

POLICY

Subject: **Animals in the Library**
Approved By: **Board of Library Trustees**
Approval Date: **9-21-2021**
Effective Date: **9-21-2021**
New (X) **Revised ()**

Purpose

1. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires state and local government agencies and non-profit organizations that provide goods or services to the public to make "reasonable modifications" in their policies, practices, or procedures when necessary to accommodate people with disabilities.
2. The Culver-Union Township Public Library (CUTPL) recognizes that some patrons with disabilities may have service animals trained to assist or accommodate a person with a sensory, mental, or physical disability or to perform tasks for the benefit of a disabled individual. CUTPL recognizes legal rights under federal and state laws regarding the use of service animals. CUTPL also considers the safety and health of all of its patrons and staff to be of utmost priority.

Definitions

1. Service Animal

CUTPL accepts the ADA Title 2 definition stating a service animal is defined as a dog that has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability. The task(s) performed by the dog must be directly related to the person's disability.

- a. Examples of such work or tasks include: guiding people who are blind; alerting people who are deaf; pulling a wheelchair; 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; or performing other duties.

2. Disability

A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities or any sensory, mental, or physical condition that:

- a. Is medically cognizable or diagnosable
- b. Exists as a record or history
- c. Is perceived to exist

Policy

No pets or animals other than service animals or service animals in training, are allowed in the Library. Owners of pets will be asked to remove them from the Library. Exceptions will be made for Library-approved programs that involve animals.

SERVICE ANIMAL ACCESS

Individuals with disabilities may bring their service animals into all areas of the Library where members of the public are normally allowed to go. All service animals must be under the full custody and control of their handler at all times. Also, all service animals must be on a leash or harness at all times unless the handler is unable to leash or harness the animal because of a disability or because use of a leash or harness would interfere with the animal's safe, effective performance of work or tasks. If the service animal cannot be leashed or harnessed, it must be otherwise under the handler's control (e.g. voice control, signals, or other effective means). Owners of the service animal are solely responsible for the supervision and care of the animal. Therefore, owners must keep the service animal directly with them at all times.

VALIDATION OF SERVICE ANIMALS

Users of service animals are not required to show papers or to prove a disability. Service animals are not required to be licensed or certified by a state or local government or training program, or be identified by a special harness or collar.

When clarification is required, Library staff may ask 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? Owners of service animals or service animals in training will indicate that they are working animals and not pets. Terms used may include assistance, service, guide, hearing, or helping animal. Library staff are not permitted to ask about the owner's disability or to request any documentation for the animal or require that the animal demonstrate its task.

LIABILITIES AND DISRUPTIONS

A person with a disability cannot be asked to remove his or her service animal from the Library unless the presence, behavior, or actions of the service animal constitutes an unreasonable risk of injury or harm to property or other persons. Any damage done by a service animal will be the liability of the person responsible for the service animal.

If the service animal is unruly or disruptive, Library staff may ask the patron to remove the animal, but the patron is allowed to stay. Library staff will give the person with the disability the option to obtain Library services without having the service animal on the premises.

Fear of allergies, annoyance on the part of other patrons or employees, or fear of animals are generally not valid reasons for denying access or refusing service to people with service animals.

All service animals must be housebroken.

EMOTIONAL SUPPORT AND THERAPY ANIMALS

Because they have not been trained to perform a specific job or task, emotional support, therapy, comfort, or companion animals are not considered service animals under the ADA and therefore are not allowed in the Library.

Misrepresenting an animal as a service animal may result in suspension of Library privileges.

ANIMAL ENDANGERMENT

The Library does not condone leaving any animals outside the Library in a way that may endanger the animal or Library patrons. The Library reserves the right to contact the police regarding any unattended animals on its premises. The Library also reserves the right to ban patrons who endanger animals in such a way.