

FAQs About Service Animals in Public Facilities

What you may need to know about ADA laws regarding service animals.



Q: What is a service animal?

Under the ADA, a service animal is defined as an animal that has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability. The task(s) performed by the dog must be directly related to the person's disability.



Q: What questions can you ask to determine if an animal is a service animal?

In situations where it is not obvious that the dog is a service animal, staff may ask only two specific questions: (1) is the dog a service animal required because of a disability? and (2) what work or task(s) has the dog been trained to perform? Staff are not allowed to request any documentation for the dog, require that the dog demonstrate its task(s), or inquire about the nature of the person's disability. A service animal does NOT have to wear service animal identification.



Q: What if an employee has a service animal?

If an employee has the need to bring a service animal into the workplace, the employee should be referred to human resources to engage in the ADA interactive process. This includes temporary employees.



Q: When can service animals be excluded?

If admitting service animals would fundamentally alter the nature of a service or program, service animals may be prohibited. In addition, if a particular service animal is out of control and the handler does not take effective action to control it, or if it is not housebroken, that animal may be excluded. Under control also means that a service animal should not be allowed to bark repeatedly in a lecture hall, theater, library, or other quiet place. However, if a dog barks just once, or barks because someone has provoked it, this would not mean that the dog is out of control.



Q: If someone complains about or has an allergy to a service animal, must the animal be removed?

No. Fear or dislike of or an allergy to a service animal is not a valid reason for denying access of a service animal to a public facility. An accommodation could be made for the person with the allergy to keep the animal as far away from them as possible.

Please note: This information is regarding the general public. If an employee has the need to bring a service animal into the workplace, the employee should be referred to human resources to engage in the ADA interactive process. This includes temporary employees.