

# NICHOLLS STATE UNIVERSITY



OFFICE OF  
RESIDENTIAL LIVING

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Division of Student Affairs



PET-FRIENDLY LIVING LEARNING COMMUNITY

POLICY & PROCEDURE MANUAL

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## **Introduction**

The Office of Residential Living at Nicholls State University is adding to its Living Learning Community (LLC) inventory by developing a Pet-Friendly LLC in Calecas Hall for any returning residents to sign up to live in it for Fall. Sign-ups will begin during the Room Selection Process this March, and students will be assigned on a first-come basis. For now, we will permit cats and dogs. Students will have to complete necessary documentation (vet, vaccination, etc.) forms, but otherwise, the process will be barrier-free. More information will be posted on our housing website under the Living Learning Communities drop-down menu.

By living in this type of community, which focuses on easing the transition within the campus community, students may be challenged in the areas of accountability, personal, and social responsibility. Animal ownership can also benefit students emotionally, psychologically and socially, relieve stress, lift one's mood, and provide a sense of feeling needed. While animal ownership is not for everyone, those who are approved for Pet-Friendly LLC must remember that the opportunity to have an animal on campus is a privilege, not a right.

The following guidelines and policies, in conjunction with the University's guidelines, are designed to maintain a safe environment for all members of the Nicholls community. Students are reminded that visitors to campus are not allowed to bring their animals into the residential facilities. Students are responsible for following the procedures as outlined to be considered for approval. No animal should be brought to campus without prior written approval from the Coordinator of Assignment Processes and Communications within the Residential Living & Learning office. We encourage every animal owner to consider carefully the advantages and disadvantages of the campus environment for their animal.

Nicholls State University recognizes four categories for animal ownership: Pets, Emotional Support/Companion/Comfort Animals, Service Dogs in Training, and Service Animals. *At this time, visiting animals are not allowed in residential facilities under any circumstances.*

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## **Mission**

The mission of this Living Learning Community will provide a pet-friendly environment that enhances the students' college experience and offers participants the opportunity to experience the benefits of pet companionship, especially those that contribute to their academic and personal health.

# **Approved Pets**

## **Permitted Animals**

The Pet-Friendly LLC recognizes the following animals as permitted pets at this time:

- Cats
- Dogs (certain dog breeds and sizes only)

Animals must be old enough for at least their 1st round of shots. Additionally, the number of animals is not to exceed ONE animal per student in the LLC.

## **Prohibited Animals**

The following animals will not be eligible for approval at this time:

- Fish (permitted in all halls - no larger than a 10-gallon size tank)
  - Amphibians
  - Reptiles
  - Ferrets
  - Birds
  - Small caged animal (rabbits, hamsters, gerbils, chinchillas, guinea pigs, rats, mice, hedgehogs);
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# **Registration Requirements/Application Process**

## **Registration Requirements**

- Acceptable pets include cats and dogs only. At this time, no other domesticated animals or undomesticated animals will be permitted in the LLC.
- All Documentation and agreement forms must be submitted **a minimum of 30 days** prior to the move-in day of a given academic semester. This ensures adequate time for students to complete all necessary procedures in regards to submitting documentation and reviewing policy.
- Requests will be considered on a first-come, first-served basis.

## **Application Process**

1. Student completes the Pet-Friendly LLC Application
2. Student meets registration requirements.
3. The student's application will be reviewed.
4. Student will be informed of their Pet-Friendly LLC application status via email.
  - a. If approved, the student will be given the additional paperwork to complete, including documentation, and the non-refundable \$100.00 pet-friendly fee each academic year.
5. Student will complete all necessary paperwork, listed below, and turn it into the Office of Residential Living via email ([housing@nicholls.edu](mailto:housing@nicholls.edu)) at one time:
  - a. Veterinarian Verification Form
  - b. Vaccination/Immunization Records
  - c. Spay & Neuter Records
  - d. Alternate Caregiver Form (In Application)
  - e. A Clear and Identifiable Picture of the Pet (In Application)
6. Once approved, the student will be indebted for and be required to pay the Pet-Friendly Fee on their Banner Account.

## **Pet-Friendly Fee and Fine Information**

- **Pet-Friendly Fee** | Once per academic year, a \$100.00 non-refundable 'pet-friendly fee' will be charged to the student's Banner account. This fee must be paid **before** the student's move-in date.
- **Pet-Friendly Fee Refund** | Once a student moves into the LLC, the fee will no longer be able to be removed. If a student decides not to move in or cannot move in for some reason, the fee will be removed from their account.

- **Punitive & Damage Fines** | Students will be responsible for paying for the replacement or restoration of university property that was damaged by their animal at cost value.

