

**St. Joseph Public Library
Pets and Service Animals Policy**

The St. Joseph Public Library (SJPL) recognizes that some patrons with sensory, mental, or physical disabilities may have service animals that are trained to do work or perform tasks. The library recognizes legal rights under federal and state laws regarding use of service animals. Emotional support animals, comfort animals, and therapy dogs are not considered service animals under the Americans with Disabilities Act and are, therefore, not allowed to accompany patrons in the library.

No animals are allowed in SJPL branches other than service animals, service-animals-in-training, or animals that are included in a program or event sponsored by the library.

- Library staff have the right to ask an animal's handler what work or task the animal has been trained to perform and whether the animal is a service animal required because of a disability.
- Staff are not allowed to request any documentation for the animal, require the animal to demonstrate its task, or inquire about the nature of the person's disability.
- Service animals are not required to be licensed or certified or be identified by a special harness or collar.

Individuals with disabilities may bring their service animals into all areas of the library where members of the public are normally allowed to go.

- Service animals must be on a leash, harness, or tether unless the use of a leash, harness, or tether interferes with the animal's performance of its task or the person's disability prevents use of these devices.
- If the animal cannot be leashed, harnessed, or tethered, it must be under the handler's control via voice, signals, or other effective means.

SJPL also considers the safety and health of all of its patrons, the public, and library staff to be a priority.

- SJPL may ask that a service animal vacate the premises if the animal is not under the control of its handler or if the animal is not housebroken.
- Library staff may ask that a service animal be removed from the building if its behavior is a direct threat to the health or safety of others. For example, if a service dog barks repeatedly or growls at patrons, it could be asked to leave.
- In these cases, library staff should give the option to obtain services without the animal on the premises.
- While we understand some of our patrons have allergies or discomfort around animals, we are not allowed by law to restrict service animals who comply with this policy.

This policy is based on the ADA 2010 Revised Requirements for Service Animals.

*Previous approval date: April 23, 2019