

Considerations for the Use and Training of Service Dogs in Canada:

***Information for dog trainers and people with disabilities,
Including their support teams and service/care providers.***

Prepared for the



Last Updated: March 28, 2021

The aim of this document is to serve as a resource for Canadian professional dog trainers, other business and service providers, people with disabilities considering getting a service dog in Canada and their support team/advisors – including doctors, social workers and other health professionals.

Prepared by:

Helen Prinold, Dog Friendship Inc.

Guelph, Ontario, Canada

NOTE: The author does not represent that information compiled, particularly from any third-party sources, is accurate or complete. As a result, the author shall not be in any way responsible for any indirect, special or consequential damages that may arise to any person, organization, or business from any error in the information contained in this report nor does it guarantee or assume liability for any omissions of the information contained therein. Information contained therein cannot be the basis for any claim, demand or cause of action. This report and the information contained herein does not constitute a scientific publication or legal opinion and shall not carry any evidentiary value whatsoever.

Contents

Executive Summary	3
Introduction	3
Disability Definitions	4
What is a Service Dog or Guide Dog?.....	5
Disability Mitigation Tasks	6
Etiquette Around Service Dogs	8
Getting a Service Dog – Pros and Cons	9
Costs of Purchase & Care	11
Dog Licensing	12
Risk and Ongoing Care	12
Service Dog Selection.....	13
Service Dog Training	15
Training Content	16
Dogs from Established Programs	20
Owner (Handler) -Trained Service Dogs.....	23
Legal Rights and Requirements.....	25
Disability Certification & Access Laws	25
Canadian Laws	25
Certification, Credentials & “FAKE Credentials”	28
Information for Business Owners and Employees	29
Public Access Issues – Tips for Service Dog Handlers.....	32
Information for Places of Religious Worship.....	33
School and Educational Institution Access	34
Access in Healthcare Settings	35
Airline & Transportation Provider Access	35
Access to Military Installations	47
Information for Medical and Healthcare Professionals	48
APPENDIX A – Sample Patient Letter – Domestic	53
APPENDIX B – Sample Patient Letter – Foreign Travel.....	54
APPENDIX C – Service Dog Handler’s Proposed Bill of Rights re Service Dog Training/Use	55
Appendix D - Training Methods	61
APPENDIX E - If Your Service Dog is Attacked	66
Appendix F - Terms and Definitions	68
APPENDIX G – Signs of Dog Fear, Anxiety or Stress (FAS)	71
Appendix H – Key Program Disability Criteria	72
Appendix H - References.....	73

Executive Summary

This report provides an overview of factors regarding guide dog selection and training in Canada that is intended to provide clarity for Canadian dog trainers as well as Canadians with disabilities and the people that support them – from friends and family to caseworkers and doctors completing letters to be carried with the service dog to allow public access under Human Rights Codes. In a survey of psychiatric dog handlers in the U.S., handlers learned about psychiatric service dogs through the internet (37%), medical/health care practitioners (32%), or family/friends (30%)(Lloyd et al., 2019a). It is important that credible sources are available to Canadians that provide clear and readily accessible advice – preferably, advice that is not hosted on internet sites that offer to sell the prospective service dog handler a variety of unnecessary “certifications”. This report aims to fill that gap by defining service dogs, outlining their common tasks, detailing the common pros, cons and costs of service dogs, describing considerations for selecting a service dog candidate and trainer, as well as providing an overview of the legal situation surrounding the use of service dogs in Canada for businesses and service providers to people with disabilities.

Introduction

According to Statistics Canada’s Participation and Activity Limitation Survey, about 4.4 million Canadians reported some form of activity limitation in 2006, representing a disability rate of 14.3% of the total population (PALS, 2006a)

Disability rates increase with age and the survey revealed that Canadians aged 65 and over had a disability rate of 43.4% (HRSDC, 2009). The Participation and Activity Limitation Survey reported numbers for those with learning disabilities (302,847), memory-related disabilities (2562,488) and emotional disabilities (353,551) (PALS, 2006b). While these are older statistics, they are simply used to illustrate that there are a large number of Canadians with disabilities.

Services dogs have been shown to make a significant difference to many people with disabilities, enabling them in multiple ways. The benefits of service dogs can include increased independence, social relationships, self-esteem, and life satisfaction, and decreased anxiety, stress, and loneliness as noted in a variety of scientific journals (Allen and Blascovich, 1996; Beetz et al., 2019; Burrows et al., 2008; Dalziel et al., 2003; Davis et al., 2004; Dominguez-Ortega et al., 2013; Fry-Johnson et al., 2011, 2009; Hardin et al., 2015; Kwong and Bartholomew, 2011; LaFollette et al., 2019; Leonard, 2017; Lloyd et al., 2019b; O’Haire and Rodriguez, 2018; Rodriguez et al., 2018; Rooney et al., 2013; Valentine et al., 1993; Viau et al., 2010; Vincent et al., 2019, 2011; Yamamoto and Hart, 2019).

Research has also shown that getting a service dog can reduce overall family stress for families with children on the autism spectrum (Burrows et al., 2008).

If you are considering a service dog for one or more people with disabilities – whether yourself or a family member, patient or client - we encourage you to review this document and thoroughly investigate options before choosing a dog or trainer or purchasing a certification. Included in this document is information on common terminology, pros and cons for the handler, cost and other issues to be considered as well as some of the legal issues involved.

Disability Definitions

While there is a full section of definitions at the end of the document, we feel it is important to start with a definition of disability itself. For the purposes of this document, the authors consider a disability a previous or existing mental or physical impairment and previous or existing dependence on alcohol or a drug.

In a review of the concept of disability in the United Nations, Julian Walker provided an excellent overview of the history and current evolution of how definitions of disability are changing over time (Walker, 2013). We have included his summary below as we found it helpful when considering the terminology in this report, and believe it may be helpful for dog trainers approached by people seeking a service dog.

The 1975 UN *Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons* defined a “disabled person” as anyone “unable to ensure by himself or herself, wholly or partly, the necessities of a normal individual and/or social life, as a result of deficiency, either congenital or not, in his or her physical or mental capabilities”(UN, 1975).

This definition stresses the inabilities of persons with disabilities and their dependence on assistance. Since this was written, attitudes toward disability have shifted. For instance, the term “disabled person” has been largely replaced in common use by “persons with disabilities,” since the latter places emphasis on the person, and not their disability.

The more recent United Nations ***Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*** uses the term “persons with disabilities,” although it is not included in the definitions section. The absence of a formal definition permits people to define their own relationship with disability. It recognizes, as noted in the preamble, that “disability” is an “evolving concept” (UN, 2006).

To provide some guidance, however, the Convention states in its “Purpose” section that the term “persons with disabilities” includes, but is not limited to, “those who have long-term

physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others" (article 1).

This wording recognizes the diverse types of disabilities, or "impairments," that a person may have. It emphasizes that a person with a disability is only limited in their ability to participate in society as a result of their interaction with barriers that any society permits to exist, which may be physical obstacles, policies, legislation, or discriminatory behaviour and prejudicial attitudes.

This considered use of language is also reflective of the rights-based approach and the shift, as noted by the UN's Secretariat for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on its Enable website, from "viewing persons with disabilities as 'objects' of charity, medical treatment and social protection toward viewing persons with disabilities as 'subjects' with rights, who are capable of claiming those rights and making decisions for their lives based on their free and informed consent as well as being active members of society."

The information in this document is intended to support the agency of persons with disabilities in choosing a service dog. Should any reader have suggestions on how we can improve this document and ensure it accomplishes its object, please email the authors.

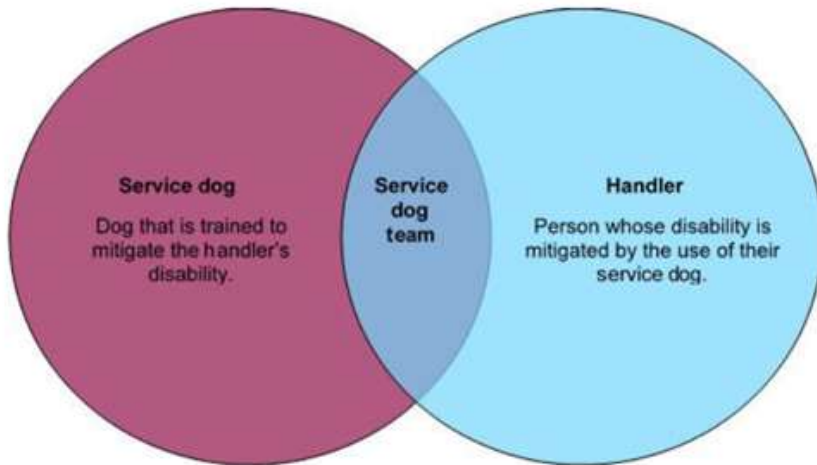
What is a Service Dog or Guide Dog?

