

TITLE: Emotional Support Animal (ESA) Policy

NUMBER 533

APPROVED BY Board of Trustees

DATE April 8, 2020

Whatcom Community College (WCC) recognizes the importance of “ESAs” under the Fair Housing Act that provide physical and/or emotional support to individuals with disabilities. WCC is committed to allowing ESAs necessary to provide individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to fully participate in the housing program. The Whatcom Community College Emotional Support Animal (ESA) Procedure 750 explains the specific requirements applicable to an individual’s use of an ESA in student housing. WCC reserves the right to amend this Policy and associated Procedure as circumstances require. This policy applies solely to “ESAs” which may be necessary in student housing. It does not apply to “service animals” as defined by the ADA and WCC Procedure 744.

Although it is the policy of WCC that individuals are generally prohibited from having animals of any type in student housing, WCC will consider a request by an individual with a disability for reasonable accommodation from this prohibition to allow an ESA that is necessary and reasonable because of a disability. However, no ESA may be kept in student housing at any time prior to the individual receiving approval as a reasonable accommodation pursuant to this Policy.