



Policy 4.15
Animals on Library Property
Adopted by the Library Board of Trustees: 02/26/2015

It is the policy of the North Olympic Library System to prohibit all animals from entering the library, with the exception of animals featured in programs sponsored by the North Olympic Library System (NOLS), and service animals.

Animals, including service animals, cannot be left unattended within 25 feet of library entrances, outside book returns, or bike racks.

A service animal is defined as: “an animal that is trained for the purpose of assisting or accommodating a person's sensory, mental, or physical disability.”

NOLS recognizes that some patrons with disabilities may have service animals which are trained to assist or accommodate a person with a disability or to perform tasks for the benefit of a disabled individual. The Library recognizes legal rights under federal and state laws regarding use of service animals, and also considers the safety and health of all of its patrons, the public and library staff to be of utmost priority.

Apart from animals featured in programs sponsored by the North Olympic Library System (NOLS) only service animals, or service animals in training, are allowed in NOLS libraries, and only those persons requiring the assistance of such an animal, and service animal trainers, are permitted to bring service animals into the Library. Owners of animals other than service animals will be asked to remove them from the library.

Individuals with disabilities may bring their service animals into all areas of the library where members of the public are normally allowed. All service animals must be under the full custody and control of their handler at all times. Also, all service animals must be on a leash or harness at all times unless the handler is unable to leash or harness the animal because of a disability, or use of a leash or harness would interfere with the animal's safe, effective performance of tasks. If the service animal cannot be leashed or harnessed, it must be otherwise under the handler's control (for example voice control, signals, or other effective means). Owners of service animals are solely responsible for the supervision, care, and behavior of the service animal. Owners must keep the service animal directly with them at all times. Owners must immediately bring any damage or mess caused by the animal to the attention of library staff, and may be required to clean up or assist with clean-up, of any such mess or damage.

If the presence, behavior or actions of a service animal or service animal in training pose a direct threat to the health or safety of others, or violates *NOLS Policy 4.1: Basic Rule of Conduct*, it must leave the library premises. In this case, library staff will endeavor to give the person with the disability the option to obtain library services without having the services animal or service animal in training on the premises. Fear of allergies, annoyance on the part of other

patrons or employees, or fear of animals are generally not valid reasons for denying access or refusing service to people with service animals or service animals in training.

Library visitors using 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 or collar. Staff may ask for confirmation that an animal is a service animal required because of a disability; they can also ask what tasks the animal has been trained to perform. Staff may not ask about the owner's disability.

The Library Director is responsible for administering this policy.