Reviewed and Approved: 07/21/2026

INDIAN RIVER AREA LIBRARY

Animal Policy

1. STATEMENT of PURPOSE

   In order to ensure the safety of *Indian River Area Library* (IRAL) staff and patrons, the Board of Trustees of the *Indian River Area Library* has adopted the following policy regarding animals on Library grounds and inside the Library facility.

2. SCOPE of POLICY

   This policy applies to all patrons, employees, temporary employees, and volunteers of the *Indian River Area Library*.

3. ANIMAL POLICY

   A. Animals, except for specially trained service animals, are not allowed in the building without prior approval of the Library Director or their designee.

   B. Animals may not be left unattended on Library grounds. Animals may not be tied to doors, railings, fences, bike racks, shrubs, book boxes, or other items on Library grounds.

   C. Animals used for law enforcement purposes will be allowed on IRAL property in accordance with all federal, state, and local laws.

   D. Any animal on IRAL property must be under control of the owner or handler at all times. Animals must be leashed, harnessed, crated, or carried in a way that maintains control over the animal.

   E. Any animal that displays behavior that poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others may be asked to leave the Library. This behavior includes vicious behavior towards humans or other animals, barking, snarling, growling, or other aggressive behavior.

   F. Animals that are not housebroken or that urinate or defecate in the Library may be asked to leave.

   G. All animals permitted on IRAL property must be vaccinated and licensed in accordance with state and local laws. Vaccination and license information must be readily available on a tag or certificate.

H. The *Indian River Area Library* is not required to provide supplies or equipment or provide care or supervision of an animal on Library property.

I. Users of service animals are not required to show papers or to prove a disability. Service animals are not required to be licensed or certified by a state or local government or training program or be identified by a special harness, cape, or collar.

J. Employees may not ask about an owner's disability. Employees may ask two questions:

a. Is the service animal required because of a disability?

b. What work or tasks has the service animal been trained to perform?

K. A person with a disability may not be asked to remove their service animal or service animal in-training from the Library unless the presence, behavior, or actions of the service dog constitute an unreasonable risk of injury or harm to property or other persons, or the animal is disruptive, and the owner does not take effective action to control it.

a. In these cases, Library employees must give the person with a disability the option to obtain Library services without having the service animal or service animal in-training on the premises.

L. Fear of allergies, annoyance on the part of other patrons or employees, or fear of dogs or animals are not valid reasons for denying access or refusing service to people with service animals or service animals in-training.

4. SERVICE DOGS

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 and meets the definition of "service animal" under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations at 28 CFR 35.104. The work or tasks performed must be related to the individual's disability.

Dogs whose sole function is to provide comfort or emotional support do not qualify as service animals under ADA. The crime deterrent effects of an animal's presence and the provision of emotional support, well-being, comfort, or companionship do not constitute work or tasks.

5. SERVICE ANIMALS IN TRAINING

Service animals that are being trained for the purpose of assisting disabled persons are entitled to full and equal access to Library facilities. Although the ADA does not apply to service animals in training, effective March 28, 2023, Public Act 75 of 2022 requires service animals in-training to be admitted into places of public accommodation located in Michigan if they are accompanied by an animal trainer or raiser for the purpose of training or socializing the animal per the Michigan Dept. of Civil Rights.

6. MINIATURE HORSES

Federal regulations allow miniature horses to be recognized as lawful service animals. Therefore, an individual with a disability may be allowed to utilize a miniature horse as a service animal, subject to all the restrictions stated in this policy, but also subject to additional considerations. When determining whether to allow a miniature horse to function as a service animal, IRAL may consider the following before permission is granted.

1. The horse in question may be no more than 34 inches tall measured at its shoulder and it may weigh no more than 100 pounds.
2. As with dogs, the horse must have been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of the individual with a disability.
3. As with dogs, the handler of the horse must be in control of the horse and the horse must be housebroken.
4. The horse's presence may not compromise legitimate safety requirements necessary for the safe operation of Library services.

7. EXCEPTIONS for LIBRARY ENGAGEMENT

Pending approval by the Director or their designee, the Library may have animals in the building as part of its educational and recreational offerings.