A service dog (sometimes know as assistance dogs) is a dog whose presence and training mitigates the effects of a person's disability. In Canada, there is no unified legal definition of a "service animal" and so this definition should be checked with local regulations where required (Doctor and Meggs, 2017).

Dogs who work with the vision-impaired or hearing impaired are generally called either guide dogs or hearing dogs rather than service dogs but the service dog laws apply to them (sometimes they even have extra laws made just for them). Guide dogs were the original types of service dogs in Canada. In 1929, the first formal program in North America introduced was by The Seeing Eye, Inc. and the first guide dogs in Canada were placed by the MIRA Foundation in 1981 (Ensminger, 2010).

Service and guide dogs can help a person with a vision or hearing impairment navigate the world, help a person on the autism spectrum self-regulate and maintain social ties, alert a person to a medical issue and much more.

In general, the combination of a trained service dog and the handler whose disability is mitigated by the use of their service dog make up a service dog team.



There may be times that a substitute handler may manage a dog for a service dog handler (for example, a parent will generally handle the service dog of a minor child).

In Canada, a dog **does not qualify** as a service dog or assistance dog if:

- they are present for protection or personal defence
- they are present for emotional comfort or are an “emotional support animal” (unless they are acting to mitigate a psychiatric disability as certified by a medical professional)
**NOTE: ESA is a term that has legal standing in the U.S. ONLY!
- they are therapy animals and well-behaved canine citizens who visit with people in situations such as hospitals or during personal counselling sessions
- they are facility or working dogs who provide emotional comfort in situations such as courtrooms or help first responders (for example, dogs who are present to support victims of crime – especially children, search dogs or cadaver dogs)

Disability Mitigation Tasks

Service dogs can provide a variety of supports to people with disabilities. These can include (but are not limited to) the supports below, and service dogs are often categorized on the basis of these supports:

Guide dogs

- Safely navigating obstacles
- Providing navigation aid
- Signaling curbs, stairs or edges
- Finding and leading to doors, entrances and exits
- Warning of approaching vehicles

Hearing dogs

- Alerting the handler to an alarm clock, timer, telephone, doorbell, door knock, baby crying, someone calling the handler's name. Alerts usually involve the dog making physical contact with the handler and leading them to the source of the sound
- Alerting the handler to a smoke detector or emergency alarm. The alert does not involve leading the handler back to the source, but is a novel behaviour which the dog only engages in for this sound; for example, making physical contact with the handler and circling
- Warning of approaching vehicles

Mobility dogs

- Opening and closing doors; including activation of automatic door openers
- Pulling wheel chairs
- Retrieving a variety of objects
- Carrying objects from one spot to another
- Assisting with the removal of clothing
- Assisting with balance and gait
- Activating an emergency alert and/or barking for help in emergency, retrieving phone

Diabetic alert dogs

- Alerting handler to significant changes in blood sugar levels. Alerts can take any form, but should be novel and linked only to this scent work
- Retrieving medication, test kit, or dietary aid
- Activating an emergency response system, and/or seek help

Seizure response dogs

Note: the training is to respond in the event of a seizure and not to predict the seizure itself.

- Activating an emergency response system in response to a seizure
- Barking for assistance in response to a seizure
- Providing anxiety reducing support post seizure during recovery, protecting and/or providing comfort during a seizure
- Retrieving medication, telephone

Autism service dogs

- Anchoring on command—Reduces bolting behaviours and increases safety levels
- Visiting and nudging—Tactile distraction that redirects to more positive behaviours, reduces/suppresses behavioural outbursts, centres and grounds the individual
- Providing deep pressure on cue or during sleep
- Tracking

Psychiatric and posttraumatic stress service dogs

- Nightmare interruption—Removing blankets, turning on lights, nudges and licks
- Perimeter blocking
- Visiting and nudging—Tactile distraction in response to anxiety related behaviours that redirects to more positive behaviours, reduces/suppresses behavioural outbursts, centres and grounds the individual
- Searching of house or room—Turning on lights or retrieving an object
- Retrieving medication
- Activating an alert system or seeking assistance
- Providing deep pressure on cue or during sleep

Severe allergy alert dogs

- Alerting handler to allergen. Alerts can take any form, but should be novel and linked only to this scent work
- Activating a life line or emergency response system in response to allergic reaction
- Barking for assistance in response to allergic reaction
- Retrieving medication, telephone

Etiquette Around Service Dogs

If you do not have a service dog and you meet someone who does, there are some general rules of etiquette that apply:

- **Harness and jacket on means hands off.** Seeing a service dog jacket on a dog means that the dog is working. In many cases, distracting and trying to pet the dog while it is doing its job (being someone's eyes, for example) can take the dog's focus off its partner and the potential for injury increases. If the person is blind, you have basically removed their eyes! Some service dogs can be petted. ALWAYS ASK ANYWAY!!! If the dog is not working the guide dog handler may decide to remove the harness and let you pet the guide dog, or the service dog handler can make the decision if it is a good time or if THEY ARE TOO BUSY. It's a good idea to always ask first.

- **Don't feed them.** Offering food to the dog can result in disruptive behaviours like begging for food and scavenging off the ground.
- **Contain your excitement.** Don't encourage excitable play with a service dog. Staying calm is part of their job.
- **Let your dog say "hello" another time.** If you're walking your pet and you approach a service dog team, keep your dog away to avoid a distraction for the service dog and possible harm to the service dog handler. Of course, it's a good idea to keep your dog on a leash. There are always times a service dog will be not wearing their jacket and be off duty. Your dog might meet them at the dog park or on a walk then!

Getting a Service Dog – Pros and Cons

The hope in getting a service dog is that great bond between person and dog is created that is sufficient for the team to work effectively together, meaning that the service dog responds appropriately to cues, commands or alerts the handler when needed, and the handler responds to the service dog's indications. It is preferred that the bond be stronger than a basic pet dog bond, and be more the type where each can anticipate the other's needs and actions. Service dog organizations suggest this is typically achieved after a year working together (O'Brien, 2018), although some teams never progress beyond the basic working level.

While mitigating a disability is the desired outcome, some people with disabilities may find the benefits of having a service dog are outweighed by the ongoing maintenance, training and daily life challenges involved in owning a dog who is working in public. While the benefits received are often greater than people expect (Lane et al., 2001), the challenges are also real (Sillaby, 2016).

Service dog handlers often report they find themselves in challenging and frustrating situations when trying to access public facilities and places such as cabs, restaurants and retailers:

- Average people in public locations may take issue with a legitimate service dog who does not look like the breed historically most chosen as a service dog (the Labrador Retriever) and decide to socially shame the handler or challenge their legitimacy.
- Staff or owners of public facilities or private companies who are unfamiliar with human rights legislation and access laws may deny a person with a legitimate service dog access unnecessarily. Imagine, for example, arriving at a restaurant to celebrate your parent's 50th anniversary to be told in no uncertain terms that your service dog can't enter!
- People interested in dogs or with an opinion about service dogs may interrupt the dog and person's daily life - interrupting the dog's work by patting or calling them, or flagging the handler down just to "visit" about their dog, service dogs or dogs in

general. “Do not pet” signs on jackets or leashes are regularly ignored, with some people going so far as to practice “drive by petting”. These interruptions can add over fifteen minutes to even the most routine of outings to pick up a coffee or loaf of bread.

The handler will need to be aware of laws and guidance documents that pertain to service dogs in the handler’s jurisdiction, be able to effectively manage stressful interpersonal situations and access challenges and be prepared to negotiate situations where the rights of other members of the public may overlap with the rights of the handler and the service dog team.

There are also other factors that a service dog handler will need to understand and manage:

- A service-dog-in-training takes approximately two years to fully mature and be ready for work, and must undergo constant training during that time. Mature dogs must be trained specifically for any specific tasks required to mitigate the handler’s disability. In major service dog charities, the average failure rate for dogs is 25%. Unless the dog comes from a major service dog charity, the costs and responsibility for training will rest on the handler (hopefully, supported by an experienced trainer). “Building your own service dog” is therefore a costly and risk way to obtain a working dog. It may be, however, the only option for some people with disabilities given long waiting lists and service gaps. This places a significant burden on the potential dog handler and a failure after 2 – 3 years of effort (or after some expense) will certainly exact an emotional toll.
- Once a service dog is matured and fully trained, maintaining training generally takes up to an hour or two a week. Handlers will need to understand the principles of humane training, know how to use those principles to modify the service dog’s behaviour in a manner that respects the service dog as a learner (using the least invasive, minimally aversive approach), know what to do when the service dog behaves incorrectly and understand how to effectively reward the service dog for successful behaviour completion (according to scientific principles and proven effective reinforcement schedules).
- Maintaining an environment that allows the service dog to remain healthy physically and mentally (a clean home, access to water, 30 minutes a day of off-leash exercise and so on) can be challenging for some people to maintain in terms of time, energy and money. A psychiatric disability may make it particularly difficult to provide the stability and structure every dog requires to lead a healthy life. Carrying water, a first aid kit and perhaps food on long days is an extra consideration, as is managing attire changes for extreme weather.
- The handler will need to understand dog behaviour – including being able to identify and respond to common signs of dog fear, anxiety, stress and pain. They will also need to be able to effectively respond to members of the public who intentionally or unintentionally would cause undue stress/fear/anxiety or harm to the service dog (and keep the dog safe).