## Required Forms/Paperwork

All required paperwork must be completed and turned in at one time, via email ([housing@nicholls.edu](mailto:housing@nicholls.edu)) or in-person to the Office of Residential Living **30 days prior** to the student's move-in day on a given academic semester. Failure to do so will result in disqualification and revocation of the student's eligibility to participate in the LLC, and the next student on the waiting list will be contacted.

- **Application Form** | A student will not be considered for the LLC unless they complete the initial application form.
  - **Veterinarian Verification Form** | This form will be emailed to the student once they are notified of their initial acceptance into the LLC. An example is listed in [Appendix I](#).
  - **Vaccination/Immunization Records** | This should be provided by the veterinarian when the student meets with one to complete the necessary veterinarian verification form.
  - **Flea & Tick Treatment Records** | This should be provided by a veterinarian when the student meets with one to complete the necessary treatment.
  - **Spay or Neuter Records** | This should be provided by the veterinarian when the student meets with one to complete the necessary veterinarian verification form.
  - **Hold Harmless Agreement** | This is completed as part of the initial application process.
  - **Alternate Caregiver Form** | This is completed as part of the initial application process.
  - **Picture of Pet** | A Clear and Identifiable Picture of the Pet.
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# **Policies & Procedures**

## **Emergency Situations**

- **Illness** | Should the owner be unable to take care of the animal for any reason, there must be an emergency contact (local) person listed on the appropriate form who can pick up the animal. If the emergency contact cannot be reached or is unable to care for the animal, a rescue or foster arrangement will be made (at the cost of the owner) until the owner can again care for the animal or make other off-campus arrangements for the animal.
- **Hurricanes** | Hurricane season extends from June through November. In the event the University activates an emergency operations plan\*, please be aware of the following.

Evacuation plans may mean students could be housed in a gym or similar facility; students are not guaranteed a room. If you have an animal, you may want to consider self-evacuation plans. If an evacuation is ordered due to weather, and you plan to evacuate, the following are additional guidelines to which a student with an animal must adhere.

1. Bring vaccination documentation verification with you. Ensure that your animal is vaccinated per local ordinances and regulations; the animal must be immunized against diseases common to that type of animal.
2. Bring adequate supplies for your animal (water, food, bathroom bags if needed, etc.). Since the duration of an evacuation is unknown, it is your responsibility to ensure that you have food and water for your animal.
3. Your animal must be put in a crate or cage while being transported on the bus.
4. Your animal may be primarily confined to its crate or cage while evacuated.

\*If you must evacuate with your pet, please search this [website for Pet-Friendly Lodging](#) in the destination that you are traveling to. Additionally, [follow these instructions for caring for a pet in an emergency/disaster](#).

## **Owner Expectations & Policies**

Nicholls State University is not responsible for the care, training or supervision of Service, emotional support, or pets in the LLC. Owners are responsible for the cost, care, and supervision of animals, including compliance with any laws and requirements pertaining to:

- **Abandonment** | Animals **may not** be left overnight in student housing to be cared for by another student. Animals must be taken with the student if they leave campus for a prolonged period. Residents are not allowed to leave their animals over breaks, holidays, emergencies (such as

evacuations), or weekends if the resident is not going to be staying on campus.

- **Abuse/Maltreatment** | If at any point, you are found responsible for maltreatment, abuse, or neglect of your animal, your animal must be removed from campus. Additionally, you will be reported to the appropriate animal welfare authorities.
- **Aggression/Harm of Another** | If an animal physically harms another resident, animal, or another individual, it will be removed from the residence hall immediately.
  - The owner is financially responsible for any harm caused or the cost of removal services if needed. In the case where 'Student A' has an animal that is approved on campus, and it bites/harms 'Student B', whereas 'Student B' has to receive medical attention, 'Student A' will be financially responsible for the medical care of 'Student B'. In such a case, 'Student A' would be responsible for paying 'Student B' personally, without a transaction occurring through the University or a University representative.
- **Pet-Sitting/Sharing of Animals** | Residents of the pet-friendly LLC are not permitted to let their animal be watched or taken care of by another resident on campus. The student should be the only person tending or caring for the animal, and the animal should not visit other residence hall rooms/apartments.
- **Crating** | Animals must be crated or placed in a carrier in the resident's assigned area at all times when the resident is not physically present in the room or apartment. Areas not allowed as crating spaces are the shared bathroom, living room, or any other shared space.
  - Should an animal escape due to oversight of this rule while university personnel are entering the room, the university is not liable for the animal's well-being in any capacity. The resident will be contacted to retrieve the said animal. If the resident cannot be contacted or if the resident is unsuccessful in retrieving their animal, Animal Control will be notified. The owner will hold the University blameless if the animal goes missing. University staff is not responsible for the retrieval of said animal in the event the animal escapes or becomes lost.
- **Leash Law** | According to Louisiana Leash Laws, animals must be maintained at all times under standard restraints such as a carrier and/or leash to relieve themselves in a grassy area. The animal must be kept under control at all times or effective action must be taken to control the animal if control is lost.

