

Cook Public Library

Service Animal Policy

Purpose

The purpose of the Service Animals Policy is to provide a safe and welcome environment for all of those in the library. In compliance with the Federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), service animals accompanied by their handlers are welcome at the Cook Public Library.

Definition

The legal definition of a service animal as provided by the United States Department of Justice is as follows:

Service animals are defined as dogs 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 blind, alerting people who are deaf, 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 Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) during an anxiety attack, or performing other duties. Service animals are working animals, not pets. The work or task a dog has been trained to provide must be directly related to the person's disability. Dogs whose sole function is to provide comfort or emotional support do not qualify as service animals under the ADA.

In addition to the provisions about service dogs, the Department's revised ADA regulations have a new, separate provision about miniature horses that have been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities. (Miniature horses generally range in height from 24 inches to 34 inches measured to the shoulders and generally weigh between 70 and 100 pounds.) Entities covered by the ADA must modify their policies to permit miniature horses where reasonable. The regulations set out four assessment factors to assist entities in determining whether miniature horses can be accommodated in their facility. The assessment factors are (1) whether the miniature horse is housebroken; (2) whether the miniature horse is under the owner's control; (3) whether the facility can accommodate the miniature horse's type, size, and weight; and (4) whether the miniature horse's presence will not compromise legitimate safety requirements necessary for safe operation of the facility.

(ADA Requirements: Service Animals. (2011, July 12). Retrieved September 10, 2019 from https://www.ada.gov/service_animals_2010.htm)

Only service animals, as defined above, are allowed in the library.

Special Exception for Library Programs

The Cook Public Library may choose to host programs that include the presence of non-service animals.

Staff Procedures

When it is not obvious what service an animal provides, staff are only allowed to ask:

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 cannot

- ask about a person's disability
- require medical or training documentation
- require special identification
- ask that the animal demonstrate its ability to perform work or task

Service animals are only dogs and miniature horses as defined above. Therefore, any other type of animal is not allowed in the library. This includes: pets, therapy animals and comfort animals. Animals in carriers, bags or purses are not allowed in the library.

Adopted and Approved by the Cook Public Library Board

November 6, 2019

Service Animal Flowchart

