

SERVICE ANIMALS

Definition of Service Animal:

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):

Service animals are defined as dogs that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities. Examples of such work or tasks include guiding people who are blind, alerting people who are deaf, pulling a wheelchair, alerting and protecting a person who is having a seizure, reminding a person with mental illness to take prescribed medications, calming a person with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) during an anxiety attack, or performing other duties. Service animals are working animals, not pets. The work or task a dog has been trained to provide must be directly related to the person's disability. Dogs whose sole function is to provide comfort or emotional support do not qualify as service animals under the ADA.

(U.S. Department of Justice – Civil Rights Division – Disability Rights Section)

Montana Code Annotated (MCA):

(2) "Service animal" means a dog or miniature horse individually trained to provide assistance to an individual with a disability. The term does not include an emotional support animal.

(MCA 49-4-203)

Right to be accompanied by service animal -- identification for service animals in training. (1) A person with a disability has the right to be accompanied by a service animal or a service animal in training with identification complying with subsection (4) in any of the places mentioned

(4) For the purposes of this section, a service animal in training shall wear a leash, collar, cape, harness, or backpack that identifies in writing that the animal is a service animal in training. The written identification for service animals in training must be visible and legible from a distance of at least 20 feet.

(MCA 49-4-214)

Rules for Service Animals at Flathead County Libraries:

1. Animals over the age of 6 months must be up to date on all age-appropriate vaccinations, fully licensed, and house-broken.
2. Animals cannot be left unsupervised on library property.
3. Animals should be well maintained and clean, pest and odor free to the best of the owner's ability when visiting the library.
4. Animals must be leashed at all times and fully under the control of their owner while on library property.
5. Owners must clean up after their animals. Animals that urinate, defecate, or vomit on library property must be removed and the owner will be charged a \$75 biohazard fee per incident.
6. Flathead County Library reserves the right to remove any animal from the premises if the animal is causing damage to library property, disturbing library patrons, and/or

interfering with library operations or services. This includes auditory disturbances such as barking, whining, etc.

7. Flathead County Library requires owners to pay for any damage to library goods or property caused by their animal. Owners are liable for injury to any person or animal as a result of their animal's actions while on library property. Owners accept all liability related to their animal being on library property.
8. Any real or perceived act of animal aggression will result in a permanent trespass of the animal from the library. If any animal has been trespassed, the owner is welcome to access library property and services without the animal.
9. Any incidents involving animal attacks will be reported to the library board, Law Enforcement, Flathead County Animal Control, and Flathead County Health Department.

Adopted 2/23/23

Revised 2/26/26

David Ingram, Chair
Library Board of Trustees