

Resources

This publication provides succinct guidance on service animals in places that are open to the public.

ADA Requirements, Service Animals

www.ada.gov/service_animals_2010.htm

Frequently Asked Questions about Service Animals and the ADA

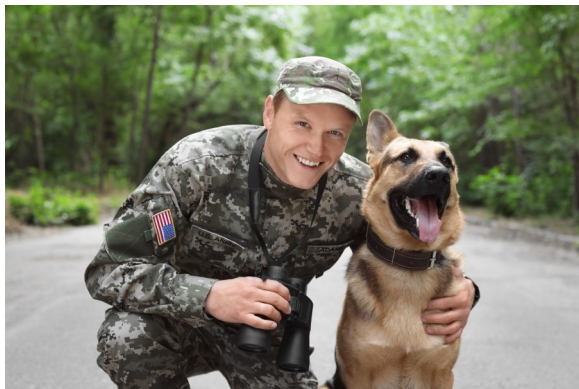
www.ada.gov/regs2010/service_animal_qa.html

ADA National Network:
Service Animals and Emotional Support Animals

adata.org/publication/service-animals-booklet

Service Animal Video from Massachusetts Office on Disability

youtu.be/eZqZaUfS1zc



MASSACHUSETTS OFFICE ON DISABILITY

One Ashburton Place
Room 1305
Boston, MA 02108

Phone: 617-727-7440

Fax: 617-727-0965

mass.gov/mod



[@MassDisability](https://twitter.com/MassDisability)



blog.mass.gov/mod

MASSACHUSETTS OFFICE ON DISABILITY

“Full and equal participation in all aspects of life by persons with disabilities”

Service Animals and

Public Accommodations in Massachusetts



Charles D. Baker, Governor

Karyn E. Polito, Lt Governor

Evan C. Bjorklund, Interim Director

What is a Service Animal?

Only **dogs** meet the definition of service animal under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) with the exception of miniature horses.

A service animal is a dog or miniature horse that has been **individually trained to perform a task or service** to assist a person with a disability.

Examples of services: Guiding a person who is blind, alerting a person who is deaf, interrupting a compulsive behavior, retrieving objects, etc.

Animals whose sole function is to provide comfort or emotional support are not considered service animals but may have to be allowed in the housing context.



What About “Certification”?

Service animals are **not** required to possess any certification or identification, nor are service animals required to wear a particular vest or badge.

Although there are rigorous, formal service animal training programs, Americans with disabilities have the right to train their animal themselves.

An individual with a disability accompanied by a service animal may not be asked to provide documentation of a disability, to answer questions regarding his or her disability, or to have the service animal demonstrate its work.

Only when the individual’s disability is **not obvious**, staff may ask the following **two** questions:

1. Is the animal a service animal required because of a disability?
2. What task or service is the animal trained to perform?

The law requires staff to take the individual at their word.

Rights & Responsibilities

Service animals:

Are permitted to go wherever the handler is permitted to go.

Are allowed even if others have fears of or allergies to dogs.

Must be under the handler’s control at all times. In most cases this means on a harness or leash, unless actively providing a specific service.

Must be housebroken.

May not pose a legitimate, direct threat to health or safety.

Do not have to be allowed to sit on furniture meant for patrons or to eat from plates provided by a food service establishment.

In Massachusetts, **service animals in training** have the same status as fully trained service animals.

