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Quick Reference Guide to Service and Assistance Animals

Federal protections for individuals living with a disability* require access for service and assistance animals in places where pets are not allowed, enabling those individuals to participate in mainstream life

Public Spaces

Dwellings

Airplanes

	Public Spaces	Dwellings	Airplanes
Type of animal granted access	<p>A service animal is any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability.</p> <p>Service animals must be trained to work or perform a task for an individual with a disability that alleviates a symptom or effect of the disability</p>	<p>An assistance animal works, provides assistance, or performs tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability, or provides emotional support that alleviates one or more identified symptoms or effects of a person's disability.</p> <p>Assistance animal need to work or perform a task for an individual with a disability that alleviates a symptom or effect of the disability, but do not need to be trained</p>	<p>Air carriers must permit service animals and emotional support animals to accompany a passenger with a disability.</p>
Which federal laws apply?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Title III of the ADA Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fair Housing Act Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Air Carrier Access Act of 1986
What animals are covered?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trained dogs of any breed or size Trained miniature horses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Animals of any species, breed, or size 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service animals Emotional support animals, except for unusual animals (<i>e.g.</i>, snakes, other reptiles, ferrets, rodents, and spiders)
Where does this law apply?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public spaces (retail stores, restaurants, etc.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Example: Leasing office in a residential building Programs receiving federal funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nearly all types of dwellings with a few exceptions Residential common areas Programs receiving federal funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Airlines Airplanes
What are the training requirements?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The animal must be trained to work or perform a task for an individual with a disability Work performed must be directly related to the person's disability No special certification or registration is necessary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The animal does not need to be trained Must provide a benefit directly related to the individual's disability No special certification or registration is necessary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service animals must be trained to work or perform a task for an individual with a disability that alleviates a symptom or effect of the disability Emotional support animals do not need to be trained
What pet rules apply?	<p>None, because service animals aren't pets. For example:</p>	<p>None, because assistance animals aren't pets. For example:</p>	<p>None, because service animals and emotional support animal aren't pets. For example:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Breed and size restrictions don't apply Not subject to an access fee or other pet fee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Breed, size, number restrictions don't apply Not subject to a pet fee, pet rent, or extra pet security deposit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Breed and size restrictions don't apply Not subject to a pet fee
Any registration requirements?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is no government sanctioned registration or certification for service animals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is no government sanctioned registration or certification for assistance animals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is no government sanctioned registration or certification for service or emotional support animals
How is a service or assistance animal verified?	<p>Only if the disability or need for animal is not obvious, can ask 2 questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is this service animal required because of a disability? What work or task has the dog been trained to perform? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only if disability or need for animal is not obvious, can request reliable documentation of the person's disability and related need for assistance animal Cannot require the applicant to reveal the diagnosis Cannot require access to the applicant's medical records or the medical provider 	<p>Service animals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ID cards Other written documentation Harnesses or tags Credible verbal assurances <p>Emotional Support Animals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submit documentation 48 hours in advance Current documentation < 1 yr old on treating dr's letterhead, verifying disability and related need for ESA during air travel or activity at destination
Under what circumstances may the request be denied or rescinded?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The request causes an undue financial or administrative burden The individual cannot satisfactorily answer the two above questions (e.g., an emotional support animal that is not trained and assists with an individual's well-being is not a service animal and not permitted access in a public space) The animal poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others The animal isn't under control The animal causes damage or creates a nuisance (odor, incessant barking, not housebroken) The request "fundamentally alters" the nature of the services provided to the public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No disability or related need for the animal The housing isn't subject to FHA The animal's owner can't provide reliable documentation of disability or need for the assistance animal The request causes an undue financial or administrative burden The animal poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others The animal isn't under control The animal causes damage or creates a nuisance The request "fundamentally alters" the nature of the services to residents The owner doesn't follow local licensing, registration, public health requirements for the assistance animal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No disability or related need for the animal No reliable documentation Certain unusual animals Disruption of cabin service Direct threat to health and safety Too large or heavy to be accommodated safely in the cabin Prohibited animal at the foreign destination country (note: foreign carriers are only required to allow service dogs)

*An individual with a disability is defined as a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities or the operation of a major bodily function. Examples of "major life activities" include, but are not limited to, caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, working as well as many others. Note that this is a very broad definition with a low standard to meet. In fact, according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, nearly 1 in 5 individuals are living with a disability.