

# Three Truths and One Lie. Housing Accommodations: Lions, Requirements, PCA's, Oh My!

# Presenters:

- Sonia Badesha-University of South Carolina
- Barclay Bentley-Auburn University
- Jamie Bojarski-Vanderbilt University
- Jenna Gonzalez-University of Florida

We ask you to join us in creating a culture that reflects...

**Access and Inclusion**

and

**Civility and Respect**

...this week and in all aspects of our organization.

# Presentation Agenda

- Introductions
- University Information
- Personal Care Attendants (PCAs)
- Housing Accommodations
- Emotional Support Animals (ESAs)

# Learning Outcomes

- Understand documentation and eligibility requirements for housing accommodations related to Emotional Support Animals (ESA's) , general disability-related needs, and Personal Care Attendants (PCA's)
- Recognize the roles and responsibilities of campus staff, including ODS and housing personnel, in housing accommodation approval process
- Identify key components of PCA agreements
- Learn strategies for effectively implementing housing accommodations, including training and student feedback

# Three Truths. One Lie. Housing101.

## General Housing Accommodations

Which of these is **NOT** true?

1. Students with disabilities have the right to reasonable housing accommodations under the Fair Housing Act and Section 504.
2. Housing accommodations can include single rooms, accessible units, or policy adjustments.
3. Housing accommodations are guaranteed for all students with disabilities, regardless of documentation.
4. Disability Services and Housing staff collaborate to determine and implement accommodations.

# Auburn University

- Overall:

- 30,000 Students
- 80% undergrad,  
20% graduate
- 5000 beds

- Office of  
Accessibility:

- 6,000 Students
- Almost exclusively  
undergrad
- 100 - 150 Housing  
Accommodations per  
incoming class.

# Vanderbilt University

- Overall:
  - 14,000 Students
  - 50/50 undergrad to grad
  - All undergraduate live-on requirement
- Student Access:
  - Over 1800 students
  - $\frac{2}{3}$  Undergrad to  $\frac{1}{3}$  graduate
  - 348 housing accommodations



# University of South Carolina

- Overall:

- Over 56,000 student population (system wide)
- Majority undergraduate
- Over 9000 beds on campus

- SDRC:

- Over 4,000 registered
- Majority undergraduate
- Over 250 Housing Accommodations

# University of Florida

- Overall:
  - Over 61,000 student population
  - Majority undergraduate
  - Over 8,000 beds on campus
- Disability Resource Center:
  - Over 8,000 registered
  - Majority undergraduate
  - Over 1,200 Housing Accommodations

# Three Truths. One Lie. Housing.

## Housing Accommodations

### Which of these is NOT true?

1. The Fair Housing Act applies to most student housing, including residence halls and university apartments.
2. Students can be charged an additional fee for requesting a disability-related housing accommodation.
3. Documentation should demonstrate the relationship between the disability and the requested accommodation.
4. Housing accommodations may include policy modifications in addition to physical changes

# Three Truths. One Lie. PCA's.

## Personal Care Attendants (PCAs)

Which of these is **NOT** true?

1. PCAs must sign an agreement outlining roles and responsibilities.
2. Students are responsible for hiring, paying, and managing their PCAs.
3. Universities must provide PCA services for free if a student qualifies under the ADA.
4. Universities may conduct background checks on PCAs for safety.

# Personal Care Attendants (PCAs)

- Interactive Process
- Onboarding PCAs to the University
- PCA Company vs. Family Member

# Personal Care Attendants (PCAs)

- PCA in Housing vs. PCA in Classroom Setting
- Student Responsibility
- Disability Service Office Responsibility

# Personal Care Attendants (PCAs)

- Parking
- Key Check-In Process
- Emergency Situations, Dining Hall, Rec Sports, etc.

# Three Truths. One Lie. PCA's.

## Personal Care Attendants (PCAs)

Which of these is **NOT** true?

