

The HIGHLANDS, Inc.

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RESIDENT APPLICATION FOR ASSISTANCE, EMOTIONAL, SUPPORT ANIMAL

**APPLICATION MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY A WRITTEN STATEMENT FROM
YOUR HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONAL (see attached excerpts from Housing and
Urban Development Notice FHEO-2020-01 dated January 28, 2020)**

(Please print)

Name of Resident: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

Type/Description of Animal

You, the undersigned, hereby request consideration and approval from The Highlands for the above-named animal to live in your home and serve as a service, assistance, or emotional animal.

Signature of Resident/Applicant

Date

Signature of Healthcare Professional

Date

**EXCERPTS TAKEN FROM U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND
URBAN DEVELOPMENT NOTICE FHEO-2020-01
DATED JANUARY 28, 2020**

Page 17 (Attachment A) – **Disability-related information**

“A disability for purposes of fair housing law exists when a person has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.”

Page 12 (Attachment B) – **Box at the top of the page**

“A relationship or connection between the disability and the need for the assistance animal must be provided. This is particularly the case where a disability is non-observable...”

Page 16 (Attachment C) – **Paragraph below the box**

“health care professionals should use personal knowledge of their patient/client – i.e. the knowledge used to diagnose, advise, counsel, treat, or provide health care or other disability related services to their patient/client.”

The document in its entirety may be found at:

<https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/PA/documents/HUDAsstAnimalNC1-28-2020.pdf>



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
WASHINGTON, DC 20410-2000

OFFICE OF FAIR HOUSING
AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

DOCUMENT COVER PAGE

SPECIAL ATTENTION OF:

HUD Regional and Field Office Directors of
Public and Indian Housing (PIH); Housing;
Community Planning and Development
(CPD); Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity;
and Regional Counsel; CPD, PIH, and
Housing Program Providers

FHEO Notice: **FHEO-2020-01**

Issued: January 28, 2020

Expires: Effective until Amended,
Superseded, or Rescinded.

Subject: Assessing a Person's Request to Have an Animal as a Reasonable Accommodation Under the Fair Housing Act

- 1. Purpose:** This notice explains certain obligations of housing providers under the Fair Housing Act (FHA) with respect to animals that individuals with disabilities may request as reasonable accommodations. There are two types of assistance animals: (1) service animals, and (2) other trained or untrained animals that do work, perform tasks, provide assistance, and/or provide therapeutic emotional support for individuals with disabilities (referred to in this guidance as a "support animal"). Persons with disabilities may request a reasonable accommodation for service animals and other types of assistance animals, including support animals, under the FHA. This guidance provides housing providers with a set of best practices for complying with the FHA when assessing requests for reasonable accommodations to keep animals in housing, including the information that a housing provider may need to know from a health care professional about an individual's need for an assistance animal in housing. This guidance replaces HUD's prior guidance, FHEO-2013-01, on housing providers' obligations regarding service animals and assistance animals. In particular, this guidance provides a set of best practices regarding the type and amount of documentation a housing provider may ask an individual with a disability to provide in support of an accommodation request for a support animal, including documentation of a disability (that is, physical or mental impairments that substantially limit at least one major life activity) or a disability-related need for a support animal when the disability or disability-related need for the animal is non-obvious and not known to the housing provider. By providing greater clarity through this guidance, HUD seeks to provide housing providers with a tool they may use to reduce burdens that they may face when they are uncertain about the type and amount of documentation they may need and may be permitted to request when an individual seeks to keep a support animal in housing. Housing providers may be subject to the requirements of several civil rights laws, including but not limited to the FHA, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (Section 504), and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). This guidance does not address how HUD will process complaints against housing providers under Section 504 or the ADA.

persons unless the information is needed for evaluating whether to grant or deny a reasonable accommodation request or unless disclosure is required by law.⁵¹

As a best practice, documentation contemplated in certain circumstances by the Assistance Animals Guidance is recommended to include the following general information:

- The patient's name,
- Whether the health care professional has a professional relationship with that patient/client involving the provision of health care or disability-related services, and
- The type of animal(s) for which the reasonable accommodation is sought (i.e., dog, cat, bird, rabbit, hamster, gerbil, other rodent, fish, turtle, other specified type of domesticated animal, or other specified unique animal).⁵²

Disability-related information. A disability for purposes of fair housing laws exists when a person has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.⁵³

Addiction caused by current, illegal use of a controlled substance does not qualify as a disability.⁵⁴

As a best practice, it is recommended that individuals seeking reasonable accommodations for support animals ask health care professionals to provide information related to the following:

- Whether the patient has a physical or mental impairment,
- Whether the patient's impairment(s) substantially limit at least one major life activity or major bodily function, and
- Whether the patient needs the animal(s) (because it does work, provides assistance, or performs at least one task that benefits the patient because of his or her disability, or because it provides therapeutic emotional support to alleviate a symptom or effect of the disability of the patient/client, and not merely as a pet).

Additionally, if the animal is not a dog, cat, small bird, rabbit, hamster, gerbil, other rodent, fish, turtle, or other small, domesticated animal that is traditionally kept in the home for pleasure rather than for commercial purposes, it may be helpful for patients to ask health care professionals to provide the following additional information:

- The date of the last consultation with the patient,
- Any unique circumstances justifying the patient's need for the particular animal (if already owned or identified by the individual) or particular type of animal(s), and
- Whether the health care professional has reliable information about this specific animal or

⁵¹ See Joint Statement, Q and A 18 (May 17, 2004), at <https://www.hud.gov/sites/documents/huddojstatement.pdf>.

