

SERVICE ANIMALS

POLICY STATEMENT

A service animal is a working animal, not a pet. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) defines a service animal as any dog 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. Dogs that satisfy this definition are considered service animals under the ADA regardless of whether they have been licensed or certified by a state or local government, or any other entity. Here are some examples of tasks a service animal might perform:

- Assisting with navigation, or stability and balance;
- Alerting to sounds or allergens;
- Pulling wheelchairs, carrying and retrieving items;
- Seizure assistance;
- Interrupting impulsive or destructive behaviors

Under the ADA and New York law¹, facilities that serve the public may not discriminate against individuals with disabilities. In addition, they must permit a service animal in all areas of the facility where patrons are allowed or the public is invited.

Library staff are not responsible for the care or supervision of a service animal and are not required to provide food or a special location for the animal.

A public accommodation provider cannot ask about the nature or extent of a person's disability and may not demand proof that the animal is certified. However, if it is not readily apparent that a dog is a service animal, they may ask, (1) if the animal is required because of a disability, and (2) what work the animal has been trained to perform.

1 New York Consolidated Laws, Civil Rights Law - CVR § 47. Use of public facilities by persons with a disability

Adopted by the White Plains Library Board of Trustees on: 1/8/2020
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