



Service Dogs 101

What is a Service Dog?

A service dog is a dog that performs tasks for their handler in order to aid in managing a disability.

What do Service Dogs do?

There are many different services these dogs can perform. Some are trained to alert for seizures or low blood sugar. Some are trained to assist with mobility, guide the blind, or ease panic attacks. There are many possibilities when it comes to the skill-sets of a well-trained Service Dog.

What is the certification process for a dog to become a Service Dog?

Contrary to popular belief, there is NO certification requirement for Service Dogs in the United States. All that is required is that the dog performs tasks which aid its handler. Additionally, the dog must have Public Access manners that prevent him from being a “nuisance” to the public.

Can my dog be a Service Dog?

While many dogs can be successfully trained to perform aiding tasks, not all dogs have the personality fit to be service dogs. For many service dogs, Public Access training is just as important (and difficult!) as task training. This means your dog must have exquisite attentiveness to you and be less motivated by external distractions such as wildlife, other people, or stray items that might be distractions for pet dogs.

Where can I learn more?

For more information regarding the laws surrounding Service Animals, please take some time to read the ADA: Title III. This is **essential** reading for anyone who is looking to introduce a Service Dog into their life.

[Public Access minimum requirements](#)

For further reading and learning on how to find or train your own Service Dog, please look to the following resources:

<https://www.dogwise.com/service-and-therapy-dogs/>

<https://cooperativepaws.com/>

<https://www.mddogs.org/>

<https://www.atlasdog.org/>