- The handler will need to be able to proactively identify and take steps to avoid environmental hazards that may pose a risk to the safety of their service dog in public. Hazards could include, but are not limited to: pet dogs, hot pavement, winter conditions, spilled hazardous materials, or broken glass.
- Handlers will need organization in order to maintain the dog's wellness routine – including managing weight and tracking routine veterinary visits and vaccinations.
- Even the best-behaved and most well-trained service dog will generally have an error rate of between 10 – 20% and require regular time off duty. This comes with them being fallible animals – for example, animals can have a bad day if they are in pain or sick. The dog's needs can require the person with a disability to adjust their schedule.
- Since dogs do not live as long as humans, service dogs will age, decline and their career will likely come to an end before the handler ceases to need a service dog.

Handlers must be aware that public access conveys few financial perks and a number of additional challenges in addition to the many benefits they can expect to receive. Those considering a dog may wish to consider carefully that there is no need to manage these issues or obtain special status if a dog's primary role can be to be good family pet and only provide emotional support when someone is at home.

Pets such as cats can also be considered, which require less daily dedicated care, while in some cases support from a person may be preferred (Allen et al., 1991). A good website for people considering a pet for support is <http://www.b4ugetapet.ca/>.

Good pet dogs can occasionally be obtained from service dog charities (if the dog has failed at making the grade as a service dog). Shelters and rescues may also be cheaper sources of a dog than buying a purebred puppy from a breeder. However, these dogs may have a history that requires careful scrutiny to make sure their issues do not add to the daily challenges of a person with disabilities. For example, they may have poor house manners from not being well trained as puppies or they may have behaviour issues that led to their surrender or being found as a stray ("lost" when the family doesn't want them or because they had become aggressive).

The key thing to note is that if someone requires a dog to help mitigate their disability while in public, they require a service dog.

Costs of Purchase & Care

Individuals may receive a service dog from a charity free of charge, but they are responsible for additional expenses following placement - in addition to all regular costs of owning a dog. The cost for purchasing, raising and training a dog (see <http://b4ugetapet.ca>) has been suggested at between \$10,000 - \$30,000 (CTV News 2017; Zapf and Rough, 2002). This number is not certain as it depends on issues such as the dog's training requirements or veterinary issues.

If the handler decides to avoid working with a charity and getting a young dog to train, it's important to know that there is no government assistance to cover the cost of a puppy or adult dog – which can run from \$1,000 - \$3,000.00.

Provincial and federal assistance programs often provide limited help to support the added costs of a service dog (so costs of food and regular medical care would need to be budgeted).

Some provinces will only provide some partial reimbursement for dog food and care if the dog comes from an accredited program (either Guide Dogs or ADI/Assistance Dogs International – more on the programs below). The provinces of Quebec and Ontario have opted to restrict service dog benefits, see the descriptions at these links:

- [Ontario Disability Support Program Service and Guide Dog Benefit](#)
- [Quebec's Mobility Assistance Dog Reimbursement Program](#)

The federal government provides a tax credit for service dog care (however for the person on a disability pension and unable to work, usually their income doesn't attract any significant tax – if any - and so getting a credit to reduce taxes is of limited assistance). Here is the [Canada Revenue Agency's information](#), check with prospective service dog owner's provincial tax regulations or social assistance caseworker for more information. There are also private benefits - for example the Canadian National Institute for the Blind offers a [funding program for guide dogs that require very expensive veterinary care](#).

Dog Licensing

Most cities and townships require all dogs to be licensed. Service dogs are typically issued dog licences free of charge, but that may not always be the case. Check with the local city hall, licence issuing office or pet shelter for details.

Risk and Ongoing Care

Training and obtaining a service dog does not end the work and cost of having a service dog. Once a service dog is fully trained (by approximately 2 years of age) it is expected their working life will be around eight years. At any point during a service dog's working career, they may become disabled themselves – for example with chronic pain from arthritis or injured in an accident or dog attack. Once the dog's career is over, the service dog handler may need a replacement and may need to find a new home for the dog whose service has been completed.

The handler must be skilled in providing first aid as required, have a relationship with a veterinarian and access to veterinary care - including emergency care, maintenance care, preventative care, rapid diagnosis and treatment. This includes at minimum an annual check-up

that also addresses weight management (a common problem in service dogs that can significantly reduce their working ability and lifespan). They must also understand the signs that a dog is becoming fearful, anxious or overly stressed in their work (see the Appendix on Signs of FAS) and take steps to improve the dog's welfare.

Service Dog Selection

The best chance of getting a dog who can be an effective service dog as an adult is to select a puppy from a reputable breeder, whose parents are certified to be sound in body and where specific genetic diseases (like hip issues that could shorten a dog's lifespan, or eye disease that could impact a dog's vision) have been tested for and will not be passed on to the puppy.

A reputable breeder will also ensure the puppy has an early socialization program that will maximize their chances for success. Research has demonstrated that early socialization (prior to eight weeks) can improve the odds a dog will be suitable for service dog work.

Unfortunately, reliable tests that indicate whether a puppy will be a successful service dog candidate are not available and validated to date, despite the fact that many trainers and organizations offer to check puppies for suitability. In the absence of a test, the dogs selected for training in large service dog organizations give a good "read" of the dog breeds most likely to succeed.

The most common breed that has been a successful service dog type for many years is the Labrador Retriever – particularly yellow and black colours. Chocolate coloured retrievers have been found as less than successful by some large organizations (Lofgren et al., 2014 and S. O'Brien, Assistance Dogs International NA Chair, personal communication, 2019).

Labrador Retrievers are used due to their physical strength, even temperament, adaptability, trainability and willingness to work. Indeed, it turns out the Labrador Retrievers have a higher food motivation due to their genetics – a factor that likely leads to their success as they are willing to do complex tasks in highly distracting environments in return for food (Raffan et al., 2016).

However, there are a variety of other breeds in use as service dogs – from the tiniest lap dog to Great Danes. Each breed has their own pros and cons, and the choice of breed should depend on the tasks required.

Breeds that have generally been considered poor choices for service dogs by experts in the field include, among others, the:

American Pitbull Terrier, American Staffordshire Terrier, Staffordshire Bull Terrier, English Bull Terrier, American Bulldog, Dogo Argentino, Chow Chow, Fila Brasileiro, Bullmastiff, Portuguese Mastiff, Mastino Neapolitano, Majorca Mastiff, Dogue de Bordeaux or Cane Corso/ Dogo Canario, Belgian Malinois, Akita, Tosa Inu, Alabai, Kangal, Caucasian Shepherd Dog, Tornjak, South-Russian Shepherd, Black Russian Terrier, Yugoslavian Shepherd Dog, Anatolian Shepherd, Central Asian Shepherd, Portuguese Sheepdog, Rottweiler, Doberman, Rhodesian Ridgeback, Boerboel, Bandog, Komondor, Kuvasz, Riesenschauzer or Wolfdog

(CGSB Standards Committee, 2017).

Dogs from backyard breeders, large volume breeders (i.e. bred on farms), or pet stores are generally less likely to have sound genetics and make good service dogs. Rescue dogs that show aggression or reactivity towards animals or people (especially on leash) would be best avoided, as would dogs from breeders specializing in training for aggression and bite work.

Shelters can be a source of less expensive dogs, however these dogs often come with behaviour or health issues that make them less acceptable in the long run. Most experienced service dog trainers suggest the best way to start on the road to developing a great service dog is to purchase a purpose-bred puppy.

In general, service dogs in training are generally 2 years of age and younger. That's because a dog is generally not fully mature and settled enough to be in public much before that time. In general, an adult service dog candidate should be:

- in good health
- neutered
- with a calm and good temperament

The note "in good health" means that the dog selected be:

- physically sound, free of injury or disease
- have the structure that is required for the service dog's work (for example, a small breed dog should not be used to provide physical mobility support)
- have enough stamina for the average working or activity day of the handler
- have a healthy weight for the service dog's breed(s)
- have a coat that is clean and free of mats, debris, and parasites
- have skin/paws that are healthy and free of open wounds/sores
- have eyes that are free of illness and not have genetic or injury obstructions
- have joints (including hips, elbows and knees) that move freely and cause the service dog no pain or discomfort

- be free of communicable diseases
- be up to date on vaccinations/immunity testing as recommended by the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association and in accordance with the laws where the service dog resides and regularly travels
- has no ailments that would cause the service dog pain or discomfort or that working as a service dog would exacerbate or put the public at risk (for example, not have arthritis or anxiety – these are only two of the many health issues that could lead to pain, increased irritability and aggression)

The note “with a calm and good temperament” includes the following:

- being non-aggressive to humans, dogs, cats/small animals and beings in the locations expected to be frequented
- having low chase behaviour/absence of predatory aggression
- having responses to disruptive visual, auditory, tactile and olfactory (smell) stimuli that do not interfere with the dog’s work or unreasonably interrupt or disturb members of the general public

Service Dog Training

Training for dogs who are expected to behave well in public is lengthy and ongoing. Training times will vary depending on the breed and maturity of the dog, skill level of the trainer and complexity of the training regime.

