

SERVICE ANIMAL / EMOTIONAL SUPPORT ANIMAL - REQUIREMENTS

We will require a letter from your Licensed Medical Health Professional stating that you do require the assistance of the animal for a disability and how the animal assists you with your disability

(In addition, it will need to)

☐ be less than 60 days old

☐ be on their letterhead with phone number and address

☐ include the patients legal name

State which you have ☐ Service Animal OR ☐ Emotional Support Animal / Assistance Animal

☐ We will also require a photo of the animal for our identification purposes of the animal for which your Licensed Medical Health Professional states you require.

**** If you remain in the Rental House beyond your Lease Term, upon each renewal of your Lease, we will need updated documentation as listed above.**

(Be assured that we will keep all information concerning your Service Animal or Emotional Support Animal/Assistance Animal confidential and private)

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

“Service Animal” is defined as dogs that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities. Service Animals are working animals, not pets. The work or task a dog has been trained to provide must be directly related to the person’s disability. There are a wide range of conditions that may be benefitted by having a service dog and the only one who can ultimately make that determination is a Licensed Medical Health Professional. Dogs whose sole function is to provide comfort or emotional support do not qualify as Service Animals under the ADA.

“Emotional Support Animal” is defined as an animal that provides comfort just by being with a person. Because they have not been trained to perform a specific job or task, they do not qualify as a service animal under the ADA.

Federal Fair Housing Act (FHA)

Requires Landlord to make “reasonable accommodations” for those with disabilities. Under the FHA, a disability is defined as a physical or mental impairment which significantly limits a person’s major life activities. Assistance/Service Animals work, assist, and/or perform tasks and services for the benefit of a person with a disability or provide emotional support that improves the symptoms of a disability.

EFFECTIVE DATE: September 1, 2019

Act No. 2019-478, a person who knowingly and willingly misrepresents himself or herself as an owner or trainer of a service animal will be guilty of a Class C misdemeanor resulting in a \$100 fine and 100 community service hours to be performed with an organization that serves individuals with a disability. The law removes the possibility of criminal charges being brought against businesses and their employees.

EFFECTIVE DATE: June 1, 2018

Act 2018-235, HB198, is the Alabama Assistance and Service Animal Integrity in Housing Act. The act: (1) provides that if a person with a disability that is not readily apparent or known to the person’s landlord files a request for a policy exception that prohibits animals on the property of the landlord because the person requires the use of an assistance animal (that qualifies as a reasonable accommodation under the federal Fair Housing Act), the landlord may require the person to produce reasonable documentation of the disability; (2) provides that all documentation submitted to a landlord pursuant to the requirements of the act must be kept confidential; (3) creates the crime of misrepresentation of entitlement to an assistance animal or service animal; and (4) creates the crime of misrepresentation of an animal as an assistance animal or service animal.