



Minimum Standards for Licensing Service Dogs

The following are required by our department to license a dog as a Service Dog:

1. The service dog must meet all of the standards as laid out in the minimum standards for Assistance Dogs in Public and should be equally well behaved in the home.
2. Current rabies vaccination information or a veterinarian's note stating an exemption to the vaccine.
3. **We require a note from a licensed medical professional stating the following:**
 - o The dog that is being licensed must be mentioned by name and breed in the note.
 - o The note must state that the medical professional is willing to certify that the dog being licensed has been individually trained to provide the services necessary for mitigating the client's disability.
 - o The note must state what services the dog provides for the handler.
 - o The note is not required to contain any medical information about the handler or their disability.

Public standards and business rights for service dogs, based off of the Americans with Disabilities Act:

- Businesses may ask if an animal is a service animal or ask what tasks the animal has been trained to perform, but cannot require special ID cards for the animal or ask about the person's disability.
- People with disabilities who use service animals cannot be charged extra fees, isolated from other patrons, or treated less favorably than other patrons. However, if a business such as a hotel normally charges guests for damage that they cause, a customer with a disability may be charged for damage caused by his or her service animal.
- A person with a disability cannot be asked to remove his service animal from the premises unless: (1) the animal is out of control and the animal's owner does not take effective action to control it (for example, a dog that barks repeatedly during a movie) or (2) the animal poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others.
- In these cases, the business should give the person with the disability the option to obtain goods and services without having the animal on the premises.
- Businesses that sell or prepare food must allow service animals in public areas even if state or local health codes prohibit animals on the premises.
- A business is not required to provide care or food for a service animal or provide a special location for it to relieve itself.
- Allergies and fear of animals are generally not valid reasons for denying access or refusing service to people with service animals.
- Violators of the ADA can be required to pay money damages and penalties.