For the first two years of a dog's life, the dog should not be expected to work for a specific person. Rather, they are "in training", under supervision and expected to learn all they need to perform flawlessly on adulthood. As they learn, the dog should be continually assessed for any issues that would rule them out as a service dog later in life (such as reacting badly to other dogs and people on leash, significant fear and anxiety, fear of novel items and situations and so on). The majority of this training can be done by any competent dog trainer. Service dogs in training may wear a jacket, but do not have the same access rights as service dogs to enter public areas (it is up to the individual facility managers to decide if they allow these dogs).

Many service-dogs-in-training start out being raised by a volunteer foster raiser. Larger and more established service dog schools provide foster raisers with support, veterinary care, training and sometimes food or equipment.

Once the dog has matured, an additional several months intensive work is generally required to learn the specific skills that they need to work for a specific person. For example, a guide dog learns to navigate a person in complex situations, an autism service dog learns to provide strong body pressure to get their person through a "meltdown", a diabetic alert dog is taught an alert behaviour when they scent a change in their person's body chemistry and more.

This intensive skills work should be done by an experienced service dog trainer.

Training times will vary depending on the breed and maturity of the dog, skill level of the trainer and complexity of the training regime. Typically, a fully trained service dog should respond to trained commands 90% of the time on the first cue, regardless of environment, to be considered fully trained (CGSB Proposed Standard, 2017).

When dealing with trainers (either from a large established service dog organization or an independent), it's important to discuss and consider items covered in [Appendix C – Proposed Service Dog Handler's Bill of Rights](#) and ensure the trainer has insurance. Insurance provides the handler with some confidence that as a client you can sue them for things covered under their policy and that a reputable Canadian insurer may have to pay the claim.

Once these specific skills are learned, they must be maintained... in the same way that cars need ongoing maintenance to run well. Regularly weekly and daily training sessions will be required for the dog and must either be done by the person with the disability or someone in their support system (or done at a cost by a trainer).

Training Content

There are three general types of training using the recommended methods in Appendix C that can prepare an immature or inexperienced dog to become a service dog:

1. General family dog manners training - Dogs that are candidates to become service dogs may benefit from attending general family dog manners training to learn skills like sit, down, stay, etc. Many of the established service dog training schools (see the next section) teach these skills by providing classes to raisers of foster puppies. Independent trainers may do this work for a fee for non-school puppies, and/or service-dogs-in-training are welcomed to the regular foundation manners classes of CAPDT members.

There are two additional key types of training service dogs may need. CAPDT member-trainers may offer both types or only one.

2. Training in Public Access

Specific training in public access (special skills for going to malls, using relief areas that aren't grass, etc.). At the end of public access training, dogs should be able to meet a standard Public Access Test (PAT) and/or provincial government test which ensures that dogs who are accessing public spaces are stable, well behaved, and unobtrusive to the public and that the team is not a public hazard. They will need special skills for travel – such as fitting under the tables of restaurants, lying calmly in the wheel well of a strange taxi or sitting under a bus seat. Again, with a larger established school, much of the public access training will be done through classes the schools provide to raisers of foster puppies. An independent trainer who may be a CAPDT member may also provide this training for a fee in an individual one-on-one or in a group setting.

3. Training in Disability-Mitigating Specific Skills and Tasks

Specific skills and task training cover a variety of disability-mitigating dog behaviours – from alerting to diabetic lows, providing body pressure and more. At the end of skills and task training, dogs should be reliable over 90% of the time and fluent in performing the required skill/task. The larger established service dog schools have training staff who work with foster program graduates to “finish” them by training advanced skills specific to the clients.

Choosing Private Trainers for Manners or Public Access Training

If a CAPDT member offers these skills, they will be noted on their member profile. Before engaging a CAPDT member in these areas, you may find it useful to read the CAPDT article on choosing a trainer and also check the following:

- Go to their Facebook page and look for references from people who have their dogs.
- Ask to see their dogs and talk to the people that have their dogs about their experience with the trainer.
- Ask what your role is in the process - good trainers understand that both ends of the leash need extensive training to be a good service dog team.
- Typical dog trainer insurance does not cover training service dogs, so it is important to check that the trainer is specifically insured for this portion of their business. Ask to see their insurance certificate and make sure they carry at least \$2 million in liability insurance. This is especially important if you are looking for a medical alert service dog where the handler's health could depend on the dog's abilities to keep them safe.
- Reputable trainers also generally do not demand significantly large up-front payments before service is provided - this can be considered a red flag and a potential indicator of "if something sounds too good to be true, it probably is".
- According to the stringent [CAPDT Code of Ethics](#), guarantees can also not be provided so any trainer who is "guaranteeing you a fully trained service dog" is also likely not performing according to our ethics. Good dog trainers know that even the best trained dogs only perform as expected about 80 - 90% of the time and some of a service dog's performance will depend on the skill of - and bond with - their dog.

Even service dog experts note that only 3 of 4 dogs trained will be suitable to become service dogs. If you purchase a dog and it fails, you can try again but you are back to the 3 in 4 odds.... with those odds it would be possible to be unlucky twice (or more) in a row.

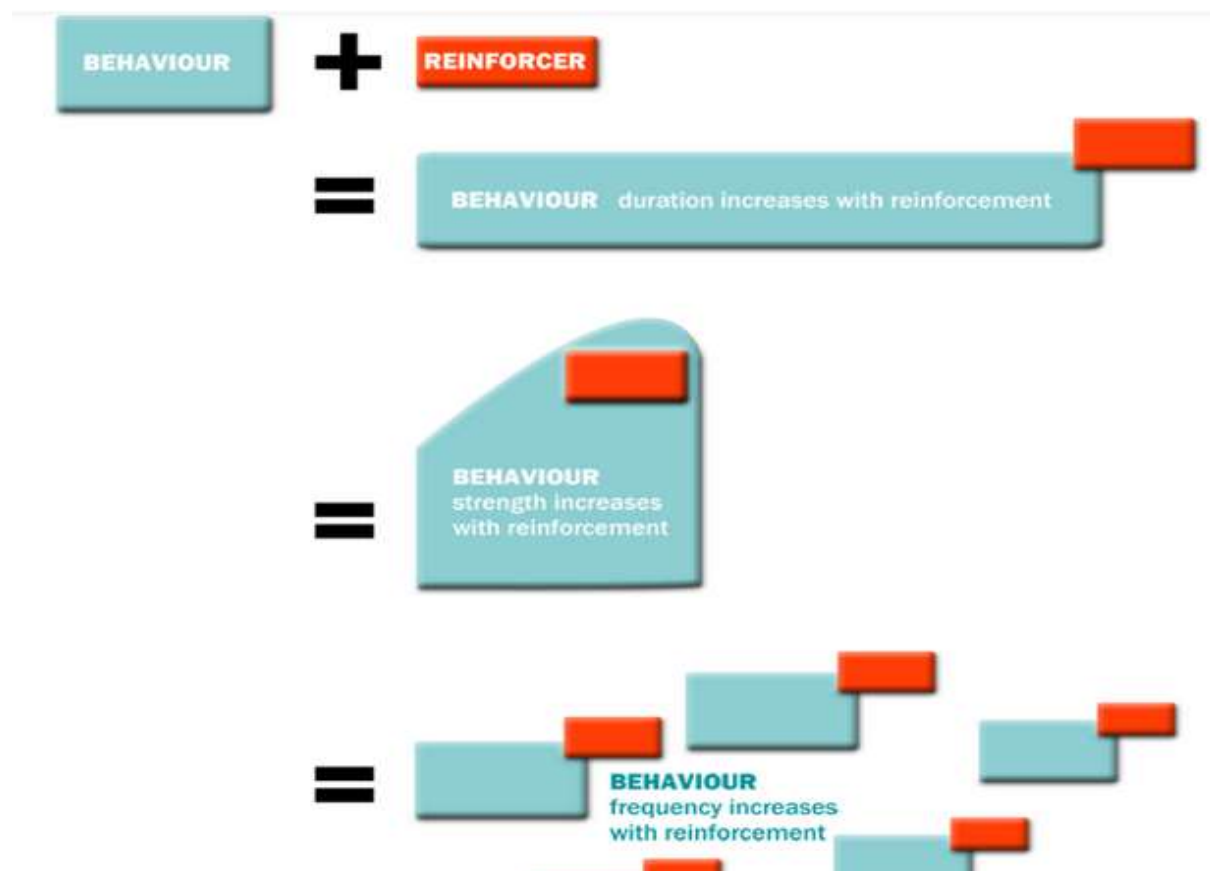
Training is the process of developing and maintaining skills in both the service dog candidate and the dog's handler. With both dogs and handlers, training sessions should be of duration appropriate to the age, abilities, cognitive capacities and experience of the learner and should not cause undue stress, anxiety or fear. For example, if a dog is showing more than an average

of one stress/anxiety/fear sign every two minutes over a twenty-minute training session, the session should be stopped and training method should be re-evaluated (CGSB Proposed Standard, 2017). These ideal training methods have been shown in research to improve the human-canine relationship, increase the amount of time the dog pays attention to their handler, predictability of behaviours and produce enthusiastic learners who are flexible in their behaviours...and are vital for operating effectively in modern public spaces.