⁵² See, e.g., *Janush v. Charities Housing Development Corporation*, 169 F.Supp.2d 1133, 1136-37 (N.D. Cal. 2000) (rejecting an argument that a definition of "service dog" should be read into the Fair Housing Act to create a rule that accommodation of animals other than service dogs is per se unreasonable, finding that "the law imposes on defendants the obligation to consider each request individually and to grant requests that are reasonable.").

⁵³ 24 C.F.R. § 100.201.

⁵⁴ 24 C.F.R. § 100.201.

ATTACHMENT B

Information Confirming Disability-Related Need for an Assistance Animal. . .

- Reasonably supporting information often consists of information from a licensed health care professional – e.g., physician, optometrist, psychiatrist, psychologist, physician’s assistant, nurse practitioner, or nurse – general to the condition but specific as to the individual with a disability and the assistance or therapeutic emotional support provided by the animal.
- A relationship or connection between the disability and the need for the assistance animal must be provided. This is particularly the case where the disability is non-observable, and/or the animal provides therapeutic emotional support.
- For non-observable disabilities and animals that provide therapeutic emotional support, a housing provider may ask for information that is consistent with that identified in the Guidance on Documenting an Individual’s Need for Assistance Animals in Housing (*see Questions 6 and 7) in order to conduct an individualized assessment of whether it must provide the accommodation under the Fair Housing Act. The lack of such documentation in many cases may be reasonable grounds for denying a requested accommodation.

Part IV: Type of Animal

8. Is the animal commonly kept in households?

- If “yes,” the reasonable accommodation should be provided under the FHA unless the general exceptions described below exist.³⁷
- If “no,” a reasonable accommodation need not be provided, but note the very rare circumstances described below.

Animals commonly kept in households. If the animal is a dog, cat, small bird, rabbit, hamster, gerbil, other rodent, fish, turtle, or other small, domesticated animal that is traditionally kept in the home for pleasure rather than for commercial purposes, then the reasonable accommodation should be granted because the requestor has provided information confirming that there is a disability-related need for the animal.³⁸ For purposes of this assessment, reptiles (other than turtles), barnyard animals, monkeys, kangaroos, and other non-domesticated animals are not considered common household animals.

Unique animals. If the individual is requesting to keep a unique type of animal that is not commonly kept in households as described above, then the requestor has the substantial burden of demonstrating a disability-related therapeutic need for the specific animal or the specific type of animal. The individual is encouraged to submit documentation from a health care professional confirming the need for this animal, which includes information of the type set out in the Guidance on Documenting an Individual’s Need for Assistance Animals in Housing. While this guidance

³⁷ See, e.g., *Majors v. Hous. Auth. of the Cnty. of DeKalb Georgia*, 652 F.2d 454, 457 (5th Cir. 1981) (enforcing a “no pets” rule against an individual with a disability who needs an animal as a reasonable accommodation effectively deprives the individual of the benefits of the housing).

³⁸ See 24 C.F.R. § 100.204(a).

Guidance on Documenting an Individual's Need for Assistance Animals in Housing

This section provides best practices for documenting an individual's need for assistance animals in housing. It offers a summary of information that a housing provider may need to know from a health care professional about an individual's need for an assistance animal in housing. It is intended to help individuals with disabilities explain to their health care professionals the type of information that housing providers may need to help them make sometimes difficult legal decisions under fair housing laws. It also will help an individual with a disability and their health care provider understand what information may be needed to support an accommodation request when the disability or disability-related need for an accommodation is not readily observable or known by the housing provider. Housing providers may not require a health care professional to use a specific form (including this document), to provide notarized statements, to make statements under penalty of perjury, or to provide an individual's diagnosis or other detailed information about a person's physical or mental impairments.⁴⁹ Housing providers and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development rely on professionals to provide accurate information to the best of their personal knowledge, consistent with their professional obligations. This document only provides assistance on the type of information that may be needed under the Fair Housing Act (FHA). The contents of this document do not have the force and effect of law and are not meant to bind the public in any way. This document is intended only to provide clarity to the public regarding existing requirements under the law or agency policies. Further, this document does not create any obligation to provide health-care information and does not authorize or solicit the collection of any information not otherwise permitted by the FHA.⁵⁰

The Appendix to this Guide answers some commonly asked questions about terms and issues below. An understanding of the terms and issues is helpful to providing this information.

When providing this information, health care professionals should use personal knowledge of their patient/client – i.e., the knowledge used to diagnose, advise, counsel, treat, or provide health care or other disability-related services to their patient/client. **Information relating to an individual's disability and health conditions must be kept confidential and cannot be shared with other**

⁴⁹ See Joint Statement of the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Department of Justice, Reasonable Accommodations Under the Fair Housing Act ("Joint Statement"), Q and A's 13, 16-18 (May 17, 2004), at <https://www.hud.gov/sites/documents/huddojstatement.pdf>.

⁵⁰ This guidance does not expand on the obligations under the FHA or HUD's regulations and should be construed consistently with Executive Order 13891 of October 9, 2019 entitled "Promoting the Rule of Law Through Improved Agency Guidance Documents," Executive Order 13892 of October 9, 2019 entitled "Promoting the Rule of Law Through Transparency and Fairness in Civil Administrative Enforcement and Adjudication," the Department of Justice Memorandum of January 25, 2018 entitled "Limiting Use of Agency Guidance Documents in Affirmative Civil Enforcement Cases," and the Department of Justice Memorandum of November 16, 2017 entitled "Prohibition on Improper Guidance Documents."