



## **Dedham** PUBLIC LIBRARY

43 Church Street  
Dedham, MA 02026  
781-751-9284

### **Animal Policy**

**Voted and approved by the Board of Library Trustees: September 14, 2023**

**Effective date: October 20, 2023**

The Dedham Public Library does not allow animals in Library buildings or on Library grounds unless the animal is being used for a Library-sponsored program. However, under Massachusetts law as well as the Americans with Disabilities Act, an individual with a disability may bring a service animal into the Library when medically necessary. This policy also applies to those training service animals, whether or not the trainer has a disability.

#### **Service Animals**

A service animal is a dog trained to work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, such as guiding individuals with impaired vision, alerting individuals to an impending seizure, or pulling a wheelchair and fetching dropped items. Service animals are not required to wear a vest or any form of identification.

The patron must be in full control of the animal at all times. Animals must be on a leash, harness, or other type of restraint at all times, unless the owner is unable to retain an animal on leash due to a disability. The care and supervision of the animal is solely the responsibility of the patron. The patron is expected to clean and dispose of all animal waste appropriately.

Reasonable behavior is expected from service animals while on Library property. Examples of unacceptable behavior include but are not limited to:

- uncontrolled barking or growling,
- jumping on people,
- or running away from the owner.

Before removing a disruptive or aggressive service animal, staff should ask the handler to get control of the animal. If the service animal is still out of control, staff may ask the handler to remove the service animal from the Library. If a service animal is removed from the premises, the individual with a disability must still have the opportunity to re-enter the Library without the service animal.

Employees and staff must leave service animals alone. This includes not petting them, talking to them, or whistling at them; treats should not be offered.

Library employees may ask two questions when a patron with an animal enters the Library:

1. Is the animal required because of a disability?
2. What work or task has the animal been trained to perform?

The patron cannot be asked about their disability. The patron cannot also be asked to show proof that the animal has been certified, trained, or licensed as a service animal. Additionally, service animals must not be required to demonstrate the tasks they perform.

All animals need to be immunized against rabies and other diseases common to that type of animal. All vaccinations must be current, and animals must be in good health.