New behaviours should be trained through:

- **luring** (using something a dog wants to guide them into a position and then rewarding them with it – slowly reducing/fading the visibility of the lure until the dog is doing the behaviour based on a specific cue in the absence of the lure),
- **capturing** (setting the dog up so they are likely to do the behaviour or watching them to see if the behaviour occurs, then rewarding them when they do it on their own), or
- **shaping** (setting the dog up so they are likely to make a small movement/approximation that is the first part of the behaviour and rewarding it – essentially breaking the final behaviour down into smaller steps that build toward the final goal – an excellent description of the process can be found at <https://www.clickertraining.com/shaping-success>).

Behaviour that is being reinforced changes in predictable ways:



Reinforcement must be what the dog finds rewarding in that moment – such as: treats, toys, play, access to environments, and so on.

Ending unwanted behaviours is also an important step in service dog training. However, punishing a dog can create conflicted responses to cues and can damage the bond between the service dog and the handler. In general, trainers recommend either managing situations so unwanted behaviours are unlikely to happen (for example, baby gating a dog away from a doorway so it doesn't learn to jump in excited greeting) or by using rewards to train a different and incompatible behaviour (such as lying down on a mat while visitors enter the home).

Becoming a dog trainer and understanding how to expertly develop a training plan for a dog requires a well-developed combination of education and experience. While it might be possible to find out how to provide first aid for a cut on the internet, if you wanted excellent quality medical care you would go to a doctor who had received excellent medical training and had been in practice for more than a few weeks. Training a service dog is best approached with the same idea in mind. Rather than trying to piece together how to train a dog from the internet, people interested in self-training a service dog are best advised to find a qualified and experienced professional trainer with excellent client testimonials to act as their guide and support who have used techniques like shaping to build the skills of a variety of dogs.

Having an experienced trainer becomes even more important when moving from having a young service-dog-in-training (SDIT) doing a behaviour well in the quiet atmosphere of the home, into a busy urban setting.

When the SDIT has completed “learner driver in the vacant parking lot training” – that is, when they will do a well-known behaviour for the trainer on cue, on a quiet day in their familiar home setting for the sole reward of one kibble, there's a tendency to want to take the SDIT into a busier environment and expect them to do the same behaviour equally well.

However, a learner driver who is leaving a vacant parking lot for the first time isn't asked to jump immediately to driving on a six-lane highway, where they would most likely experience:

- greater amounts of time driving (more **Duration**)
- getting further and further away from you (more **Distance**)
- all kinds of cars, signs, trucks and interesting things to see (more **Distraction**)
- having less room to maneuver and being required to react quickly (more **Difficulty**)
- and, usually, being without the emotional support of the calm driving instructor while passengers yell directions while at the same time frantically seeking a never-before-tried exit (more cognitive **Demand**)

So, it only makes sense that a trainer not ask a SDIT to try out their new behaviour while in a busy area (difficulty), with all kinds things to catch the eye (distractions), perhaps for a long time (duration) and to listen to us from further and further away (distance recalls, anyone?), perhaps with people yelling cues or other dogs trying to introduce themselves.

A key part of any dog trainer's job is to prepare and support clients as they begin to gradually introduce an SDIT to the five "D" areas. Experienced trainers also remind dog handlers that their dogs are individuals, and individuals don't learn everything the same way or act identically (otherwise the world would be a very boring place). So, there's no one "recipe" or "exact guide" that will "get the dog to do it" every time. This is one of the key differences between getting a service dog as a support versus getting an inanimate object such as a crutch.

Dogs from Established Programs

There are a number of well-respected programs in Canada that train and make available service dogs to the community of people with disabilities. They are primarily [Canadian Association of Guide & Assistance Dog Schools](#) members and operate on a not-for-profit basis.

There are both pros and cons to obtaining a dog from these schools. The cons of obtaining a dog from an established school include:

- generally, the schools maintain ownership of the dog. This can prevent the owner from things like competing in dog sports, choosing how to manage their weight or feed, etc.
- there are often long waiting lists (many hovering around two years)
- schools may have required training for prospective service dog handlers, done at the handler's expense (and at times done in the school's own residential setting)
- require ongoing updates and contacts with the school for the life of the dog

Some of these same "cons" may actually benefit the handler in the long run:

- there is less cognitive and emotional "load" for the handler in the training phase – with no need to acquire major training skills themselves or attend an extra two years of classes/work with a private trainer
- dogs who are no longer able to function may be replaced by the school
- temperamentally unsuitable dogs are "washed out" from the program and not placed
- the potential danger of selecting a private trainer who may not complete the contract or train poorly is avoided
- waiting lists are no longer than the time it would take to raise and begin to skill a privately-purchased dog

- if the dog is the one in four on average who do not make it, the owner has not committed two years and the expense to find out
- private trainers may focus on training the dog and not provide handler training or ongoing support

Programs accredited by Assistance Dogs International and similar large schools often provide a minimum of 300 hours of training/ education for the candidate dog.

In addition to not having to pay for extensive training, benefits to school dogs can include that if the dog is not a good "fit" or ages out/needs retirement, the school may provide a replacement dog.

Handler training and ongoing testing can ensure that the dog's training doesn't fail and fall apart once it is placed.

Each school is different and CAPDT suggests people consider a dog request to see the placement contract the school will require the dog recipient to sign and get assurances that the school is using the modern recommended training methods noted in the section above.

Below are links to the established and/or well-recognized service dog schools in Canada:

[Canadian Guide Dogs for the Blind](#)

[CNIB Guide Dogs](#)

[BC Guide Dog Services](#) - [Alberta Guide Dog Services](#), Autism Support Dogs and [Vancouver Island Compassion Dogs](#) are all divisions of BC Guide Dog Services

[MIRA Foundation Inc.](#)

[Autism Dog Services Inc. \(SW Ontario\)](#)

[National Service Dogs Training Centre, Inc.](#)

[Pacific Assistance Dogs Society](#)

[Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides](#)

[Dogs with Wings Assistance Dog Society \(AB\)](#)

[COPE Service Dogs](#)

[MSAR Service Dogs](#)

Dogs that are provided by these schools are considered "certified by the [school name]" and may have an I.D. card. However - these cards are not required for legal certification in Canada and are "nice" but not mandatory for owners.

For more on certification, credentials and identification, see the section of the same name further on in this document.

This list below is composed of smaller, independent schools who are not members of either ADI or IGDF:

[Asista Foundation](#)
[Aspen Service Dogs](#)
[Assistance Dogs for All \(AD4A\)](#)
[Assistance Service Dogs BC](#)
[AUDEAMUS](#)
[Canadian Alert Dogs, Inc.](#)
[Canadian Intervention and Assistance Dogs](#)
[Canine Support Services](#)
[Citadel Canine Society](#)
[Courageous Canines](#)
[Epic Service Dogs](#)
[Hope Heels Service Dogs](#)
[K9 Country Inn Service Dogs](#)
[Kingston 4 Paws Service Dogs](#)
[Leash of Hope Assistance Dogs](#)
[Les chiens togo](#)
[Maritime Specialty Service Dog Society](#)
[PAWS Fur Thought](#)
[Pawsitive Horizons](#)
[Searchlight Service Dogs](#)
[Skunk Academy](#)
[Sweet Charity Medical Assistance Dogs](#)
[Thames Centre Service Dogs](#)
[The Canadian Veteran Service Dog Unit](#)
[Watch My 6 Service Dogs](#)
[Wounded Warriors Canada](#)

Potential service dog handlers seeking a dog from one of these schools should review Appendix C – the Proposed Service Dog Handler’s Bill of Rights for additional items to consider.

