

The Facts

In accordance with the **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)**, a service animal is a dog that has been individually trained to provide assistance to an individual living with a disability. The tasks performed by the dog must be directly related to the person's disability.

Guide dogs

Guide dogs are a type of service animal, used by some individuals who are blind or have poor vision. However, service animals assist with a wide range of disabilities.



For more information
go to:
www.nh.gov/disability

Answers to most asked questions:

- ◆ Only dogs may be service animals.
- ◆ Service dogs do not have to pass a test.
- ◆ There is no central ADA registry. The ADA is a law.
- ◆ Service dogs do not have to be professionally trained.
- ◆ No vest or ID badge of any type is required.
- ◆ When it is not obvious what service a dog provides, only two questions may be asked: 1. *Is the dog required because of a disability?*; and 2. *What work or task has the dog been trained to perform?*

For more information
go to:
www.nh.gov/disability
(603)271-2773

Cover photo courtesy of NEADS.org



The Law and



Service Animals

Prepared by the NH
Governor's Commission
on Disability

"Removing Barriers to Equality"

www.nh.gov/disability

Service animals specialize in providing some of the work and tasks that individuals with a disability cannot perform on their own.

Examples of service dog tasks

- ♦ Alert persons with hearing impairments to sounds.
- ♦ Halt to signal changes in elevation.
- ♦ Pull a wheelchair or pick-up things for a person with mobility impairments.
- ♦ Assist someone with mobility impairments with their balance.
- ♦ Retrieve dropped objects.
- ♦ Intelligent Disobedience as in refusing a command to go forward into traffic.

Psychiatric service dogs have training to match the disability of the individual they assist.



Where service dogs are allowed?

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), businesses and organizations that serve the public must allow people with disabilities to bring their service animals into all areas of the facility where customers are normally allowed to go.

This federal law applies to all businesses open to the public, including restaurants, hotels, taxis and shuttles, grocery and department stores, hospitals and medical offices, theaters, health clubs, parks, and zoos.

It's all about the training:

Emotional Support Dogs and Therapy Animals

An **emotional support** dog or ESA is not a service animal.

In some limited instances, ESA's may be allowed in residences if a person's mental health professional has determined that the ESA's presence is necessary.

A **therapy dog** is legally a pet and not permitted to go anywhere that pets are not allowed.

Because they have not been trained to perform a specific task, they do not qualify as service animals under the ADA.

Special Note:

The Air Carrier Access Act governs ESA's and Service Dogs for air travel. Check with your airline when flying.