

## **Caroline County Library**

### **ANIMALS IN THE LIBRARY POLICY**

#### **Policy Statement**

In order to prevent possible damage to library facilities and property, as well as possible injury to library patrons and staff, animals are not permitted in any Caroline County Library branch. Exceptions will be made for service animals or as approved by the library director. All other persons bringing in animals will be asked to remove them.

#### **Eligibility**

Animals may be permitted inside the library for:

- Use or exhibition for a valid purpose, as determined by the library director. This may include library programs, and will be decided on a case-by-case basis.
- Service animals as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), 2010 Revised Requirements- “A service animal is a dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for a person with a disability.”
  - 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 ADA nor the Code of Virginia §51.5-44. These animals are not permitted in the library.
  - Miniature horses may also be permitted as long as they can be accommodated in the library facility.

#### **Policy Regulations**

- Any animal must be under the control of their owner or handlers at all times.
- Neither food nor care will be provided by staff to any animal allowed inside the library.
- Animals permitted inside the library for use or exhibition will be restricted to the single area of the library where they are being presented.
- Service animals are permitted in all areas of the library where members of the public are allowed to go.
- 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.
- A person with a disability will not be asked to remove his service animal unless the animal:
  - Is out of control and the handler does not take effective action to control it,
  - Is not housebroken, or
  - Poses a direct threat to the health and safety of others.
- Fear of animals, allergies, presumed outcomes, or annoyance on the part of other patrons are not permissible reasons for denying access or refusing library service to people with a service animal.

- When there is a legitimate reason for the removal of a service animal, the person with the disability will be able to continue to use the library without the animal.
- Patrons are responsible for any damages caused by their service animal.

Adopted by Caroline County Board of Supervisors January 14, 2020