The exception to this law is if the animal is in a designated "Dog Park" area, where students are not required to control their animal with a leash.



- **Noise** | The noise level of the animal must never hinder another student's learning environment or create a bothersome atmosphere.
- **Number of Pets** | The number of pets is not to exceed one per resident.
- **Pet Waste** | It is the owner's responsibility to clean up after their animal. Owners must exercise proper care and control of their animal which means cleaning up their animal's waste material and disposing of it properly. Animal waste bag stations are located in and around all animal housing facilities. Students are required to have animal waste or plastic bags with them at all times and dispose of them in any green dumpster. Litter Boxes must be cleaned regularly and maintained to ensure reduced odors. Owners are required to dispose of old litter in a sealed bag or container in the exterior dumpsters immediately. Residents are responsible for disposing all disposable cage or crate bedding in the exterior dumpsters. It is the owner's responsibility to change and maintain the appropriate upkeep for their animal.

Waste disposal via university plumbing is prohibited. **If the owner is found not cleaning up after their animal, and a University staff member must clean up after an animal, an additional cleaning charge will be placed on the resident's account.**

- **Vaccinations & Immunizations** | All animals must have current applicable vaccinations and immunizations for their specific breed. The resident must ensure that these records remain current and updated for the duration of the tenure that the animal is on campus.
- **Visitation of Pets** | Pets of residents living in the LLC should not visit other residence hall rooms or places on campus where animals are not permitted. Unless your animal a registered service animal, you should not bring it into other residential or academic buildings.

## Policy Violations & Removal of an Animal

Nicholls State University may exclude or remove an animal when:

- The animal poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others
- The animal attempts to enter a place on campus where the presence of an animal is prohibited
- The animal attempts to enter any place on campus where the animal's safety is compromised
- The animal's behavior is unruly or disruptive (e.g. barking, jumping on people, growling, running around, and/or exhibiting aggressive behavior).
- Uncleanliness: Animals are required to be housebroken. Owners must also ensure that their animals are kept clean and well-groomed. Excessively unclean animals (e.g. repeated soiling of facilities, flea-infested, foul-smelling, and/or shedding excessively) may be excluded from University facilities.

- If a room must be treated for flea treatment during the tenure of the resident or directly after (due to flea infestation), then the resident will be charged the cost of the flea treatment (~\$100.00).
- Repeated violation of university policy: i.e., failure to control the animal via leash; failure to adhere to these guidelines; etc.
- The owner does not comply with the owner's responsibilities detailed in the section above.

If a resident is forced by Residential Living to remove an animal for violating policy or another reason, they will lose their opportunity to bring the animal to campus for at least 1 academic year (depending on egregiousness, this could be extended up to indefinite suspension of opportunity).

## Sanctions/Consequences

Email correspondence sent prior to the start of each academic term serves as a general warning. It is not guaranteed that this warning system will follow a sequential order, depending on the egregiousness of the violation. Any documented situation that contradicts these guidelines will result in the following:

1. The resident will receive a formal written warning.
2. Upon the second report of a violation occurring, a meeting will be scheduled with the appropriate Area Coordinator to discuss policy violations. In addition to this meeting, the student will be placed on animal compliance probation.
3. Any incidents that break this probation will result in the removal of the animal from campus residence halls.
4. Animals causing physical harm to any persons on campus will automatically result in the immediate removal of animals and will not be subject to the warning system.

Documented warnings and probationary periods will continue to a specified end date. Residential Living staff will determine this time period. Depending on the egregiousness of the situation, the period could be indefinite. Once an animal has been removed from residential facilities, it will no longer be allowed to return on campus for the remainder of the owner's tenure at Nicholls State University. **The owner is expected to fulfill their housing obligation as stated in the housing contract in the event of an animal's removal.**

## Animal Compliance Checks (1 per month)

- All residents with registered animals are subject to animal compliance checks. During these checks, the following will be inspected:
  - a. All animal belongings are in the correct area
  - b. Cleanliness related to animals (fur, waste, and odor)
  - c. Any damages caused by the animal

- i. The owner is financially responsible for any damage or additional cleaning needed.
- d. Space is free of fleas, ticks, and other pests
  - i. If detected, university-approved pest control services will be contacted and the resident will be billed for the expense of any pest treatment beyond the standard pest management.
  - ii. At the end of each semester, the space will be treated for fleas.