Owner (Handler) -Trained Service Dogs

As with the other options above, there are pros and cons to having the handler choose to purchase and train their own dog. While the handler avoids the long wait from a training school for a ready-made dog, the handler takes the cost of purchasing and raising the dog on themselves. While some people with disabilities find this extra work a significant challenge, other handlers find it a worthwhile project.

There are also hybrid models where owners take their young candidate dog-in-training through general obedience and work with a professional trainer or independent service dog school (see the list on the previous page) to complete the public access and skills training. One professional trainer called self-training the “build your own wheelchair from scratch” approach suggested that potential owner-trainers consider the challenges they might face building their own wheelchair from scratch if you could afford one. They suggested this would provide some small sense of the energy, cost and commitment self-training takes.

One study also noted that, when first living with their service dogs, people who had self-trained their service dogs experienced more burdens than those living with professionally trained service dogs (Yamamoto and Hart, 2019).

In general, people with disabilities who have never trained a service dog before or have not had a dog in quite a while will benefit from the advice and support of an experienced trainer who abides by the CAPDT Code of Ethics and Bylaws (www.capdt.ca – search “service dog”).

With all trainers not from the large established schools, who are not backed by a large program, there is limited recourse if the dog whose training you have invested in does not provide the required assistance. You may be able to sue your private specialist service dog trainer if you can prove that they did not meet agreed deliverables. A contract clearly outlining your expected outcomes, length of time of the program and what will happen if the trainer finds the dog unable to learn the outcomes, as well as any provision for follow-up and ongoing training is vital. It is highly recommended potential private trainer clients seek legal advice on a contract!

Appendix C – which describes a Proposed Service Dog Handler’s Bill of Rights, can provide some guidance on what to look for from a private trainer – particularly if they are proposing to provide all your dog’s training in the same fashion as one of the larger and more established schools.

TRAINER INTERVIEWS

The following questions should be asked of all schools and trainers you are considering:

Is there a waiting list? If you do, how long is the average wait at the current time?
Is your organization a registered charity or non-profit organization?
Are you and/or your organization insured?
If your organization provides the service dog, are they provided at no charge or do you charge for the dog?
Do I provide the puppy service-dog-in-training candidate or do you?
Will I have to raise funds and tell my story for my application to be accepted? Do you support clients in raising funds?
What are the qualifications of your service dog trainers, what are your qualifications?
Are you working with an interdisciplinary team to meet the needs of your clients?
Do you have a background working with people with special needs?
Do you have an application process? If so, do you have a privacy and use of information policy?
Is there an application fee? Are there any other fees along the way (for example, room & board at a training centre)
Do you support this document's "Appendix C – Proposed Service Dog Handler's Bill of Rights"
What training do you offer to service dog handlers? Is the training mandatory?
What are your clients' responsibilities?
Do you have any breed restrictions?
What is the organization's responsibilities?
Do you provide follow-up, aftercare, advocacy, and other resources for your graduates?
If you work independently, do you have a current police check or a vulnerable sector check?
Does your organization screen staff and volunteers working with vulnerable people?
How do you determine who is qualified for your program?
How long has your school existed? Who are you accountable to? Do you belong to any national intl. associations?
How long have you been in business? Is the business registered with the federal or provincial government and where?
How many service dog teams do you graduate annually?
If I meet the application requirements and graduate, do you have or know of a peer support group that I could get involved with?
How much ongoing training am I required to do to maintain the dog's behaviours?
Do you have regular testing and/or recertification once the dogs are placed into service?
Am I required to travel to you for training or ongoing testing? If so, to where? Is this a cost I need to cover?
Who maintains ownership of the dog?
Do your staff provide ongoing information on access and support in advocacy for access where needed?
What happens to the dogs that are not suited to be a service dog?
Can I keep the service dog when it retires?

- Thanks to the Canadian Foundation for Animal Assisted Support Services for many of these questions!

Legal Rights and Requirements

Disability Certification & Access Laws

The *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, passed in 1982. Section 15(1) of the *Charter* states: “Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination...”

The Act only applies to people who work for or receive benefits from the federal government, to First Nations, and to federally-regulated private companies such as airlines and banks. Each province and territory in Canada have their own human rights legislation (Ontario’s legislation was the first in 1962). The right not to be discriminated against because of a disability under this type of legislation generally includes the right to have disability-related needs reasonably accommodated to the point of undue hardship. This is called the “duty to accommodate”.

So, in general, Canadians cannot be discriminated against based on their use of a service dog, as there is a fundamental guarantee of equality under the law. However, each jurisdiction and regulation differs by in the disability groups that are covered, the protections the law offers or who is afforded the rights, whether it be the individual or the dog (McCaig, 2008).

Most provincial and territorial laws require that a medical professional provide a letter to the person seeking a service dog stating that they believe a service dog would be helpful to mitigate the individual's disabilities.

There is a general understanding that Canada’s laws in the area of service dogs have not been able to keep pace with the growth in their general use (Doctor and Meggs, 2017).

Canadian Laws

There are a number of federal and provincial/territorial laws that govern how service dogs are permitted in public life and addressing access. A list is on the next page (however, more are added or changed regularly, so we encourage you to check with your local jurisdiction – this can be done fairly efficiently on the internet by looking for each province and territory’s e-laws website and typing “dog” in the search field). For case law, search [CanLII - Canadian Legal Information Institute](#). Provincial laws may require a dog not from a “recognized provider” (in many cases these are the larger assistance dog schools, such as those that are certified by Assistance Dogs International) to undergo testing and get a licence. Others will require that the service dog handler’s disability be certified via a letter from a medical professional (which professionals will be defined in the law).

However, none of these laws specify a dog must be perfectly behaved at all times. Dogs are living beings, and can be unpredictable in certain situations, no matter how much training they receive. Dogs displaying aggressive behaviour fall under the same legislation (not listed here) as pet dogs. For example, in Ontario the Dog Owner's Liability Act requires the owner of a dog be liable for damages resulting from a bite or attack by the dog on another person or domestic animal. Any dog owner can also be sued for negligence - not if the animal acts in an unexpected way and injures someone – but only if there is foreseeability of harm and unreasonable conduct.

Disability laws generally suggest that where there are competing issues of disability and access (i.e. people with severe allergies and people with service dogs) that accommodations be made so that both persons can be satisfied. For example, a person with allergies may be seated at a distance from the dog where possible.

Service dogs **in training** are not legally-protected service dogs when they are not acting to mitigate the disability of their handler. Foster dogs under the control of volunteers or dogs in training being handled by a trainer are not required under law to be given a right of public access. Barring the grace of commercial establishments or specific local laws, these dogs are entitled only to the same access as any pet dog would be.

LEGISLATION

Canada

[Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms](#)

[Canadian Human Rights Act](#)

[Canada Transport Act](#) and Air Passenger Protection Regulations (SOR/2019-150), and the Accessible Transportation for Persons with Disabilities Regulations

[Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation - Landlord and Tenant Responsibilities](#)

National Defence and Canadian Forces Ombudsman - [Travelling with a Psychiatric Service Dog or Emotional Support Animal: A Guide for Canadian Armed Forces Members and Veterans](#)

British Columbia

[Guide Dog and Service Dog Act – \(requires certification for service dogs that perform tasks for people with disabilities, out of province service dogs are exempt\)](#)

[Rights of Certified Dog & Handler Teams](#)

[Guide Dog & Service Dog Team Certification](#)

Phone Toll free - 1 855 587-0185 (press option 5), Phone Direct - 250-387-6414

Email: guideandservicedogs@gov.bc.ca

Alberta

[Service Dogs in Alberta](#)

[Human Rights, Citizenship and Multiculturalism Act](#)

[Blind Person's Rights Act](#) ,

[Blind Person's Rights Amendment Act](#) (adds specific protection for service dogs for the Deaf.)

Manitoba

[Human Rights Code](#)

[Manitoba Service Animals Protection Act](#)

[Food and Food Handling Establishments Regulation](#) (see section 9)

Saskatchewan

[Human Rights Code](#)

Yukon Territory

[Human Rights Act](#)

Northwest Territory

[Human Rights Act](#)

Nunavut

[Human Rights Act](#)

Ontario

[Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act - Standard 2016](#)

Health Protection and Promotion Act - [Food Premises Regulation](#), [Meat Act](#)

[Blind Person's Rights Act](#)

Quebec

[Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms](#)

Nova Scotia

[Nova Scotia Service Dog Act](#)

[Human Rights Act](#)

[Blind Person's Rights Act](#)

New Brunswick

[Human Rights Act](#)

Prince Edward Island

[Human Rights Act](#)

Newfoundland & Labrador

[Human Rights Code](#)

[Blind Person's Rights Act](#)

Certification, Credentials & “FAKE Credentials”

There are a number of organizations who claim to certify, accredit or otherwise recognize a dog in Canada as a service dog. What makes a certification worth anything is the size and credibility of the organization backing the certification AND whether it is accepted by law or at least recognized by many places where Canadians wish to take their service dogs (like schools).

