

Service Animals

700 Security Policy

Chapter IV. Service Animals

The Great River Regional Library System (GRRL) recognizes that some patrons with disabilities may have service animals, which are 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. GRRL recognizes legal rights under federal and state laws regarding use of service animals. GRRL also considers the safety and health of all of its patrons, the public and library staff to be of utmost priority.

No pets or animals other than service animals, service animals in training, or animals featured in GRRL approved programs are allowed in GRRL libraries. Owners of pets will be asked to remove them from the library.

A service animal is defined as: “a dog that is trained for the purpose of assisting or accommodating a person’s sensory, mental, or physical disability.”

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 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 animals are solely responsible for the supervision and care of the service animal. Therefore, owners must keep the service animal directly with them at all times.

A person with a disability may be asked to remove a service animal if:

1. The animal is out of control and the animal’s handler does not take effective action to control it;
or
2. The animal is not housebroken.

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

Staff may not make inquiries about a service animal when it is readily apparent that the animal is trained to do work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability. When it is not readily apparent that the animal is a service animal, staff may ask the following two questions:

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

Staff may not ask about the owner’s disability.

If an animal is properly excluded, library staff should give the person with the disability the option to obtain library services without having the service animal or service animal in training on the premises.

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