Rice University Policy No. 834

PETS ON CAMPUS

General Policy

The following policy has been established to provide for the health and safety of Rice’s students, faculty, staff and visitors, and for the protection, efficient use, and enjoyment of the campus. Rice allows members of the campus community and visitors to bring their pets to the campus. However, some regulation is necessary to ensure that a pet does not become a threat, health hazard, nuisance, or distraction to university activities.

Definitions

Pets: This policy applies to domesticated animals and does not apply to animals authorized for research activity, wild or feral animals, service animals accompanying a person with a disability, registered therapy animals, or official police dogs.

Statements of Elaboration of Policy

For the health and safety of Rice students, faculty, staff, and guests, and the protection of our facilities:

1. Consistent with Houston City Ordinance, dogs, cats, and other animals must be under direct physical control of a responsible person while on campus grounds and restrained by a harness, chain, or leash not exceeding 8 feet in length. Pets may be at large only when confined to an enclosed private area whereby the animal does not have access to a public area (e.g. enclosed yards of masters’ residences).

2. Pet owners are responsible for the immediate and proper removal and disposal of fecal matter.

3. Dogs, cats, and other animals may not enter campus buildings, including classrooms, offices, and residential buildings, with the following exceptions:
   a. Non-flesh-eating fish in tanks of 10 gallons or less are permitted in campus housing.
   b. Dogs, cats, and other pets may be permitted in university-owned housing units if explicitly indicated in the contract or lease agreement.
   c. Other exceptions must be approved in writing by the Director of Environmental Health and Safety. The presence of the animal must clearly align with the university’s missions of teaching, research, and service.

4. Pets may be confined in vehicles parked on campus for a reasonable period of time, as long as the animal is not endangered and does not endanger others or create a public nuisance (e.g. excessive barking).

5. Animals that disrupt the educational, research, administrative, or other core operations of the university must be immediately removed from the campus.

6. Pets are not allowed on any playing field at any time.
All faculty, staff, students and visitors of Rice University are expected to comply with this policy. Faculty, students and staff who ignore warnings and continue to violate this policy may be subject to disciplinary action. In most cases, compliance issues should be resolved informally through discussion and education.

Any issues involving staff that cannot be resolved informally should be brought to the attention of the appropriate supervisor, in consultation with Human Resources as necessary. Any issues involving faculty which cannot be resolved informally should be brought to the attention of the appropriate department chair or dean. Student-raised issues within the residential colleges should be brought to the attention of the master or judicial committee of the college. Graduate students living in Rice graduate residences should address issues in accordance with the policies of the Rice graduate residences. Other student issues that cannot be resolved informally should be referred to the assistant dean for student judicial programs. Visitor issues that cannot be resolved informally should be referred to RUPD; visitors who refuse to comply with this policy may be asked to leave the campus and cited for violation of Houston city ordinance.

**Cross References to Related Policies**
402-94 – Accommodation of Applicants/Employees with Disabilities
805-00 – Safety Policy

**Responsible Officer:** Vice President of Administration

**Key Offices to Contact Regarding the Policy and its Implementation:**
Rice University Police Department
Environmental Health and Safety
Housing and Dining

**Date of Initial Policy:** September 1, 1995

**Date(s) of Any Revisions:** ______, 2012