

Service Animal Policy – La Crosse Public Library

In compliance with the Federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), service animals (including those in training) are welcome at the La Crosse Public Library. Animals that are not designated as service animals are not permitted in any library facility, unless they are included in an approved library program.

The legal definition of a service animal as provided by the U.S. Department of Justice is as follows:

“Service animal means any dog or miniature horse that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability. Other species of animals, whether wild or domestic, trained or untrained, are not service animals for the purposes of this definition. The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the handler’s disability.”

Library staff may ask the handler to remove his or her animal, even a service animal, from the building under the following circumstances:

- The animal does not meet the legal definition of a valid service animal as defined above*.
- The animal is unruly, disruptive, or exhibits aggressive behavior.
- The animal is destructive and the handler does not take effective action to control it.
- The animal is not house-broken.
- The animal is ill.
- The animal is unclean.
- The owner does not clean up after his or her animal.
- The animal’s vaccination record is not up to date. Dogs must wear a current rabies vaccination tag.

If the service animal is removed, the handler shall be allowed to return to the library without the service animal.

Any interaction regarding a service animal is to be documented on the library’s IRS.

*In order to assess whether or not an animal is a valid service animal, library staff may legally ask the following two questions:

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

Library staff is not legally allowed to ask about the nature of a disability or to challenge the validity of a disability.

In the event that an individual with an animal declines to answer these questions or refuses to cooperate, library staff at Main are to avoid a confrontation, to immediately refer the matter to library management and security for further action as necessary, and then to document the incident on the IRS.

In the event of a conflict at a branch location, staff should calmly apologize and then document the incident. Library management and security will determine if further action will be taken.

Approved La Crosse Public Library Board
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