

## East Providence Public Library

### Assistance Animal Policy

This policy uses the following definitions, as provided by the Department of Justice's modified Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations, effective March 15, 2011:

**Assistance Animal:** any animal that provides work, assist, and/or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability or provide emotional support that improves the symptoms of a disability.

**Service Animal:** 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. The work or tasks performed by the Service Animal must relate directly to the individual's disability. Emotional support animals are not service animals. They differ from psychiatric service animals in that those animals are trained to perform tasks related to psychiatric disabilities.

### Policy

Individuals and their service animals are permitted access to all areas of the Library accessible by members of the public without accompanying service animals. Assistance animals that are not service animals (for example, emotional support animals) are also permitted in the same way. Pets are not service animals and are prohibited from entering the Library. All animals allowable in the Library must be housebroken and under the control of the owner at all times through a leash, harness, or other tether unless the owner cannot hold these objects or such use would interfere with the animal's work or tasks, and in which case the animal must be controllable by voice, signal, or any other effective means. Being under control also means that the animal cannot bark repeatedly without provocation.

However, any animal's access to the Library—including service animals—may be restricted if the animal creates an undue hardship to the Library. The Library is a place of public accommodation but to achieve its essential purpose must be clean, safe, welcoming, and quiet. As such, a service animal who behaves in a way inappropriate to the Library's essential mission may be asked to leave. Such behavior includes:

- 1) If its behavior can reasonably be interpreted as dangerous, i.e. posing a risk to others whether through aggression (e.g., growling/barking) or has injured another person or animal. Dangerous animals will be asked to leave the Library immediately or be prevented from entering the Library.
- 2) If it is "out of control." An out of control animal is one which acts disruptively and which does not respond to the owner and/or the owner does not take effective action to gain and maintain control. Owners will be first approached and informed that the animal's behavior conflicts with library policy and/or the animal interferes with library operations.

The owner will be asked to gain and maintain control of the animal. If the animal remains out of control, then the service animal will be asked to leave.

- 3) If it is not housebroken, i.e. if it urinates or defecates in the Library.
- 4) If the animal appears improperly or inadequate cared for, the Library may report such abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities.

In all of the aforementioned circumstances, the owner of the service animal is not prohibited from entering the Library's premises and is free to return once the animal has been removed.