There is also no such thing as a Canadian Emotional Support Animal in any law, so those "certifications" are completely FAKE in Canada! A service dog is a service dog. PERIOD.

Essentially, credentials available fall into three categories:

1. Government-Required Credentials
2. Large Service Dog School I.D. Cards
3. Poorly Recognized Credentials (often known as “fake” credentials and certifications)

Don't pay for "certifications" unless the examinations are offered by government departments for a fee. Large service dog schools do not charge for certifying a dog from their programs and there is a lengthy process to obtain a dog certified by these schools. And the **poorly recognized credentials in the third category are primarily meaningless to the service dog handler and tend not to be worth the paper they are printed on.**

1. Government-Required Credentials

There are currently only three provinces offering service dog testing - the provinces of British Columbia, Alberta and Nova Scotia offer legitimate certifications that a service dog and handler have passed their tests – these certifications are recognized by law in their provinces, while the other provincial and territorial laws require only the **DISABILITY OF THE PERSON** to be certified (see the section above on disability law). In the U.S., the Americans With Disability Act (ADA) does not require service animals to be certified. https://www.ada.gov/regs2010/service_animal_qa.pdf

2. Large Service Dog Schools

Large well-established training schools tend to be members of well-regarded International Associations that produce service dogs – primarily Assistance Dogs International and the International Guide Dog Federation. Member Schools such as National Service Dogs and Canadian Guide Dogs for the Blind have set testing criteria and programs to ensure dog and handler teams are working effectively together before they “pass” from the school and are provided with the school's I.D. card. It's important to note these are **ID cards** and **not certifications**. These ID cards MAY OR MAY NOT be accepted by any organization within Canada (including educational institutions).

3. Poorly Recognized Credentials

“Fake” certifying organizations can easily offer their own certifications - anyone can set up a website and offer a letter, or a jacket, or an ID card saying they have “certified you”. These certifications are not worth the paper they are written on. There are also a number of trainers or organizations who offer to provide your dog with testing and certification. Unfortunately, many of these credentials are not well recognized and none have the force of law which would allow you to call a dog a “service dog” and take them out in public.

Information for Business Owners and Employees

Despite legislation that makes it illegal to deny access or refuse service to a person with a disability who has a service dog, it happens every day in Canada - with taxi and rideshare refusals being the most frequent (to the point where there is a Twitter hashtag - #DeniedaRide – and a handler who posts this can harm the public reputation of the business). Even when businesses allow service dogs in correctly, the treatment of service dog handlers may be different from the treatment offered other customers. For example, the team are allowed in a restaurant, but the host seats them in a far corner away from the other diners, or no one actually asks the service dog and handler to leave the business, but the employees tell the service dog handler they have to check with their manager to see if service dogs are allowed.

These types of experiences can leave service dog handlers apprehensive about visiting any new business. There is an extra sense of dread caused by wondering if things are going to go wrong or if they can just expect to be treated like everyone else – without having to explain themselves and their rights. Most particularly for those whose service dog offers support for social anxiety – it can be traumatic to be pulled aside and singled out for treatment different from everyone else, and to appear to be "in trouble" and challenging a legitimate authority. It can become an even more fraught situation when bystanders unfamiliar with service dog access issues are watching and/or commenting.

When the service dog handler is more familiar with Canadian laws than your staff handling the situation, and your staff misunderstand the law, heated discussions can ensue. Indeed, the North American website "Service Dog Central" notes that many confrontations over access are escalated by service dog handlers (SDC webpage, 2011).

It is vital to make your business an accessible, positive, and welcoming environment for all customers. Challenging everyone who attends your facility to provide documents or arbitrarily deciding a dog of a certain type is "not a service dog" can create liabilities for your firm. Handlers arbitrarily denied access can lay a complaint against your operation under human rights laws, while in general you are required to accommodate the person with the disability (and their service dog) to the point of undue hardship.

Feeling normal is the dream of many people with disabilities and this is a dream that can be fulfilled when businesses know the law and train all their employees. Signage at the front of a business establishment indicating that service dogs are welcome can often ease a service dog handler's mind and provide guidance to staff who are unsure about the policy of the business.

Business owners and employees may be concerned about what seems to be a growing number of odd-looking service dogs you see in town. During the 1960's and 1970's, the majority of service dogs were dogs for the blind who wore a distinct jacket and harness and guided persons who were blind. Now there are a variety of people with service dogs in different harnesses and the dogs may be different sizes. This leads to some concern that people are misrepresenting

their pets as service dogs or trying to pass off a pet as a service dog. If this becomes a concern, the business or employee may be tempted to try to challenge the person and dog.

The overwhelming majority of people who use trained service dogs are on your side. Service dog handlers share your concerns, and would like you to know what your rights are so that you can help keep public spaces safe for all who want to patronize businesses, whether or not they are accompanied by a service dog. A business and its staff should know that:

A service dog is a dog that a person with a disability uses which mitigates their disability(s). More and more these days, the dogs involved in these tasks can be a variety of sizes and shapes – and may be wearing different equipment than the traditional guide dog harness.

Canadian and provincial human rights legislation protects the rights of equal access to all public places and businesses for persons with disabilities and prohibits discrimination against them, **including those who use service dogs.** Discrimination includes denial of access to any premises to which the public would normally have access. In addition to Human Rights Codes, five provinces have additional legislation which allows police to give an immediate ticket with a fine for refusing service or interfering with the dog that can go up to (in some cases) \$25,000.

For transportation service operators, we recommend reviewing this video, prepared by the Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB): <https://youtu.be/JFJJC637HZc>. Please note that while guide dogs tend to wear a harness, other types of service dogs do not have to.

If someone wishes to use your transportation service or enters your place of business with a dog and it is not obvious what service the dog provides, please keep the following in mind:

1. Neither you nor staff may:
 - request extra cleaning fees
 - ask about or require information on the person's disability
 - ask for details of the dog's training
 - require medical documentation beyond a broad letter from a medical professional in the provinces where these are required
 - require or ask for a special identification card or training documentation for the dog unless this is required in the province, or
 - ask that the dog demonstrate its ability to perform the work or the task.
2. There are no specific breeds that are not permitted under Canadian laws as service dogs – so you may see dogs of every size from tiny to large.
3. When a customer visits your business with a service dog, the customer is likely to be grateful for a courteous greeting and a sincere offer to assist.
4. If a service dog is causing a danger to customers, you may request politely that the handler control their dog. The statutory definition of criminal negligence involves doing any act or

omitting to do a legal duty that shows 'wanton or reckless disregard for the lives or safety of others. If the dog is not controlled and the dog is dangerous under the definition of Canada's Criminal Code (any animal that has attacked or bitten, attempted to attack or bite or chased any person) then the handler can be charged. You can see that the bar is set quite high for "danger" - simply barking or repeated getting up and down are not sufficient for you to bar a person with disabilities and their dog.

5. If the service dog's presence is conflicting with the health needs of another person (for example, someone with allergies) this does not mean you can bar the dog handler from your facility. The needs of both must be accommodated at the same time and that may – at times – provide you with potential conflicts. For example, the dog's handler (or the person with allergies) may be asked to move to a more distant table, for example. However, either party can refuse to move without penalty. Usually, though, when people with disabilities and health needs are given reasonable alternatives (and the law is explained to them so they understand your business could be liable for refusing entry to a person with a disability's service dog), they are willing to work through the issue with you.
6. A special note since the pandemic is that in general, guide dogs/seeing eye dogs are trained to take their vision-impaired handler to a door. They do not understand signs on the doors and arrows on the floor – directing people where to wait and which way to go. They do not understand that there may be a line-up that wraps around the building of people ahead of us, waiting to get inside. And they do not understand that there is now an "in" door and an "out" door – and that they need to stay two metres away from other people. Guide dogs and their handlers need extra patience as they navigate this changed world. If you see someone with a guide dog, don't be afraid to ask, "Do you need help?" Those four little words can make all the difference to someone who is struggling.
7. It is not required to provide food, toileting space or water to a service dog. But it is considerate to offer water to fill bowls as required, and to be aware of nearby areas where a dog could easily be relieved (and perhaps to offer to walk with a guide dog handler who is blind or partially sighted to a nearby location if they are not familiar with the area.) This is certainly not required – and yet your support can be a key factor that gets you an excellent and positive customer review!

In general, a service dog will not require bedding and should know how to station unobtrusively beneath a table or chair, but their handler may bring a mat to provide them with additional comfort. Service dogs often spend a lot of time sitting and lying on concrete and the extra padding of a mat can help prevent pressure sores or hair loss. In general, service dog handlers know it is polite to feed their dog at home before or after an outing. However, they may use food treats in training – a very acceptable and encouraged practice. So, don't be surprised if the service dog handler feeds the dog from their hand from time to time.

