

Animals in the Library Policy

Portage County Public Library

It is the Policy of the Portage County Public Library (PCPL) to prohibit all animals from entering library facilities, with the exception of service animals, service animal trainees and animals featured in programs sponsored by PCPL.

Definitions

Under Wisconsin law "Service animal" means a guide dog, signal dog, or other animal that is individually trained or is being trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability, including the work or task of guiding a person with impaired vision, alerting a person with impaired hearing to intruders or sound, providing minimal protection or rescue work, pulling a wheelchair, or fetching dropped items." Wis. Stat. §106.52(1)(fm)

While the library occasionally presents educational programs that feature animals, members of the public may only enter the library with an animal if it is a service animal that requires accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Under the ADA, a service animal is a dog or other animal that has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability. The animal must be trained to take a specific action to assist the person with a disability, and the task(s) performed must be directly related to the disability.

Emotional support, therapy, comfort, or companion animals do not qualify as service animals under the ADA.

If it is not obvious that a dog brought into the library is a service animal, a staff member may ask the following questions:

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

A staff member attempting to ascertain whether a dog is a service animal may not ask about the nature of a person's disability.

By ADA stipulation, Service animals must be under the immediate control of their handlers at all times. Therefore, Service animals which are not housebroken, bark, are uncontrolled, or are otherwise disruptive will be required to leave the premises. Animals may never be left unattended on library grounds.

Service animals are not allowed on library furniture or fixtures, and must remain on the floor or be carried (as appropriate) by their handlers at all times.

Misrepresenting a dog as a service animal is a violation of the library's Patron Code of Conduct, and may result in suspension of library privileges.