RL staff will be performing animal compliance checks each semester of residential rooms to ensure that an owner complies with the animal-friendly housing policies and guidelines. This includes: reviewing all corresponding documentation, that the animal residing in the room assignment is the approved animal, that the owner is maintaining appropriate animal care, that the room is free of damage and that the environment meets all health and safety conditions. Failure to maintain the upkeep of an animal or living space may result in the removal of the animal from campus and/or the assessment of additional room cleaning charges. Animal owners are responsible for animal-proofing their residential space, especially if young animals are present to reduce university property damage (cover/protect all garbage cans, remove toxic items from animal's reach, etc.)

If anything is found during animal inspections that is compromising the health or well-being of the animal, Residential Living will contact the Humane Society depending on egregiousness or if the issue is not addressed immediately. Residential Living will not be responsible for the maltreatment of a given animal.

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## **Holidays, Breaks, Room Changes, & Summer Housing**

### **University Holidays & Breaks (Animal Care)**

During any university holiday or break in which the animal owner will be away from campus (Fall Break, Thanksgiving, Spring Holiday or Summer Break), it is required that the animal owner will remove the animal from campus. There will be no exceptions to this rule, and animal owners found in non-compliance will be subject to disciplinary action and may be placed on animal probation.

### **Room Changes**

If at any point throughout the semester, the resident is to move to another room on-campus that is not in Calecas Hall, the animal will be required to leave campus. At this time, only Calecas Hall will house the Pet-Friendly Living Learning Community. Should a student choose to leave that community, they will forfeit their opportunity to keep their animal on-campus.

# Summer Housing

Residents who live in the Pet-Friendly Living Learning Community will not be permitted to bring their pet with them to the Brady Apartment Complex when the Summer term begins. The Pet-Friendly LLC is only active during the Academic Year (Fall & Spring).

## Frequently Asked Questions

### What buildings are Pet-Friendly?

- The designated Pet-Friendly LLC is housed in Calecas Hall, where around 70 other students will live. At this time, this is the only place where this option is available.

### How old must my animal be to live on campus?

- The animal must be at least 8 weeks of age (old enough to receive its first round of vaccinations).

### Is there a weight limit for dogs living in the LLC?

- At this time, no, there is no weight limit on dogs that could live in the LLC. It should be mentioned that some larger breeds (Great Dane, German Shepherd, etc.), may have challenges with living in such a small space in Calecas Hall. Proper exercise will be critical for their experience.

### How many pets can I have in the LLC?

- At this time, only one animal is permitted, per student that lives in the LLC.

### What vaccinations should my cat or dog have?

- See Below:

#### Animal Core Vaccinations

Animal Type	Rabies	Distemper	Bordetella	Flea Prevention	Other
Dog	X	X	X	X	Heartworm Prevention

<b>Cat</b>	X	X	N/A	X	Feline Leukemia, If Suggested

### **Why/when do I need to crate my dog or cat?**

- All animals should be crated when you are not present in the room. Since your animal cannot travel with you to academic buildings or other buildings on-campus, it will need to be contained in a proper crate while you are not in the room. This is for the safety of the animal and any personnel that may need to enter the space.

### **Can I have a pet sitter for my animal?**

- No, you alone are responsible for your animal. Other students cannot be responsible for walking, watching, feeding, or taking care of your animal.

### **How should I report an animal complaint?**

- Complaints or official reports regarding the Pet-Friendly LLC should be directed to the RA of the building or to [housing@nicholls.edu](mailto:housing@nicholls.edu) so professional staff members can work to address the complaint promptly.

### **What happens if a complaint is filed against my animal?**

- If an animal complaint is filed against your animal, you will likely be called in for a meeting to discuss the nature of the complaint and to determine its validity. Ultimately, we aim to provide a comfortable and safe environment for all of the students living in the LLC and in Calecas Hall who are not a part of the LLC.

### **How much does it cost for me to keep my animal in the LLC?**

- Each academic year, the Pet-Friendly LLC will require each student to pay a \$100.00 non-refundable 'pet-friendly fee' once per academic year to cover additional cleaning/damage costs and normal wear and tear of having an animal in our facilities.

# **Appendix I.** | Vaccination Verification Form

## **Owner Responsibility:**

I verify that all vaccinations are and will remain current through one year or as instructed by the veterinarian. If my animal receives care from multiple or separate care facilities, I will provide documentation from each care provider.

Owner Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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## **Veterinarian/Shelter/Breeder Responsibility:**

**Please attach copies of all recommended vaccination records to maintain the animal's health and prevent contagious disease, as required by local ordinances and regulation.**

I verify that the above-mentioned animal has been given a stool sample test for internal parasites and that the stool sample was found to be negative for parasites known or suspected of infecting humans, including roundworms, whipworms, hookworms, tapeworms, and Giardia sp; or that the animal has been appropriately treated for these parasites. I further verify that the above-mentioned animal has been treated and/or examined and found to be free of flea infestation. I verify that the above animal is in generally good health.

Veterinarian/Shelter/Breeder Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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