Committee will work in confidence in order to have a full and frank discussion of all options. Individual members should maintain the deliberations of the committee confidential and are expected to not discuss the content of the Committee’s deliberations outside of the Committee, unless authorized to do so by the Committee. The broader community will have an opportunity to consider the Committee’s proposals pursuant to the process described in Section VIII below.

## **VI. Composition**

This Committee will be chaired by **Leigh Culley**, Director Disability Resources and Services. The Committee will include the following members:

- **Ellen Smith**, Member, Faculty Senate’s Equity, Inclusion, and Anti-Discrimination Advocacy Committee and Senior Lecturer, English
- **Kayla Dunn**, Assistant Director Residence Life
- **Nichole Rhodes**, Office of University Counsel
- **Carma Horner**, Disability Resources and Services Coordinator, Bradford Campus
- **Kathleen Kyle**, Director of Housing
- **Rebecca Lingenfelter**, Biosafety Officer, Environmental Health and Safety
- **Dante Bongiorno**, Facility Manager, Facilities Management
- **Matt Walaan**, Business and Auxiliary Services

**Anthony Graham**, Senior Policy Specialist, Policy Development and Management, will facilitate and support the Working Group.

## **VII. Operations**

The Committee will meet monthly or more frequently as circumstances dictate, until the work set forth above is complete. The Committee’s proposed Policy and associated procedures will be submitted to the SVC/E no later than the Spring Term 2021. The SVC/E may ask for interim status reports.

After the SVC/E’s review is complete, the draft Policy will be submitted to the Policy Office to coordinate its review consistent with Policy AO 01.

## **VIII. Policy Review Process**

The policies remaining review process will be:

- University comment period;
- University Senate Equity, Inclusion, and Anti-Discrimination Advocacy Committee;
- Council of Deans
- Staff Council;

- Faculty Assembly;
- University Senate Council; and
- Administration Leadership.

## **IX. Amendment**

Any amendments to this Charter must be made in accordance with Policy AO 01 and receive the approval of the Chancellor or designee.

This Committee shall expire on the publication of a new University Policy that governs the use of service or emotional support animals, unless otherwise directed by the Chancellor.