



DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION REQUESTS: Assistance Animals

Assistance animals are animals that (1) provide assistance or perform tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability; or (2) provide emotional support that alleviates one or more identified effects of a person's disability. Assistance animals are often referred to as service animals, emotional support animals, or companion animals. A service animal is generally a dog specially trained to perform specific tasks for a person with a disability. An emotional support or companion animal can be any type of animal that can sense an event or alleviate symptoms of a disability including anxiety, depression, PTSD, and more.

As explained in our March 2022 Housing Team Update, tenants with disabilities have the right to request reasonable modifications to a landlord or property manager's policies: this right includes requests to modify a landlord or property manager's no-pet policy (or other pet restriction).

Reasonable modification requests for assistance animals can be made orally or in writing, however we recommend requests be made in writing so the tenant has a record of the request. The tenant should

provide disability-related information explaining the need for the assistance animal, unless the requester's disability is readily apparent or known to the landlord or property manager.

The Fair Housing Act and the Minnesota Human Rights Act require that landlords and property managers allow assistance animals, unless the landlord or property manager demonstrates that allowing the specific assistance animal requested would (1) cause an undue financial burden to the landlord or property manager; (2) fundamentally change the nature of the landlord or property manager's operations; (3) pose a direct threat to the health and safety of others on the premises; or (4) result in significant property damage to the property of others on the premises.

Assistance animals are not pets! Tenants who have assistance animals cannot be charged pet deposits, increased rent, etc. Also, breed, size and weight limits do not apply to assistance animals, including emotional support or companion animals.

Confidentiality: All information regarding the requester's disability must be kept confidential and must not be shared with any other person unless they need the information to evaluate a request.

Tenants who believe they have been unlawfully denied a reasonable accommodation request can file a complaint with the Minnesota Department of Human Rights or HUD.

Meet Standpoint's Housing Team



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