

Chico State University
Student Health Services
Student Health Center (SHC) ♦ Counseling & Wellness Center (CWC)

**Policy on Recommendations Regarding
Emotional Support Animals (ESAs)**

In order for a clinician to recommend a prescription for an emotional support animal, a diagnosis of a psychological disability is required. This process is complex and requires several sessions in order to understand the presence, intensity, and duration of various symptoms, degree of impairment in several areas of life functioning, and an evaluation of how an emotional support animal (ESA) would help mitigate symptoms and improve functioning.

The goal of Student Health Services is to provide acute/crisis services and ongoing treatment for our students with mental health concerns. Demand for mental health services at both the Student Health Center and the Counseling & Wellness Center continues to grow, and we must be available to meet the needs of our whole student body. At this point, **we do not have the resources** to provide assessments for the purposes of diagnosing a psychological disability that warrants an ESA prescription. For these reasons, **SHC and CWC will not schedule appointments for ESA documentation.**

Also, with the exception of working service dogs, **animals are not allowed in the Student Health Center or the Student Services Center** where the CWC is located. Please visit the Accessibility Resource Center's website for more information about the campus policy about [Animals on Campus](#).

Students who are interested in obtaining documentation of a disability with a prescription for an ESA accommodation under the Fair Housing Act, should seek this documentation from a prior medical or mental health provider or by starting a disability assessment process through local community resources. Documentation can come from a licensed medical or mental health professional, including psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, etc. A listing of local licensed mental health providers can be found on the [Psychology Today website](#).

Please note, the Student Health Service discourages use of online resources that promise ESA support letters for a fee. These sources are usually fraudulent and the Chico State [Accessibility Resource Center](#) states that it will not accept letters obtained in this fashion.

For information about pet-friendly housing in the Chico area, check out this link provided by the [Butte Humane Society](#).