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Responsible Officer: Vice President of Student Life

Policy Contact: Director of Housing

SECTION 1: PURPOSE

The University of Valley Forge recognizes the importance of animals to individuals with disabilities, and has established this policy to explain the conditions under which such animals are permitted access to University grounds and facilities. The University may amend this policy at any time, with or without prior notice, so please be sure to check with Student Life for the most up-to-date policy.

The University prohibits pets and other animals on and within University grounds and facilities. This policy provides a mechanism for an individual with a disability to seek a reasonable accommodation to the disability and an exception to that prohibition.

Accommodation requests for Service Animals or Assistance Animals should be made in accordance with the procedures set forth in this policy. Accommodation requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Please do not request an accommodation for a Service Animal or an Assistance Animal if you are not an individual with a disability.

SECTION 2: DEFINITIONS

Disability: Disability with respect to an individual means a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities of such individual, a record of such impairment, or being regarded as having such an impairment.

Service Animal: A Service Animal is a dog that has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability. Dogs may be permitted as a Service Animal. In certain circumstances, miniature horses may also qualify as Service Animals. Other animals, whether wild or domestic, do not qualify as Service Animals. The work or tasks performed by a Service Animal must be directly related to the individual’s disability. Examples of such work or tasks include, but are not limited to, guiding individuals who are blind or have low vision, alerting individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to the presence of people or sounds, pulling a wheelchair, or assisting an individual during a seizure. Animals whose sole function is to provide emotional support, comfort, or companionship do not qualify as Service Animals.

Assistance Animal: An assistance Animal is not a pet. It is an animal that works, provides assistance, or performs tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability, or provides emotional support that alleviates one or more identified symptoms or effects of a person’s disability.

Guide	Service Animals	Assistance Animals
Federal Mandate:	Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)	Fair Housing Act (FHA)

Emotional Support Coverage:	Excludes Emotional Support	Includes Emotional Support
Where can the animal go:	All Campus (with a few health & safety exceptions)	Housing Only
Reason for Animal:	Access	Reasonable Accommodation
Is Approval Necessary:	No approval required. Prior registration required for students and employees living in University housing	Approval Needed. Registration required for students and employees living in University housing
Type of Animal:	Dogs, or in limited circumstances, miniature horse	All animals within reason. Exotic animals or animals that pose a disease threat, other health threat, or direct threat to the safety of others will not be allowed on campus.

Pet: A pet is an animal kept for companionship or pleasure, and not for assisting persons with disabilities. A pet is not considered a Service Animal or Assistance Animal, and therefore is not covered by this policy. UVF does not allow pets on campus or in University housing.

Service Animal Owner: A Service Animal Owner is a member of the University community with a disability that a service animal assists, or a personal care attendant who handles the service animal for a person with a disability.

Assistance Animal Owner: An Assistance Animal Owner is a member of the University community with a disability who has received approval under this policy for the presence of the assistance animal in his/her Residence Hall only.

See Related Information below for sources for all legal definitions.

SECTION 3: POLICY

Service Animal: In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 2008 (ADA), individuals with disabilities are permitted to be accompanied by the Service Animals at the University in all areas of the University where the public is normally allowed to go. Even though Service Animals are generally permitted to be on University property in any place where the Service Animal Owner is permitted to be, there are certain locations where all animals are prohibited for health and safety reasons. These prohibited areas include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Mechanical rooms
- Custodial closets
- Research laboratories
- Areas where protective clothing is necessary
- Areas where the animal's presence would present a danger to the animal's health or safety or the health or safety of others in the area
- Residence halls or floors designated as allergy-reduced
- Food preparation areas, especially in the Dining Hall

Assistance Animal: In accordance with the Fair Housing Act (FHA), individuals with disabilities may be permitted to have their Assistance Animals in the University Residence Halls if certain conditions are met. Assistance Animals are not permitted in any other buildings on campus or University property, nor are they allowed in other controlled areas on campus. Assistance Animals are not allowed in other residents' rooms, even by invitation.

