

Service Animal Laws

Guide for Businesses



Federal and State law prohibit the discrimination of people with disabilities. A disability may be physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability that impairs a person's major life activities. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is the Federal law that requires State and local agencies, businesses, and non-profit agencies that provide goods and services to the public to accommodate people with disabilities. One such accommodation is the allowance of service animals, including trained guide dogs, in public areas, including your business.

There is a lot to know about discrimination law in relation to service animals. This handout is intended to provide basic information primarily about Washington State Law and is not intended to be legal advice. You are strongly encouraged to learn more from the resources listed.

Per Washington State Law - Revised Code of Washington, specifically RCW 49.60.040(25) - a service animal can be a dog or miniature horse that is trained to assist a person with a disability and the assistance must be directly related to the disability. For example, the service animal can assist a blind or low vision person with navigation. As a business, you are required to accommodate people using a trained dog or service animal by allowing them in public places.

As a Business, You May

- 🐾 Post a sign indicating the allowance of a trained dog or service animal and the penalty for falsely representing an animal.
- 🐾 Ask a person appearing to have a trained dog or service animal questions to clarify the animal's purpose. As a business owner/manager, if the handler refuses to answer the questions noted below or based on their answers you determine that the animal is a pet, you may exclude the animal from your premises.

As a Trained Dog/Service Animal Handler...

- 🐾 You must have complete control (e.g. leash, harness) of the animal always. Your animal must be housebroken. Urinating or defecating in public places is grounds for removal.
- 🐾 Your animal must be vaccinated and licensed according to local, county, and state laws.
- 🐾 You are responsible for the care of the animal's needs (e.g. feeding, watering, cleaning up after).

Handler Should Answer:

1. Is the animal required because of a disability?
2. What work or task is the animal trained to do for your disability?



RESOURCES

Americans with Disabilities Act
www.ADA.gov
1-800-514-0301
1-833-610-1264 TTY

Washington State Human Rights Commission
www.hum.wa.gov
1-800-233-3247
1-800-300-7525 TTY

Monroe Police Department Animal Control Officer
www.MonroeWA.gov/Police (Search: Animal Control)
(425) 407-3999 (file a complaint)
(360) 863-6300 (general information) 711 TTY