

**APPENDIX C**  
**ANIMAL PROGRAM GUIDELINES**

**Animals in Programs**

Are you interested in offering a program with different types of animals? Hosting live animals in library programs can offer educational, social and cultural benefits to patrons of all ages. While a liability waiver is not required, the following guidelines will ensure the health and safety of patrons and animals at all times:

1. When petting or touching of animals by program participants is a feature of the program, discuss with the animal handler in advance a system of organization that promotes the highest level of safety for program participants and for the animals.
2. Animal handlers should clearly communicate guidelines for the petting or touching of animals that promotes the safety of program participants and the well-being of the animals (e.g. how and where to pet the animals safely).
3. Animal presentations should take place on stage when possible, and when it is not possible, well separated from the audience in some way (e.g. taped boundaries where children cannot cross).
4. Venomous and poisonous animals are not permitted in live animal presentations.
5. Live animal demonstrations should only be permitted by organizations that are accredited by the Canadian Association of Zoo and Aquariums (CAZA) or by a scientific research organization.
6. When possible, publicity relating to animal demonstrations should state all of the animals that it will feature during the program. Signage should be posted at the entrance of the library and in the programming area on the day of the program that states the program date and time, location of program, and all of the animals that it will feature during the program.
7. Keep animal programs between 30 minutes and 1 hour.
8. A staff member must be present in the location of the program at all times.

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**Canine Reading Programs**

Are you interested in offering a library program that involves children reading to dogs?

Studies show that reading to dogs encourages confidence and boosts self-esteem in children who struggle to read aloud, therefore boosting their literacy.

Within NB public libraries, the following standards apply:

- The program **must be** carried out in partnership with an organization that offers canine programs to children to ensure that the volunteers and dogs have gone through a screening process.
- Contact [Therapeutic Paws of Canada](#) (English only) about **Paws To Read** or [St. John Ambulance](#) about **Paws 4 Stories** to see if they have capacity to offer their canine program in your community.
- The dogs must wear a vest at all times that indicates they are part of the program.
- Parents should not be involved in the program as the dogs are trained for one-on-one programs and they can get distracted if more participants are involved.
- Ensure the volunteers keep the dogs on their leashes at all times and that the dogs stay on their blankets during the program.
- Keep Canine Reading programs around 30 minutes.

**Plan early, consult your staff and advise the public**

1. Discuss in advance requirements of the partner organization.
2. Determine if any staff in your library have a medical condition that prevents them from being exposed to dogs. If so, plan ahead and discuss if it is possible to accommodate their medical condition. For example, can you offer the program in a designated room? Consult your supervisor if you need to accommodate a staff medical condition.
3. Before holding a canine program, ensure the public is notified well in advance so patrons have time to plan their library visit at another time if needed (i.e.

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signage at the library entrance and programming area, website and social media).