Animal Licensing: A Service Animal Owner and Assistance Animal Owner must abide by current city, county, and state ordinances, laws, and/or regulations pertaining to licensing, vaccination, and other requirements for animals. It is the Service Animal Owner's and Assistance Animal Owner's responsibility to know, understand, and comply with these ordinances, laws, and regulations. The University has the right to require documentation of compliance with such ordinances, laws, and/or regulations. Such documentation may include a vaccination certificate and proof of licensure.

SECTION 4: REGISTRATION AND APPROVAL PROCESS

In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 ("ADA"), the Fair Housing Act, and state and local law, the University will accommodate persons with disabilities who require the assistance of a qualified Service Animal or Assistance Animal. Individuals requiring accommodations for such animals should contact the Director of Housing in accordance with the processes set forth in this policy.

Faculty and Staff should contact the Director of Housing with any questions or concerns about Service Animals or Assistance Animals.

Service Animals

Common Spaces on Campus

The University strongly encourages individuals to notify the Director of Housing should they desire to have a Service Animal accompany them to common areas on campus. However, they are not required to do so. Individuals may be asked whether the animal is needed because of a disability and what work or task the animal has been trained to perform.

Service Animals must be harnessed, leashed, or tethered, unless these devices interfere with the Service Animal's work or the individual's disability prevents using these devices. In that case, the individual must maintain control of the animal through voice, signal, or other effective means.

Service Animals in Residence Halls

A Service Animal may reside within the assigned living space in a University Residence Hall with its Service Animal Owner provided that its behavior and care does not create unreasonable disruptions for residents, employees, and other University community members. Disruptions, including noise levels, will be addressed by Residence Life staff in the same manner as with all residents living in the Residence Halls. A Service Animal is permitted in all areas of the Residence Hall where the individual it serves is permitted. The Service Animal must be under the control of its owner at all times. It is expected that the Service Animal would be controlled by a leash, harness, or other device, unless the animal's work related to the disability requires the animal to be off-leash. In that case, the individual must maintain control of the Service Animal through voice, signal, or other effective means.

A Service Animal does not need approval, as long as it is readily apparent that the animal is trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, but to reside in University housing, the animal must be registered with the Director of Housing. The Service Animal Owner is required to complete

a Service Animal registration form and should contact the Director of Housing to complete the registration process each academic year in accordance with the timelines set forth below:

- Returning students for academic year housing: March 15
- New students for fall semester: June 1
- New students for spring semester: December 15
- Summer housing: same due date as Summer Housing Application
- Residents in family housing year-round: March 15 (no summer housing registration required)
- Faculty and Staff: three weeks before moving in

****PLEASE NOTE:** for summer housing – only the Service Animal and Assistance Animal Summer Housing Registration Form is required. The Veterinarian Verification Form from the current academic year will be used for the summer housing request. Individuals with Service Animals are required to update Student Life on any changes to the information provided on the policy forms.

The University will make every effort to process registrations within three (3) weeks of receipt by the Director of Housing.

Registration of a Service Animal is animal-specific. If an individual intends to replace a Service Animal, the new animal must be registered with the Director of Housing two weeks prior to the animal's arrival. If the Service Animal is replaced due to emergency circumstances (e.g. death or illness of the previously registered Assistance Animal), the Service Animal must be registered with 48 hours of the animal's arrival.

When registering a Service Animal, a photo of the Service Animal and a Veterinarian Verification Form (that lists the appropriate shots, age, weight, name, and overall health of the animal) will be required as well as emergency caregiver information. Individuals registering a Service Animal will be asked to give permission to the Director of Housing to disclose to others impacted by the presence of the Service Animal, such as Residence Life staff, Campus Security, Facilities staff, and potential and/or actual roommate(s)/suite(s)/ floor mate(s) that he/she will be living with an animal as an accommodation. This information will be shared with the intent of preparing for the presence of the animal. Any information about an individual's disability that the University may have is private and the University will keep this information confidential.

A Service Animal may be asked to leave the Residence Halls if (1) it is out of control and the Service Animal Owner does not take effective action to control it, (2) the dog is not housebroken, or (3) the animal poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others that cannot be eliminated or reduced to an acceptable level by a reasonable modification to other policies, practices, and procedures.

