

A Resolution Exploring a Pet Policy for Resident Life Professional Staff

WHEREAS the Residence Hall Association (RHA) is the governing body for all on-campus students, and

WHEREAS the RHA concerns itself with the welfare of the resident student body, promotes positive community growth, and fosters enriching campus environments, and

WHEREAS the welfare and happiness of professional staff plays a role in the success of staff members as advisors and leaders in the communities they build, and

WHEREAS pet owners benefit mentally and physically from pet ownership,¹ and

WHEREAS research indicates that “pet presence may serve as a low-cost, wellness intervention readily available to many organizations and may enhance organizational satisfaction and perceptions of support,”² and

WHEREAS peer institutions such as Northwestern University, George Mason University, and Duke University allow professional staff to keep cats, dogs, birds, and other pets,³ and

WHEREAS the Department of Resident Life and the Department of Residential Facilities have already developed extensive protocols governing service and assistance animals in residence halls at the University of Maryland, including consideration of concerns with allergies, phobias, vaccinations, noise, and cleanliness of pets, and

WHEREAS it is understood that the care and keeping of pets by responsible professional staff is dissimilar to students keeping personal pets,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Residence Life Advisory Team (ReLATe) and the Residential Facilities Advisory Board (ReFAB) each individually consider the possible consequences of allowing professional staff to keep pets, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that ReFAB and ReLATe reflect on the existing policies at the University of Maryland and peer institutions regarding animals in residence halls to provide their recommendations regarding the pursuit of a professional staff pet policy, and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that ReFAB and ReLATe submit their recommendations in verbal or written reports to the body by the last RHA Senate meeting of Spring 2015.

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² http://www.news.vcu.edu/article/Benefits_of_Taking_Fido_to_Work_May_Not_Be_Far_Fetched