

Sample Law Library Animal Policy

I. Purpose

This policy establishes guidelines for the presence of animals in the [Law Library Name] to ensure compliance with applicable laws, protect health and safety, and promote an accessible and inclusive environment for all patrons and staff.

II. Scope

This policy applies to all patrons, visitors, and employees who enter or work within [Law Library Name], including affiliated reading rooms, offices, and meeting spaces. This does not include those employees who have otherwise pre-approved accommodations in accordance with other relevant policies (see section VII).

This policy is not intended to override or contradict any other library or institutional policies, including standards and procedures for removal or banning of patrons.

III. Definitions

- **Service Animal:** A dog (or, in rare cases, a miniature horse) individually trained to perform tasks directly related to a person's disability, as defined under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
 - **Service Animal in Training:** A dog (or, in rare cases, a miniature horse) that is being trained to work as a service animal, typically handled by a disabled individual, a professional trainer, or an individual in connection with an organization. These animals have no federal protection, but may be given similar rights to fully-trained service animals by state or local laws.
- **Emotional Support Animal (ESA):** An animal that provides comfort or emotional support to a disabled individual, but is not necessarily trained to perform specific tasks. ESAs do not have public access rights that are protected by federal law, but they may be covered by state or local laws.
- **Therapy Animal:** An animal handled by a trained volunteer or professional that provides comfort or support in structured settings to individuals that are not their handler.
- **Pet:** Any other non-working, companion animal not covered by disability-related laws.

IV. Policy Statement

Only service animals, as defined by the ADA, are permitted in the library. All other animals, including pets, emotional support animals, and therapy animals, are not permitted unless pre-approved for a specific program or event (see section VI).

V. Guidelines for Service Animals

1. Staff may ask:
 - a. Is this a trained animal that is required to assist you with a disability?
 - i. You may **not** ask what that disability is.
 - b. What tasks has the animal been trained to perform?
 - i. Examples include, but are not limited to: medical alert, guiding, deep pressure therapy, item retrieval, opening doors, behavior disruption, or getting help in case of a medical emergency.
 - ii. But not: (exclusively) emotional support, comfort, or protection (i.e. attacking others).
 - iii. You may **not** ask the handler to “prove” or otherwise demonstrate these tasks.
 - iv. Likewise, you may **not** ask for any certification or registration to prove its training or service animal status.
2. Service animals must be under control at all times.
 - a. This typically requires being leashed and obeying commands. However, handlers are permitted to not use a leash when it impedes with their disability and/or the service animal’s tasks; in this instance, the handler is still expected to be able to provide sufficient commands to the animal to keep it under control, including verbal commands or hand signals.
3. Handlers are responsible for supervision of, care of, and cleanup after their animal.
4. Disruptive or non-housebroken animals, regardless of the legitimacy of their training or the disability status of their handler, may be asked to leave (see section IX of this policy).
 - a. However, should the handler wish to return without their animal, this must be permitted (excepting circumstances where the individual has been banned or removed for separate reasons in accordance with other relevant policies).

VI. Programmatic Exceptions

Therapy animals may be allowed temporarily for sanctioned events, with prior approval from library administration. To receive approval, contact [Library Director/Designated Staff Person].

VII. Employee Accommodations

Employees needing service animals must coordinate through [HR/Disability Services]. Employees who may need accommodations in interactions with animals (such as those with allergies or severe phobias) should also coordinate with [HR/Disability Services]. This policy does not govern employee accommodations.

VIII. Complaints and Violations

Report concerns and violations to [Library Director/Designated Staff Person]. Examples of what qualifies as a violation are provided below. Complaints will be handled confidentially and in compliance with the law and other relevant policies.

- Example violations of policy:
 - The animal is repeatedly barking for reasons other than alerting its handler, causing a disruption to other patrons.
 - The animal has attacked or attempted to attack another patron or an employee unprovoked.
 - The animal is not housebroken and has created a biohazard.
 - The animal is left unsupervised.
 - The animal is not under control, such as an unleashed animal running loose around the library and disrupting other patrons.
- Not violations:
 - The animal makes a reasonable level of noise, such as scratching, adjusting, or brief, intermittent barks used to alert its handler.
 - The animal has a reasonable response to unexpected contact, such as yelping if stepped on.

IX. Conflicting Accommodations

Should there be a conflict between either a patron's accommodations and an employee's accommodations, or a conflict between two patrons' accommodations, you should attempt to accommodate both. For instance, if one individual has a severe phobia, allergy, or other accommodation that requires not being in the presence of the other individual's service animal, you should attempt to provide space for each individual as far away from each other as possible. However, it may not always be possible to provide the ideal accommodation for all involved – remember, the standard is “reasonable accommodations.” When in doubt, contact [Library Director/Designated Staff Person] for guidance.

X. Contact

[Library Director/Designated Staff Person]

Email: [Insert Email]

Phone: [Insert Phone #]

[HR/Disability Services]

Email: [Insert Email]

Phone: [Insert Phone #]