Service Animal Owners must abide by the Service Animal Owner's Responsibilities outlined in Section 5 of this policy. In order for an animal to be regarded as a Service Animal, it must meet the legal standards for a Service Animal.

Service Dogs in Training

Trainers/Trainees

Under Pennsylvania law, individuals with disabilities who use guide dogs or support animals, or trainers of such animals, are entitled to equal opportunities in all aspects of employment and education, as well as equal access to and treatment of in all public accommodations, and any housing accommodation or commercial property without discrimination. Violation of this law may result in an award of damages or other remedies pursuant to the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act 43 P.S. section 953. Animals in training and their trainers are expected to adhere to the responsibilities and requirements of this policy.

Assistance Animals in Residence Halls

Approval

An Assistance Animal may reside within the assigned living space in a Residence Hall with its Assistance Animal Owner only after the Owner has submitted an Assistance Animal Approval Request – Disability and Accommodation Verification Form and has received written approval from the Director of Housing, provided that the animal's behavior and care does not create unreasonable disruptions for residents, employees, and other University community members. Disruptions, including noise levels, will be addressed by Residence Life staff in the same manner as with all residents. The accommodation request may be denied if (1) the specific Assistance Animal in question poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others that cannot be reduced or eliminated by another reasonable accommodation, or (2) the specific Assistance Animal in question would cause substantial physical damage to the property of others that cannot be reduced or eliminated by another reasonable accommodation.

An Assistance Animal is not permitted in other areas of the University, for example, dining halls, libraries, academic buildings, athletic buildings, classrooms, labs, or other residents' rooms, even if invited.

The Assistance Animal must be confined within the assigned dorm room, suite, or apartment within the Residence Hall, except when the Assistance Animal Owner is taking the animal out for natural relief.

Within the Residence Hall, the Assistance Animal is permitted in the “shared” living spaces of an assigned apartment or suite, and in the bathroom for a single/double room assignment with a “shared” bathroom. However, the Assistance Animal must be under the control of the Assistance Animal Owner at all times. It is expected that the animal would be controlled by a leash, harness, or other device when in these “shared” living spaces, unless the animal’s work related to the disability requires the animal to be off-leash. In such cases, the Assistance Animal Owner must be able to maintain control over the Assistance Animal through voice, signal, or other effective means. When the Assistance Animal is unattended by the Assistance Animal Owner, it must remain in the Assistance Animal Owner’s bedroom and kenneled or housed in an appropriate device (tank, cage, etc.).

The Assistance Animal Owner will be expected to provide documentation of the disability and the disability-related need for an Assistance Animal from a physician, psychiatrist, licensed clinical social worker, or other licensed mental health professional. The documentation must state how the animal will impact the Assistance Animal Owner’s ability to participate in University housing. A request for housing accommodations must be completed for each new academic year in accordance with the timeline set forth below:

- Returning students for academic year housing: March 15
- New students for fall semester: June 1
- New students for spring semester: December 15
- Summer housing: same due date as Summer Housing Application
- Residents in family housing year-round: March 15 (no summer housing registration required)
- Faculty and Staff: three (3) weeks before moving in

****PLEASE NOTE:** for summer housing – only the Service Animal and Assistance Animal Summer Housing Registration Form is required. The Veterinarian Verification Form and Assistance Animal Approval – Disability and Accommodation Verification Form from the current academic year will be used for the summer housing request. Individuals with approved Assistance Animals are required to update Student Life on any changes to the information provided on the policy forms.

The University will make every effort to process accommodation requests within three (3) weeks of receipt by the Director of Housing.

The Director of Housing may consider the following factors, among others, to assist with the approval process and with Residence Hall assignments:

- The animal’s presence fundamentally alters another individual’s living environment;
- The animal is not housebroken or is unable to live with others in a reasonable manner;
- The animal’s vaccinations are not up-to-date;
- The animal has posed a direct threat to the student or other individuals, including but not limited to, aggressive behavior, which may or may not include personal injuries, toward the student or others;
- The animal is considered to be exotic or pose a disease threat, other health threat, or direct threat to the safety of others;
- The animal has caused damage to University property beyond what is normally considered reasonable wear and tear.

