



Service animals help open equal opportunities.

"Service animals are working animals, not pets. The work or task a dog has been trained to provide must be directly related to the person's disability. Dogs whose sole function is to provide comfort or emotional support do not qualify as service animals under the ADA."

—US Department of Justice,
[ADA Requirements: Service Animals](#)

Service Animals Under the ADA

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), a service animal is a dog that has been individually trained to do work or perform a specific task for a person with a disability (a miniature horse is a possible exception for the type of animal).

Three titles of the ADA apply to service animals.

Title I: Employment

Title I regulations do not define a service animal or require that employers automatically allow service animals at work. Rather, an employee's request to bring a service animal to work is viewed as a reasonable accommodation request. Employers must consider this request individually, just like any other reasonable accommodation request that would allow an employee with a disability to perform the essential functions of their job.

Title II and Title III: Public Spaces

- Regulations for Titles II and III provide the definition and requirements for service animals. Under these titles, allowing service animals in a location is considered a reasonable modification of a "No Pets" policy by a state or local government program or by a business.
- Service animals generally must be permitted wherever the public is allowed to go. This includes places like restaurants, grocery stores, medical offices, libraries, museums, and other places open to the public. The ADA typically does not apply to most private residential housing.
- A service animal must be tethered unless the handler's disability prevents using a leash. The animal must behave appropriately, and if it does not, the handler can be asked to remove it.
- No special license or certification is required for service animals.
- A person responsible for a public space—such as a manager, receptionist, or ticket taker—can ask only two questions: "Is the dog a service animal needed because of a disability?" And "What task has the animal been trained to perform?"

Visit www.serviceanimalquestions.org, by the Northeast ADA Center, for more about customer service and service animals.