

DRAKE COMMUNITY LIBRARY

SERVICE ANIMAL POLICY

Purpose

Drake Community Library is committed to providing a safe, welcoming, and accessible environment for all patrons. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Library permits service animals to accompany individuals with disabilities in all areas of the Library where the public is normally allowed.

Definition of a Service Animal

Under the ADA, a service animal is defined as a dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability. The work or task must be directly related to the person's disability.

Examples of service animal 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
- Pulling a wheelchair or assisting with mobility
- Alerting and protecting a person who is having a seizure
- Reminding a person to take prescribed medications
- Calming a person with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) during an anxiety attack

Service animals are working animals, **not pets**.

Dogs whose sole function is to provide comfort, emotional support, or companionship do **not** qualify as service animals under the ADA.

Animals Not Permitted in the Library

The following animals are **not permitted** in the Library:

- Pets
- Therapy animals
- Emotional support or comfort animals

- Animals carried in arms, carriers, bags, purses, or backpacks

Only service animals, as defined by the ADA, are permitted inside the Library.

Miniature Horses

In addition to service dogs, the ADA includes a separate provision for **miniature horses** that are individually trained to perform tasks for people with disabilities.

The Library will make reasonable modifications to allow a miniature horse if all of the following conditions are met:

1. The miniature horse is housebroken
 2. The miniature horse is under the handler's control
 3. The Library can reasonably accommodate the animal's type, size, and weight
 4. The animal's presence does not compromise legitimate safety requirements necessary for the safe operation of the Library
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Responsibilities of the Handler

Handlers are responsible for the care and supervision of their service animal at all times.

Service animals must:

- Be under the handler's control (harnessed, leashed, tethered, or controlled by voice or signal)
- Be housebroken
- Not pose a direct threat to the health or safety of others

The Library is not responsible for the care, feeding, or supervision of service animals.

Permissible Questions by Staff

If the service an animal provides is not obvious, staff may ask **only** the following two questions:

1. Is the animal a service animal required because of a disability?
2. What work or task has the animal been trained to perform?

Staff may **not**:

- Ask about the person's disability
- Require medical documentation
- Require special identification or training documentation for the animal
- Ask the animal to demonstrate its work or task

Until staff are familiar with a patron and their service animal, these questions may be asked as needed.

Staff may preface the questions with a brief explanation such as:

"I apologize for the inconvenience, but we ask these questions to ensure that service animals can do their job without interference from untrained animals."

Removal of an Animal

A patron may be asked to remove an animal from the Library if:

- The animal is not a service animal
- The animal is out of control and the handler does not take effective action to control it
- The animal is not housebroken

If an animal is removed, the patron is welcome to remain in the Library and access services without the animal.

Library Programs Involving Animals

The Library may host programs that include animals, such as trained reading dogs, visits from professional animal handlers, or educational naturalist programs.

For these programs:

- Events will be scheduled for a specific date and time and advertised in advance
 - Animals will remain within the designated program space
 - A trained handler will accompany the animal(s) at all times
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Authority

This policy is based on the U.S. Department of Justice ADA regulations.

Reference: *ADA Requirements: Service Animals (2010)*

Adopted: 7/22

Reviewed: 1/26