Should the request for an Assistance Animal be approved, the Assistance Animal Owner will be notified in writing and be provided an accommodation letter that confirms his/her right to maintain the animal within the assigned living space within the Residence Hall. The approval of an Assistance Animal will be shared prior to moving the animal into the Residence Hall with Residence Life staff, Campus Security, Facilities staff, and potential and/or actual roommate(s)/suite mate(s)/floor mate(s) with the intent of preparing for the presence of the animal. Any information about an individual’s disability that the University may have is private and the University will keep this information confidential.

Registration

In addition to completing the Assistance Animal Approval Request – Disability and Accommodation Verification Form, the Assistance Animal Owner is required to complete an Assistance Animal Registration Form. Upon written notification of approval of the Assistance Animal, the registration process for the Assistance Animal will be deemed complete. Only approved Assistance Animals are permitted to be registered. If an Assistance Animal Approval Request is denied, the animal will not be registered with Student Life and will not be permitted in the Residence Halls or on University grounds.

Both approval and registration of an Assistance Animal is animal-specific. If an Owner intends to replace an Assistance Animal, the new animal must be approved and registered with the Director of Housing two weeks prior to the animal's arrival. If the Assistance Animal is replaced due to emergency circumstances (e.g. death or illness of the previously approved and registered Assistance Animal), the Assistance Animal Owner must notify the Director of Housing within 24 hours of the animal's arrival to begin a new approval and registration process.

When completing the forms to register an Assistance Animal, a photo of the Assistance Animal and a Veterinarian Verification Form (that lists the appropriate shots, age, weight, name, and overall health of the animal), will be required, as well as emergency caregiver information. Individuals registering an Assistance Animal will be asked to give permission to the Director of Housing to disclose to others impacted by the presence of the Assistance Animal, such as Residence Life staff, Campus Security, Facilities staff, and potential and/or actual roommate(s)/suitemate(s)/floor mate(s) that he/she will be living with an animal as an accommodation. This information will be shared with the intent of preparing for the presence of the animal. Any information about an individual's disability that the University may have is private and the University will keep this information confidential.

An Assistance Animal may be asked to leave the Residence Halls if (1) it is out of control and the Assistance Animal Owner does not take effective action to control it, (2) the animal is not housebroken, or (3) the animal poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others that cannot be eliminated or reduced to an acceptable level by a reasonable modification to other policies, practices, and procedures.

Assistance Animal Owners must abide by the Assistance Animal Owner's Responsibilities outlined in Section 5 of this policy. In order for an animal to be regarded as an Assistance Animal, it must meet the legal standards for an Assistance Animal.

Allergies, Asthma, and Other Medical Conditions

Individuals with asthma, allergies, or other medical conditions affected by the presence of animals must provide verifiable medical documentation to support their claim. The needs of both individuals with disabilities requiring Service Animals or an Assistance Animal and those with verifiable asthma, allergies, or other medical conditions affected by the presence of animals will be considered in resolving any issues. If a conflict cannot be resolved agreeably, then the Vice President of Student Life, the Director of Housing, and the Director of Disability Services will collaborate to determine a solution.

SECTION 5: SERVICE ANIMAL OWNER'S AND ASSISTANCE ANIMAL OWNER'S RESPONSIBILITIES ON CAMPUS

Liabilities

- The Service Animal Owner and Assistance Animal Owner must abide by current city, county, and state ordinances, laws, and/or regulations pertaining to licensing, vaccination, and other requirements for animals. It is the Service Animal Owner's and Assistance Animal Owner's responsibility to know, understand, and comply with these ordinances, laws, and regulations. The University has the right to require documentation of compliance with such ordinances, laws, and/or regulations. Such documentation may include a vaccination certificate and proof of licensure.
- The Owner will be charged for any damage caused by the Service Animal/Assistance Animal beyond reasonable wear and tear. Service Animal/Assistance Animal Owners are responsible for taking effective precautions to avoid flea and tick infestations and for reporting any flea or tick infestation that he/she discovers. The University may inspect the owner's living area for fleas, ticks or other pests, as necessary and consistent with the room entry policies. If fleas, ticks, or other pests are detected through inspection, the University will treat the areas as appropriate. The Service Animal Owner/Assistance Animal Owner will be responsible for eliminating the fur coat infestation and laundering all animal bedding.

