

### **Service Animals in the Library Policy**

The Elmhurst Public Library restricts bringing a pet (a domesticated animal kept for companionship) or any other animal into the building, with the exception of qualified service animals as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). A qualified service animal is defined as a dog (any breed) or a miniature horse that has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability. The task(s) performed by the service animal must be directly related to the person's disability. Service animals in training are not considered service animals under the ADA and are not permitted in the Library.

The ADA does not consider animals whose sole function is to provide comfort or emotional support to be qualified service animals. Therefore, comfort and emotional support animals are not allowed in the Library unless they have been scheduled, by staff, for a Library sponsored program or event.

#### **Procedures:**

- Supervision and care of the service animal resides solely with the owner which includes toileting, feeding, grooming, and veterinary care. Service animals must be harnessed, leashed or tethered, unless those devices interfere with the service animal's work or if it is prevented by the qualified individual's disability in which case the service animal must be otherwise under the handler's control (e.g., voice control, signals or other effective means).
- The service animal is required to be housebroken.
- A service animal may be removed from the Library if the animal is out of control and the handler does not take effective action to control it or if the animal is not housebroken. The owner of a disruptive (e.g., barks repeatedly in the Library) or aggressive service animal may be asked to remove the animal from the Library. In this case, Library staff will offer reasonable opportunity to the owner to obtain Library materials or services without having the service animal on the premises.
- In situations where it is not obvious that a dog is a service animal, Library staff are only permitted to ask an individual who accesses the Library with a service animal the following two questions: (1) is the dog is a service animal required due to a disability, and (2) what work or task the service animal has been trained to perform.
- Library staff cannot ask about the qualified person's disability, request medical documentation, special identification, training documentation or ask that the animal demonstrate its ability to perform the work or task.
- Staff are not required to supervise, provide food or a special location, or otherwise care for a service animal.
- Other patrons' allergies or fear of animals are not valid reasons for the removal of service animals.
- To determine if a miniature horse can be accommodated in the Library, the Library will assess whether (1) the miniature horse is housebroken, (2) the miniature horse is under the owner's control, (3) the Library can accommodate the miniature horse's type, size

and weight, and (4) the miniature horse's presence will compromise legitimate safety requirements necessary for the safe operation of the Library.

**Definitions:**

**Service Animals:** The Americans with Disabilities Act defines a service animal as a “dog that has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability. The task(s) performed by the dog must be directly related to the person’s disability.”

**Emotional Support/Therapy/Comfort/Companion Animal:** These terms are used to describe animals that provide comfort just by being with a person. Because they have not been trained to perform a specific job or task, they do not qualify as a service animal under the ADA.