

PURPOSE:

To establish guidelines related to the presence of animals in the Chesapeake Public Library and on Library premises.

POLICY:

To prevent possible damage to library facilities and property, and possible injury to library users and staff, animals (as defined in 3.2-6500 of the Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended) are only permitted in the Chesapeake Public Library in the following circumstances:

- Service animals in accordance with the American with Disabilities Act and accompanying regulations.
 - In situations where it is not obvious that the animal is a service animal, staff may ask two specific questions:
 - Is the animal a service animal, and
 - What work or task has the animal been trained to perform?
 - Staff are not allowed to request any documentation for the animal, require that the animal demonstrate the task, or inquire about the nature of the person's disability.
- Use or exhibition for library programming, as determined and approved by the Library Director or designee.
 - The Director will make the final decisions in regards to animals used for library programs.
- Animals on Chesapeake Public Library premises must be under the immediate control of their handlers. Animals must be properly restrained by harness, leash, or tether and must not infringe on another patron's ability to use the Library. This includes:
 - Obstructing library entrances and exits
 - Molesting passersby
 - Barking, growling, jumping, scratching, or biting
- Handlers are expected to clean up after their animals while the animal is on Library premises.

DEFINITIONS:

- Service animals are defined as dogs and miniature horses that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities.
 - Examples of such work or tasks include:
 - Guiding people who are visually impaired
 - Alerting people who are hearing impaired
 - Pulling a wheelchair
 - Alerting and protecting a person who is having a seizure
 - Reminding a person with mental illness to take prescribed medications
 - Calming a person with PTSD during an anxiety attack

- Service animals are working animals, not pets
- The work or task an animal has been trained to provide must be directly related to a person's disability.
- Animals whose sole function is to provide comfort or emotional support do not qualify as service animals under ADA.
- Miniature Horses:
 - Miniature horses can be accommodated as long as the Library can accommodate the miniature horse's type, size and weight, and as long as the horse's presence will not compromise the legitimate safety requirements necessary for safe operation of the Library.

REQUIREMENTS:

- A service animal must be under the control of its handler.
- A harness, leash or other tether should be used unless a disability prevents the handler from use of a harness, leash, or tether, or it would interfere with the work of the service animal. In such cases, voice control, signals, etc. must be used.
- The Library may request that a service animal be removed from the facility, and further deny access, if the animal is out of control and the handler cannot regain control of the animal, or if the animal is not housebroken. However, the person may return to the Library without the service animal.