- The Owner is responsible for the actions of the Service Animal/Assistance Animal, including financial obligations of bodily injury.

General Responsibilities

- The Owner is responsible for ensuring that the Service Animal/Assistance Animal does not unduly interfere with the routine activities of the residence area.
- The Service Animal/Assistance Animal MUST be completely house trained—for dogs: trained to urinate and defecate outside. No training pads allowed.
- The owner must notify Director of Housing in writing if the Service Animal/Assistance Animal is no longer needed or is no longer in residence.
- Service Animals/Assistance Animals may not be left overnight in University housing to be cared for by any individual other than the owner. If the owner is to be absent from the owner's Residence Hall overnight or longer, the animal must accompany the owner.
- The owner must provide contact information for an alternative caregiver/emergency contact who will take responsibility of the Service Animal/Assistance Animal and remove it from campus should the owner be unable to care for it (e.g. hospitalization, accident, violation). The caregiver/emergency contact must reside OFF campus and must be available to remove the Service Animal/Assistance Animal in a timely manner appropriate for the animal species and needed care. Dogs must be removed within six hours. In instances where it is determined that the Service Animal/Assistance Animal's needs are not being provided for to ensure immediate health and well-being, the University reserves the right to have the animal removed from University housing. The University may have a Service Animal/Assistance Animal removed from University housing if it is not removed in a timely manner as specified in this policy.
- The Assistance Animal Owner is responsible for ensuring that the Assistance Animal is contained, as appropriate, when the Assistance Animal Owner is not present during the day while attending classes or other activities. Both Service Animals and Assistance Animals should not be left unattended in the Residence Halls for more than four (4) hours. If Owners will be leaving campus for the weekend or for breaks, they are required to take the Service Animal/Assistance Animal with them.
- Student Life may, consistent with University policy, relocate Service Animal Owners/Assistance Animal Owners and Service Animals/Assistance Animals to other housing.
- Owners must continue to abide by all other residential policies.
- Owners must provide written consent for Student Life to disclose information regarding the request for and presence of the Service Animal/Assistance Animal to those individuals who may be impacted by the presence of the animal including, but not limited to, Student Life personnel, Facilities staff, Campus Security, and potential and/or actual roommate(s)/floor mate(s). Such information shall be limited to information related to the animal and shall not include information related to the owner's disability.

Care and Supervision

- Care and supervision of the Service Animal/Assistance Animal are the responsibility of the owner, who must maintain control of the animal at all times. Other students or residents should not serve as proxies to attend/care for the animal.
- The owner is responsible for making sure that the Service Animal/Assistance Animal does not cause excessive noise or disturbance to the reasonable comfort of others and does not pose a threat to the health or safety of others.
- UVF personnel shall not be required to provide care or food for any Service Animal/Assistance Animal, including, but not limited to, removing the animal during emergency evacuation for events such as a fire alarm. In the event of an emergency, appropriate personnel will determine whether to remove the animal and may not be held responsible for the care of, injury to, or loss of the animal. In the event that University personnel are required to enter the Owner's residence when the Owner is not present, they will attempt to contact the Owner and may not be held responsible for the care of, injury to, or loss of the animal.

- The Owner must have a back-up plan, including supplying Student Life with a caretaker's name and number, to take effect in case of an emergency. If the back-up plan ends up not being feasible, the University reserves the right to take whatever actions are necessary or appropriate under the circumstances.
- The Owner is required to ensure that the animal is well cared for at all times. Any evidence of mistreatment or abuse may result in immediate removal of the Service Animal/Assistance Animal and/or discipline for the responsible individual.
- The owner is also responsible for ensuring the cleanup of the Service Animal/Assistance Animal's waste and, when appropriate, must toilet the Service Animal/Assistance Animal in outdoor areas designated by the University. All animal waste must be placed in a sturdy plastic bag and securely tied up before being disposed of in the dumpster.

