SUMMARY:

In compliance with applicable law, the University, as a place of public accommodation, generally allows service animals at its activities and events, and in its buildings, classrooms, residence halls, meetings, dining areas, and recreational facilities, when the animal is accompanied by an individual with a disability for whom the service animal is trained to provide, and does provide, a specific service that is directly related to their disability.

POLICY:

I. SCOPE

It is the policy of Coastal Carolina University that service animals assisting individuals with disabilities are generally permitted in all facilities and programs on the CCU campus. Students with a service animal are strongly encouraged to register in the Office of Disability Services. The University may not permit service animals when the animal poses a substantial and/or direct threat to health or safety or when the presence of the animal constitutes a fundamental alteration to the nature of the program or service. The University will make those determinations on a case-by-case basis.

II. DEFINITIONS

A. Handler

A handler is a person with a disability that a service animal assists or a personal care attendant who handles the animal for a person with a disability.
B. Service Animal

A service animal is any dog individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability, and meets the definition of “service animal” under the Americans with Disabilities Act (“ADA”), regulations at 28 CFR 35.136(i). The work or tasks performed must be directly related to the individual’s disability. Under particular circumstances set forth in the referenced ADA regulations, a miniature horse may qualify as a service animal.

C. Companion Animal

A companion animal is one that is necessary to afford the person with a disability an equal opportunity to use and enjoy University Housing. A companion animal may provide physical assistance, emotional support, calming, stability and other kinds of assistance. Companion Animals do not necessarily perform work or tasks that would qualify them as “service animals” under the Americans with Disabilities Act. Companion animals that are not service animals under the ADA may still be permitted in University Housing in certain circumstances pursuant to the Fair Housing Act.

D. Place of Public Accommodation

Public accommodation means “a place or service offering to the public accommodations, advantages, facilities or privileges whether in the nature of goods, services, lodgings, amusements or otherwise.” It also includes a place offering an education. A place of public accommodation does not include any institution, bona fide club or place of accommodation which is in its nature distinctly private.

III. RESPONSIBILITIES OF HANDLERS

Students who wish to bring a service animal to campus are asked to partner with the Office of Accessibility and Disability Services, especially if other academic accommodations are required. Additionally, students who plan to live in on-campus housing are required to inform University Housing that they plan to have a service animal with them in student housing. Advance notice of a service animal to on-campus housing may allow more flexibility in meeting a student’s specific requests for housing. Staff and faculty with service animals are strongly encouraged to contact the Office of Human Resources and Equal Opportunity.

Handlers are responsible for any damage or injuries caused by their animals and must take appropriate precautions to prevent property damage or injury. The costs of care,
along with maintaining the well-being of the service animal, are the sole responsibility of the handler at all times.

A. Service Animal Control Requirements

1. The animal should be on a leash when not providing a needed service to the handler.
2. The animal should respond to voice or hand commands at all times, and be in full control of the handler.
3. To the extent possible, the animal should be unobtrusive to other individuals and the learning, living, and working environment.

B. Animal Behavior

To the extent possible, the handler should ensure that the service animal does not:

1. Sniff people in food service locations and events or the personal belongings of others.
2. Display any behaviors or noises that are disruptive to others, unless part of the service being provided the handler.
3. Block an aisle or passageway for fire egress.

C. Waste Cleanup

Cleaning up after the service animal is the sole responsibility of the handler. In the event the handler is not physically able to do so, he/she must hire someone to perform this task. Following are guidelines for animal waste cleanup.

1. Always carry equipment sufficient to clean up the animal's feces or urine whenever the animal is on campus.
2. Properly dispose of waste and/or litter in appropriate containers.
3. Contact staff if assistance with cleanup is needed. Any cost incurred for doing so is the sole responsibility of the handler.

IV. REMOVAL OF SERVICE ANIMALS

Service Animals may be ordered removed by the University for the following reasons. When a service animal is properly removed pursuant to this policy, the University will work with the handler to determine reasonable alternative opportunities to participate in the service, program, or activity without having the service animal on the premises.
A. Out of Control Animal

The University may order the removal of a service animal who is out of control and whose handler does not take effective action to calm the animal. If the improper animal behavior happens repeatedly, the handler may be prohibited from bringing the animal into any University facility until it can be demonstrated that significant steps have been taken to mitigate the bad behavior.

B. Non-Housebroken Animal

A handler may be directed to remove an animal that is not housebroken.

C. Direct Threat

A handler may be directed to remove an animal that the University determines to be a substantial and direct threat to the health and safety of individuals. This may occur as the result of a very ill animal, a substantial lack of cleanliness of the animal, or the presence of an animal in a sensitive area like a medical facility, certain laboratories or mechanical or industrial areas.

V. VISITORS

Service animals accompanying individuals with disabilities are welcome in all areas of campus that are open to the public, except in situations determined to apply under Section I. Policy Statement above. Specific questions related to the use of service animals by visitors on the CCU campus can be directed to the Accessibility Coordinator in the Office of Accessibility and Disability Services.

VI. CONFLICTING DISABILITIES

Some people may have a substantial enough allergic reaction to animals that it qualifies as a disability. The University will consider the needs of both persons in meeting its obligation to reasonably accommodate all disabilities and to resolve the problem as efficiently and expeditiously as possible. Students requesting allergy accommodations should contact the Office of Accessibility and Disability Services. Staff requesting allergy accommodations should contact the Office of Human Resources and Equal Opportunity.

VII. EMERGENCY RESPONSE

In the event of an emergency, the emergency response team’s first responsibility is to the handler; this may necessitate leaving the animal behind in certain emergency evacuation
situations. However, the emergency response team will make every effort to keep the animal with its handler.

VIII. SERVICE ANIMALS IN TRAINING

A handler with a service animal in training, when identified as such in any place of public accommodation, will be afforded the same access as a handler with a fully trained service animal. Handlers of service dogs in training must adhere to the requirements for service animals and are subject to the removal policies as outlined in this policy.

IX. COMPANION ANIMALS IN RESIDENCE HALLS

University Housing may allow a companion animal if certain conditions are met. The animal must be necessary for the resident with a disability to have equal access to housing, and the accommodation must also be reasonable. An accommodation is unreasonable if it presents an undue financial or administrative burden on the University, poses a substantial and direct threat to personal or public safety, or constitutes a fundamental alteration of the nature of the service or program.

A. Requests for companion animals in University Housing must be made by:

1. Submitting documentation of a disability to the Special Housing Request Committee.
2. Making an accommodation request by filling out the Special Housing Request form online following the completion of the housing application.
3. Verifying that there is a link between the animal and a specific disability.

B. Responsibilities of Handlers

Handlers are responsible for any damage or injuries caused by their animals and must take appropriate precautions to prevent property damage or injury. The costs of care, along with maintaining the well-being of the companion animal, are the sole responsibility of the handler at all times.

X. APPEALS OR GRIEVENCES

Please refer to University Policy STUD-176 which outlines the procedures for filing and handling student complaints of denial of disability accommodations by faculty or staff members.
This policy was created in accordance with Title II of the Americans With Disabilities Act, as amended, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, as amended. If any provision herein conflicts with the applicable provisions of the above federal regulations, the federal regulations will apply. If a state law provides a greater right and/or protection to an individual with a disability as it relates to the use of service animals at a public institution of higher education, said state law will prevail.