8. ANIMAL ENDANGERMENT

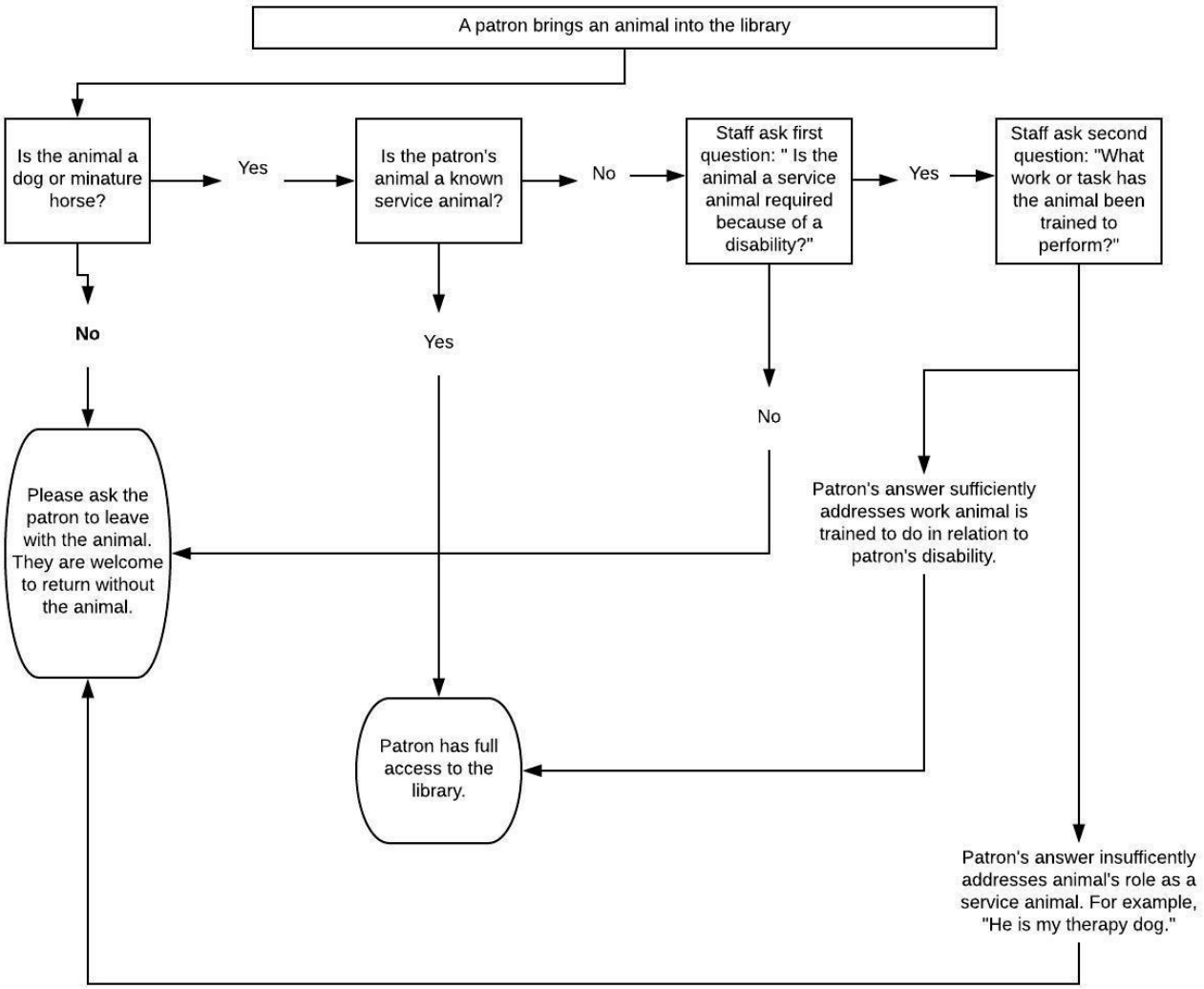
The Library does not condone leaving non-service animals outside the Library in a way that may endanger the animal or Library patrons. The Library reserves the right to contact the police regarding any unattended animals on its premises. The Library also reserves the right to suspend patrons who endanger animals.

9. GRIEVANCES

The Library is committed to the equitable use of the Library for all its patrons. Any patron who feels their use of the Library has been compromised due to this policy should report grievances to the Director or their designee.

10. CITATIONS and RELATED REFERENCES

- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, Title II, Section 35.136 (Revised September 15, 2010)
- Service Animals in Training Law – http://www.legislature.mi.gov/documents/2021-2022/publicact/pdf/2022-PA-0075.pdf


A patron brings an animal into the library
Is the animal a dog or minature horse?
Yes
Is the patron's animal a known service animal?
No
Staff ask first question: " Is the animal a service animal required because of a disability?"
Yes
Staff ask second question: "What work or task has the animal been trained to perform?"
No
Yes
No
Please ask the patron to leave with the animal. They are welcome to return without the animal.
Patron's answer sufficiently addresses work animal is trained to do in relation to patron's disability.
Patron has full access to the library.
Patron's answer insufficently addresses animal's role as a service animal. For example, "He is my therapy dog."