

WEBER COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM

Board of Trustees

PET AND SERVICE ANIMAL POLICY

I. GENERAL POLICY

The Library Board recognizes that all persons, including those with asthma and those who have allergic reactions to animals, should have safe access to public facilities. As many as three in 10 people with allergies have reactions to cats and dogs. In addition, people with asthma may have the condition worsened by an allergic reaction to animals.

Allergic reactions to animals can be life threatening and are caused by a person coming into contact with the animal's urine, saliva, or dander (dead skin cells). These allergens can enter the body by inhaling into the nose or lungs, ingesting by mouth, or absorption through the skin. Allergic reactions to animals are many, ranging from itchy, watery eyes to throat closing, wheezing, and losing the ability to breathe.

In order to provide a safe environment for people with asthma and those who are allergic to animals, Weber County Library allows only service dogs, and animals invited for special programs, to enter the library building and other public spaces. (Please see the Library Board's "Access to Buildings and Grounds Policy" and the approved Administrative Procedure for implementing this policy.)

Service animals are defined as dogs that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities. Examples of such work or tasks include guiding people who are blind, alerting people who are deaf, pulling a wheelchair, alerting and protecting a person who is having a seizure, reminding a person with mental illness to take prescribed medications, calming a person with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) during an anxiety attack, or performing other such duties.

Service dogs are working animals, not pets. The work or task a dog has been trained to provide must be directly related to the person's disability. Animals whose sole function is to provide comfort or emotional support do not qualify as service animals under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). (Please see definition from the Department of Justice Web site: https://www.ada.gov/service_animals_2010.pdf)

Under the ADA, service animals must be harnessed, leashed, or tethered, unless these devices interfere with the service animal's work or the individual's disability prevents using these devices. In that case, the individual must maintain control of the animal through voice, signal, or other effective controls.

II. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY

It is the intent of the Board that the Library Director establish the administrative rules/procedures necessary to implement this policy. These rules should, as much as possible, promote and foster pluralism in the Library environment by balancing the rights of those who are assisted by service animals with the Board's right and responsibility to maintain a level of decorum appropriate to the Library's mission.