

Enfield Public Library

Service Animal Policy

The Enfield Public Library strives to provide a safe and welcome environment for everyone. Therefore, in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, service animals are allowed to accompany their handlers anywhere the individual with disabilities is allowed to enter. Pets, therapy dogs, and emotional support animals are not considered service animals under the ADA and are not allowed in the Library with the exception of animals that are included in programs or events sponsored by the Library.

According to NH Law 197-D, "Service animal" means any dog 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 purposes of this definition.

Library staff who question the legitimacy of a service animal's credentials may ask the animal's handler only:
(1) is the dog a service animal required because of a disability, and
(2) what work or task has the dog been trained to perform

Staff may not ask a patron to provide documentation or other proof of the service animal's status. They may not ask any questions about the patron's disability.

All service animals are expected to either be on a leash or in the direct control by voice, signals or other effective means of their handler at all times. Library staff may ask someone to remove their service animal from the library if:

- The service animal's handler does not have complete control of the animal;
- The service animal is not housebroken;
- The service animal directly threatens the health or safety of others;
- The service animal barks excessively;
- The service animal demonstrates aggressive behavior.

Service animals who have been deemed out of control are welcome to return to the Library when the problem is resolved.

Fear, allergies, or annoyance on the part of other patrons or library staff are not valid reasons for denying a service animal entry to the Library.

Other Definitions:

Therapy Animal: A therapy dog is a pet that has been trained, tested, registered, and insured to accompany its owner to visit patients and residents of hospitals and nursing homes to cheer up the people living there. Because they have not been trained to perform a specific disability-mitigating task, they do not qualify as service animals according to the ADA. A therapy dog is legally a pet.

Emotional Support Animal: An emotional support animal or ESA belongs to a person living with a disability. The person's mental health professional has determined that the presence of the animal is necessary for the disabled person's mental health and has written a prescription stating the pet is necessary in the person's home. Because they have not been trained to perform a specific job or task, they do not qualify as service animals under the ADA.

Psychiatric Animal: The ADA makes a distinction between psychiatric service animals and emotional support animals. If the dog has been trained to sense that an anxiety attack is about to happen and take a specific action to help avoid the attack or lessen its impact, that would qualify as a service animal. However, if the dog's mere presence provides comfort that would not be considered a service animal under the ADA.