

FAQs for Prospective Students with Medical and/or Mental Health Needs



This FAQ document addresses common questions from prospective students and their families regarding the resources and guidelines for students with medical and/or mental health needs. It is intended to provide clarity about what the College offers and set realistic expectations for support.

FERPA and Your Student's Privacy

What can the College legally share with parents or support persons?

FERPA stands for the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. It protects the privacy of student education records. The Registrar's Office oversees FERPA waivers. The College cannot share information about a student with anyone, including parents, unless the student has signed a FERPA waiver. A FERPA waiver allows designated individuals to request information; however, the College does not automatically share updates. Communication is typically initiated by the student. Students can revoke a FERPA waiver at any time by submitting a written request to the Registrar's Office.

Medication Administration

Can a staff or faculty member administer my medication? No, staff and faculty members are not permitted to administer medication as medication administration falls outside of the scope of their respective roles. Students are expected to manage their own medications independently, with support and guidance available through the Wellness Center. The Wellness Center can provide resources to help students develop independent medication management routines.

Can my roommate administer my medication or remind me to take it? The College strongly advises against placing the responsibility of medication administration or reminders on roommates. Resident Assistants are not permitted to administer medication. Students are encouraged to use apps or other tools to help manage medication schedules independently.

Emergency Medical and Psychological Responses

Can the Wellness Center staff tend to emergencies outside of the center? The Wellness Center staff provides medical and psychological care within the confines of the center due to accreditation requirements and health and safety practices. They cannot respond to emergencies outside the center. In emergencies, students should immediately contact the University Police Department (UPD) by dialing 518.255.5555 or 911.

What is the role of UPD during a medical or mental health emergency? UPD serves as the first responder for all medical and mental health emergencies on campus. Officers are trained in de-escalation techniques and can connect students with telehealth services, next-day follow-up care, or arrange emergency transport to a hospital if needed. UPD works with the campus community to ensure student, faculty, staff and visitor safety daily.

Tell me about the local ambulance system. How quickly can an ambulance get to campus? The College is in a rural area with limited ambulance staffing. Ambulance response times may vary, with potential waits of 30 minutes or more depending on demands occurring in the county. UPD officers provide immediate assistance and support until emergency medical services arrive.

- Cobleskill Regional Hospital, level 3 trauma center, 1.5 miles from campus
- Albany Medical Center, level 1 trauma center, 45 miles from campus

Does the College have an EMT team on campus? No, the College does not have an on-campus EMT response team. For emergencies, UPD will coordinate with local ambulance services.

What happens if I lose consciousness on campus? Faculty and staff are trained to immediately contact UPD if a medical emergency occurs. Not calling is not an option. UPD will assess the situation and coordinate appropriate care. Students with known medical conditions are encouraged to connect with the Accessibility Resources Office and the Wellness Center to discuss support options and planning.

Does the College offer after-hours mental health support? Yes, the College provides access to telehealth/online services for after-hours mental health emergencies. Students can contact the Wellness Center during business hours for more information about these services.

Accessibility and Accommodations

What is the process for requesting accommodations at the College? Students must submit documentation to the Accessibility Resources Office to schedule a meeting to develop an individualized accommodation plan. Students are encouraged to submit documentation as soon as possible after acceptance to help ensure timely access to accommodations. For more information, contact the Accessibility Resources Office or refer to the website.

Can I submit my high school IEP to the Accessibility Resources Office to obtain accommodations at the College? While a high school Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan provides helpful context, it may not, on its own, meet current documentation requirements for obtaining accommodations. The College requires comprehensive and current documentation, including a psychological evaluation conducted within the last three years. This evaluation must include detailed assessments of aptitude, achievement, and information processing provided by a qualified professional. For detailed guidelines, please visit the Accessibility Resources Office website.

For more information about the differences between the high school and college processes for requesting accommodations and applicable laws, please visit SUNY Students with Disabilities [\[Link\]](#).

Service Animals and Emotional Support Animals

What is the difference between a service animal and an emotional support animal (ESA)?

Service animal is a distinction based on federal guidelines under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). A service animal is a working animal, not a pet and is defined by ADA as “any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or mental disability.” Under the Fair Housing Act, “an assistance animal is an animal that works, provider assistance, or performs tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability, or that provides emotional support that alleviates one or more identified effects of a person’s disability. An assistance animal is not a pet.”

Where is my animal permitted to go while I am on campus? Service animals are generally allowed everywhere on campus. ESAs may be approved to be present in the human’s residence hall bedroom. ESAs are not allowed in other campus buildings, such as dining facilities, the library, classrooms, labs, etc. All animals must be on a leash when outside of a residence hall room. Owners of animals are required to clean up after their animals.

For additional information, please review SUNY Cobleskill’s Policy on Privately Owned Animals on Campus.

Student Responsibilities

College support services are designed to complement, not replace, a student’s ability to manage their own health and well-being. Developing independence is an important part of the college experience.

Additional Resources

Accessibility Resources Office: [\[Link\]](#)

Policy on Privately Owned Animals on Campus [\[Link\]](#)

SUNY Students with Disabilities [\[Link\]](#)

University Police (UPD): [\[Link\]](#)

Wellness Center: [\[Link\]](#)

Residence Life: [\[Link\]](#)