

Pets in the Workplace – May 23, 2013

For many community members, allowing pets in the workplace greatly enhances the working, living, and learning environment. Each community member that elects to bring a pet to campus must be respectful of others recognizing that having a pet in the workplace is a privilege that bears the responsibility of proper hygienic care and attention to those pets, and minimizing disruption to others while at work. We must also be aware of the need for heightened consideration of the sensitivities and vulnerabilities of fellow community members, including students, staff, faculty members, and visitors, who may suffer from allergies or who may have serious apprehensions about animals.

As a general policy, the College allows pets to be in College controlled buildings and open space areas of College property, except in designated buildings and areas as provided below, as long as they are attended to and restrained at all times by their owner and their owner complies with the following:

- The College requires employees to at all times be in immediate proximity to their pet, maintain full control of their pet, and to short-leash (6-8 feet) their pet in College controlled buildings and open space areas, except when the pet is in a private office (see below). To be considered attended to a pet may not be left fastened to a stationary object.

A pet may be left unattended in a private office, by closing the door, as long as a sign is placed outside of the office door indicating a pet may be within (see sample signage at: <http://www.union.edu/offices/human-resources/policies/index.php>). When the owner is present, a “pet gate” may be used in lieu of a closed door provided that there is appropriate signage and that the gate does not damage college property, adequately restrains the pet, and provided that its use does not result in any complaints or concerns by members of the college community in the vicinity. Should any such complaints or concerns arise it is the responsibility of the employee to use a closed door instead.

- Employees who bring their pet to work are wholly responsible for making sure that their private office and all other College controlled buildings and open space areas of the College property remain undamaged and clean of pet-caused dirt or debris. Clean-up should be thorough enough as to not generate additional work for college staff.
- The College will seek restitution from the employee/owner for any pet-related damage to College owned property, facilities, or grounds and the employee/owner will be held financially responsible, in accordance with prevailing law, for any injuries to individuals caused by the pet. Under no circumstances will the College indemnify nor hold an employee/owner of a pet harmless from claims arising from injuries or damages caused by their pet.
- Any pet owner or pet caretaker must promptly clean up and properly dispose of pet waste in all areas of College property.

The College **explicitly restricts** pets from Dining Halls, Residence Halls, Minerva Houses, indoor athletic facilities (with the exception of private offices), the spectator seating and competition fields for outdoor athletic events and other buildings/open space areas as specifically posted. Research animals, certified guide animals, and other service animals are an exception to this restriction.

When a concern arises between a pet-owner and a member of the campus community and an agreement cannot be reached, the situation should be reported to Campus Safety or Human Resources. The Directors of Campus Safety and Human Resources will determine, on a case-by-case basis, how any concern regarding a particular pet will be handled. The Directors have the authority to make final determinations regarding any restrictions affecting particular pets as well as any charges in consideration of damage caused by pets.