1. PCAs are a reasonable accommodation under the ADA and Section 504.
2. Students must provide documentation from a healthcare provider verifying the need for a PCA.
3. Universities can require background checks for PCAs.
4. PCAs are employed and paid by the university as part of the accommodation process.



# Three Truths. One Lie. Private Institutions.

## Public vs. Private Institutions

### Which of these is NOT true?

1. Public universities must comply with the ADA, Section 504, and the Fair Housing Act when providing housing accommodations.
2. Private universities must only follow their own policies and are not bound by federal disability laws such as the ADA or the Fair Housing Act
3. The interactive process for housing accommodations should involve both Disability Services and Housing staff to ensure equitable outcomes.
4. Both public and private universities must provide housing accommodations that are reasonable and necessary for equal access.

# Creating on-campus, accessible residential spaces

Common limitations:

- loss of concentration → study space on campus
- need bathroom access → close proximity to
- need to be with friends → do it on campus
- dietary restrictions → dietitian referral or kitchen
- mobility restrictions → preferred floor placement and priority registration

# VU Freshman Commons Requirement

Students admitted exceeds the number of beds provided.

Freshmen tend to wait to request singles until either

- they are placed in a triple (before school starts), or
- they are not able to live with a roommate even though they tried (well into the school year)

New solution: additional bed space apart from the Freshman Commons

# Three Truths. One Lie. ESA's.

## Emotional Support Animals (ESAs)

Which of these is **NOT** true?

1. ESAs are not considered service animals under the ADA but are protected under the Fair Housing Act.
2. Universities may limit ESAs to certain animal types for safety reasons.
3. ESA documentation must come from a licensed mental health professional.
4. Approved ESAs are automatically allowed in all areas of campus, including classrooms.

# Emotional Support Animals (ESAs) vs Service Animals

## ESAs

- ESAs can be almost any type of animal, but they are not a protected class.
- Animals that have been designated as part of a person's therapeutic treatment plan.
- Usually supports mental health.

## Service Animals

- Can be dogs or miniature horses.
- Protected class of animal.
- Allowed in almost any space open to the public.
- Have been trained to perform a task related to the handler's disability or health condition.

# What information do you need to approve an ESA?

- What is the nature of the student's impairment and how is the student substantially limited?
- What is the nexus or connection between the disability and the need for the animal in housing?
- How are the symptoms mitigated by the ESA?
  - "animal alleviates anxiety" is not sufficient
- Current vaccination records

# Emotional Support Animals (ESAs)

- Animal should be a “common pet” and you can reject animals that pose a safety risk.
  - Constrictor is ok; venomous is not.
- Some small animals/reptiles do not require vaccination.
  - Do your homework!
- ESAs often provide comfort and/or a feeling of safety.
- Generally speaking, ESAs are only approved for Housing.
- You DO NOT have to allow an ESA at program or clinical sites.

# ESA Housing Agreements

- Provided by Housing and lists the requirements for animal care, animal safety, interacting with other students/staff in the residence hall, and reasons for removing the ESA.
- Roommate agreements.
- ESA conflicts with allergies.



# Three Truths. One Lie. ESA's.

Which of these is **NOT** true?

1. ESAs provide therapeutic benefits for mental health disabilities.
2. An ESA can be banned or removed for damaging the housing unit.
3. ESA laws are the same in every state.
4. Students can request multiple ESAs if each serves a unique therapeutic purpose.

# Three Truths. One Lie. The Closer.

Which of these is NOT true?

1. Emotional Support Animals are limited to a student's assigned residence space and are not permitted in dining halls or classrooms.
2. Personal Care Attendants must follow university rules, including emergency procedures and conduct expectations.
3. Housing accommodations can only be requested before a student signs a housing contract.
4. Institutions can require an interactive process to ensure housing accommodations are appropriate and reasonable.

# Session Evaluation



[tinyurl.com/AHEADFeedback](https://tinyurl.com/AHEADFeedback)

Your feedback helps shape future programming.

Thank you for attending!