

Service Dogs

Since 2011, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) only recognizes dogs as legitimate service animals. A service dog is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability.

The following are *not* service dogs: those whose sole purpose is to provide emotional support, well-being, comfort, or companionship, or to serve as a crime deterrent. In addition, therapy dogs that visit nursing home residents, hospital patients, and others are not service animals. Search-and-rescue dogs, unless they are on duty, are not service dogs. None of these categories assist one individual with a disability in his or her activities of daily living.

A person who requires the use of a service dog has rights and obligations:

The right to be accompanied by the service dog.

The obligation to control the service dog in a manner that complies with the animal control laws of the area. *Control* equals behavior appropriate to the setting.

Service dogs are allowed in all areas, including a public entity's facilities and areas where members of the public, participants in services, programs, or activities, or invitees, as relevant, are allowed to go.

The only time a service dog can be off the leash, harness, or tether is when it is necessary to do the work for which it was trained to assist the person with a disability. For example, a seizure alert dog may need to go for help if the person has a seizure.

You may be asked to remove the dog from the premises if it is out of control, and its handler does not take effective action to control it;

or the dog is not housebroken (for instance, while in a Recreation Area Visitor Center).

If a service dog is properly excluded, the individual with a disability is to be given the opportunity to participate in the service, program, or activity without having the service dog on the premises.