Animal Health and Well-being

- The Service Animal/Assistance Animal must be immunized against diseases common to that type of animal. Dogs must have current vaccination against rabies and wear a rabies vaccination tag. Local licensing requirements must be followed.
- Service Animals/Assistance Animals must have an annual clean bill of health from a licensed veterinarian. Documentation should be an Animal Wellness Examination from a veterinarian regarding the Service Animal/ Assistance Animal's health. The University has authority to direct that the Service Animal/Assistance Animal receive veterinary attention, but has no obligation to do so.
- The University may require documentation showing that the Service Animal/Assistance Animal is properly licensed.
- The Service Animal/Assistance Animal must be under the control of the individual at all times and must have a harness, leash, or other tether. If the use of a harness, leash, or other tether would interfere with the performance of the work or tasks performed by the Service Animal/Assistance Animal or is impractical because of an individual's disability, a harness, leash, or other tether may not be required. However, in that case, the individual must be able to control the Service Animal/Assistance Animal by other effective means such as voice controls or signals.
- UVF may place other reasonable conditions or restrictions on a Service Animal/Assistance Animal, depending on the nature and characteristics of the animal.
- Should the animal be removed from the premises for any reason, the Service Animal Owner/Assistance Animal Owner is expected to fulfill his/her housing obligations for the remainder of the academic year.
- Any violations of the rules contained in this policy or other University policies may result in immediate removal of the animal from the University and, if appropriate, referral to Student Life for disciplinary action. If a Service Animal/Assistance Animal is banned from campus, the individual with a disability will have the right to engage in a deliberate process to determine if effective participation can occur with other appropriate accommodations.
- Service Animal Owners/Assistance Animal Owners are responsible for the payment of any impound and/or any fees required to secure the release of his/her animal.

SECTION 5: UVF COMMUNITY RESPONSIBILITIES

Members of the University community are required to abide by the following practices:

- Must allow Service Animals/Assistance Animals to accompany their owners consistent with this policy.
- Contact Student Life if any questions or concerns arise relating to Service Animals/Assistance Animals.
- Service Animals/Assistance Animals will be present on campus consistent with this policy. Because of this, third party complaints may not be submitted as complaints about the simple presence of an animal. However, third-party complaints may be made, for example, regarding excessive noise, or based upon concerns regarding cleanliness, or aggressive behavior.

- Only two questions can be asked about Service Animals, and only if the answers are not obvious:
 - a. Is the Service Animal required because of a disability?
 - b. What work or task is the dog trained to perform?
 - Do not ask questions about the individual's disability.
 - Do not pet or feed a Service Animal/Assistance Animal.
 - Do not attempt to separate the animal from the Owner.
 - Do not startle or tease a Service Animal/Assistance Animal.
 - Contact Student Life if Faculty/Staff have any additional questions regarding visitors to campus who have Service Animals/Assistance Animals.
 - Refrain from charging a fee for the Service Animal/Assistance Animals to reside in the Residence Hall, but may assess usual fees for any damages incurred.
 - Report to Student Life any Service Animals who misbehave. Report any owners (or other individuals) who mistreat their service animals to Student Life, who may report the incident to the Department of Public Safety.
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SECTION 7: APPEALS

Owners who wish to appeal a denial of a request for a reasonable accommodation for an Assistance Animal or the removal of a Service Animal should do so in accordance with the University's Student Grievance Policy within three working days of the communication of the decision. The appeal should include grounds for denial or evidence that the cause of the removal has been remedied.

In either case, the individual may appeal only on the grounds that:

- Due process was not provided to the individual (i.e. there is information that some aspect of the decision being appealed was prejudicial, arbitrary, or capricious).
- New and significant information, not reasonably available at the time of the decision being appealed, has become available.

Also in either case, the appeal will be reviewed and disposed of according to the abovementioned Student Grievance Policy.

SECTION 8: RELATED INFORMATION

1. Americans with Disabilities Act, 28 C.F.R. Part 35, https://www.ada.gov/service_animals_2010.htm
2. The Fair Housing Act of 1968, 42 U.S.C.A. § 3601-3631: Service Animals and Assistance Animals for People with Disabilities in Housing and HUD-Funding Programs (2013), https://www.hud.gov/sites/documents/SERVANIMALS_NTCFHEO2013-01.PDF
3. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (§ 504), 29 U.S.C. § 701 et seq
4. Pennsylvania Human Relations Act 43 P.S. § 95