8. Service dogs in training are not provided with the same legal recognition and rights of public access as working service dog teams are. However, many provinces and municipalities allow service dogs in training to be treated as service animals. The socialization period of the service dog in training is extremely important to help develop their overall skills for their future as a working dog in the field, and to learn to keep a calm demeanor in busy public places. In general, it is a public service to allow them access... and their handlers will be working hard to prevent any issues. The good name of your business can be enhanced if you allow these young dogs access so they can practice their skills.

Public Access Issues – Tips for Service Dog Handlers

In general, service dog handlers have the right to access the vast majority of public and private spaces with their service dog (barring specific requirements such as those listed in the legislation on the previous pages – such as not being allowed where animals are being slaughtered or in food preparation areas of restaurants).

The first line of defence against these situations is pre-planning. It is a shame that this becomes an extra burden for service dog handlers, however a “heads up” to a store owner that a service dog

will be accompanying a handler for a wedding dress fitting provides a chance to assure them you will keep a dog’s muddy paws away from their products and be respectful while in their space. With taxis and rideshares, it may also be helpful to identify that there will a dog present up front – however at times this can also mean waiting longer for a ride! Make sure when you request a driven transportation that you specify not only the address but the specific location you will be standing.

When facing access issues, it is important the service dog handler does their best not to respond emotionally and without putting into action a clear plan that can help them succeed. Any time a situation becomes emotionally charged, both sides tend to dig in their heels and refuse to budge, most often resulting in neither side getting a successful resolution.

During advance discussions where access is challenged, or in spontaneous visits where an uneducated staffer or small business owner tries to ban a service dog, be prepared to professionally present the facts that support the access claim. It is often helpful to carry copies of short one-page summaries of access laws in your local jurisdiction for handing to staff.

The initial goal of the conversation should be education. If the discussion becomes emotionally charged or the staff is unwilling to consider a factual presentation, a request to speak to the staff’s manager is in order. Should a discussion at that level not be successful, it is best to end the discussion and leave the premises.

Continuing to escalate an unproductive discussion or appearing to offer a physical threat by their presence can create a dangerous situation for both the service handler and service dog.

Once initial notes are made and the emotional stress and toll of the negative encounter attended to, it can be easier to develop an effective strategy to address the issue – keeping in mind how much time, energy and expense the handler is willing to go to in order to have the facility educated on public access rights for future handlers.

If you have been denied access:

- You can file a Human Rights Complaint through your provincial Human Rights Tribunal.
- You can file a complaint with a local by-law officer, if the city licenses the establishment.
- You may be able to file a police report in one of the five provinces with additional legislation by calling the non-emergency number of the police force where the business was located.
- If you are using a licensed taxi or airport limousine, you may contact the local Licensing Enforcement and file a complaint with a by-law officer, or in the case of rideshare services such as Uber, file a complaint with the head office.
- You can contact your local media.
- If you have a dog from one of the large training schools, reach out to check if they provide assistance in advocacy.

Information for Places of Religious Worship

Any religious organization in Canada that permits entry to the public and other third parties (for example, people working for a secular organization that leases or rents space from the congregation) is required to allow a service dog handler the same access allowed in other public spaces. As a result, we recommend places of worship review the ‘Information for Business Owners’ section above and follow these guidelines.

A service dog is allowed anywhere that their human handler would normally be allowed. In premises where food is prepared for commercial service, dogs may be prohibited by law. However, kitchens in places of religious worship are usually open to all and are not public health unit inspected, so a service dog is generally permitted to enter.

An important note for places of religious worship is to recognize that people with disabilities may not be arriving with a perfect looking “Cadillac example” of a service dog. Because wait lists for dogs are so long, often handlers purchase a puppy they can afford (or rescue a dog) and their dog may not have received the same formal training as a dog from a large charitable organization. However, if the dog mitigates the handler’s disability, it IS a service dog.

It may well benefit your organization in the long run if your Board and congregational staff share the information from this document with parishioners and develop a policy for how new visitors with service dogs will be welcomed. If your congregation welcomes and encourages

members of the public to explore your faith and worship with you, then greeting them at the door in a way that questions their need for a dog, or implies their dog is a nuisance, may well turn them away. This attitude sits in stark contrast to one of the most fundamental ethical rules of how we relate to each other as people. The Golden Rule – suggesting that we act toward others as we would wish to be treated (known also as the *Ethic of Reciprocity*), is arguably the most consistent, most prevalent and most universal ethical principle in history – and is found in numerous religions. When developing a congregational policy on service dogs, in addition to checking with any national governing body for your congregation, your policy makers would be well-advised to consider the Golden Rule values of mutuality, interdependence and reciprocity.

School and Educational Institution Access

Educational institutions for all ages are vital to consider in the service dog equation. Schools are not considered public places and as a result they have unique abilities to limit access to their facilities – even for people with disabilities.

School boards may only allow certain dogs into their educational institutions. Often, educational institutions choose only to accept dogs from schools that are members of international organizations that require a high standard from their members and audit them regularly (such as [Assistance Dogs International](#) or the [International Guide Dog Federation](#)). Educational institutions believe these dogs may receive more comprehensive training than those trained by private for-profit companies or individual owner-trainers who may never have trained a service dog before. Other educational institutions may also require provincial certification and a complex application process prior to the dog beginning school with a student.

Some educational institutions prohibit service dogs completely, suggesting that the dogs are not needed to support student learning and provide a burden on staff who must now manage both student and dog. Others require significant proof that the student cannot learn effectively without the support of the dog or require the student to be the only handler of the dog. While some universities and colleges may require service dog handlers to obtain a licence allowing the dog on campus.

Each educational institution will have their own requirements and students/parents are advised to check the institution's requirements carefully before getting a service dog. The best place to begin this dialogue is to find out the policy of your local school board, university or college from their head office.

Access in Healthcare Settings

As with public settings, individuals with disabilities and their service dogs are required to have access. In general, much of the same material for Business Owners (above) will apply and healthcare settings have a duty to accommodate.

This does not mean the setting is required to provide bowls and food for the dog, however they are required to identify appropriate relief areas for the dog and dialogue with their client around issues such as exercise and sleeping arrangements. No breed of dog is hypoallergenic, so facilities will need to take care regarding placement of service dog handlers who are staying on site overnight or for an extended period.

The handler is responsible for the service dog, and the care of the service dog in any healthcare setting (outpatient or inpatient), including feeding, grooming, toileting, walking/exercising, overall welfare, and supervision. If assistance is needed the handler should generally take responsibility for arranging for support to be provided by family and friends or arranges for a separate handler. Service dogs are not required to wear an identifying vest (but it is recommended for the clarity of other handlers in the setting – the vest can differentiate the service dog from on-duty therapy dogs who may be visiting the healthcare setting).

Some restricted areas for service dogs may include those that require specific precautions and sterile areas that are restricted to the public or visitors, such as the operating rooms and burn units (*Guelph General Hospital - Policy: Accessibility standards customer service, service animals*, 2013), and may include isolation rooms. Please encourage the service dog handler to check the hospital's policies prior to any scheduled surgery, in addition to checking the policies of the hospital closest to their home in case of emergency, so that they can make appropriate arrangements to have another handler stand by if needed.

Airline & Transportation Provider Access

In general, under equity laws and the 'duty to accommodate', service dogs (but NOT service dogs in training) are able to access land-based public transportation. Some public providers such as Ontario's "GO Transit" actively encourage service dogs in training to ride the trains. It is always wise to check with local transportation providers for any unique requirements. As under the topic of "Public Access" above, challenges from staff and employees on all transportation providers may occur and must be well-managed.

Via Rail

1. VIA Rail allows one (1) service dog per passenger on board its trains.
2. Only dogs are accepted.
3. Certain provinces and municipalities prohibit pit bulls. VIA Rail therefore does not allow this breed of dog system-wide.
4. For operational reasons, Via requires 48 hours' notice for passengers intending to travel with a guide or service dog. If notified less than 48 hours in advance, VIA will make a reasonable effort to accommodate the passenger and their dog.
5. Certified guide and service dogs always travel free.
6. The dog must remain on the floor or on the handler's lap.
7. The dog must accompany the handler everywhere on board, including where food is served.
8. In either Economy or Business class, a second seat will be booked at no additional cost to make sure both the service dog and handler are comfortable. On certain departures, service dog handlers may also occupy a two-person cabin at a reduced fare.
9. Service dogs must be harnessed, leashed, or tethered, unless these devices interfere with the dog's work or the individual's disability prevents the use of these devices.

VIA personnel may require the dog be removed from the train or from the station premises in the following cases:

- The dog is not properly controlled and effective action is not immediately taken to control the dog (e.g., it barks repeatedly and uncontrollably or is not housebroken).
- The dog poses a threat to the health or safety of others.

Important: If you are asked to remove the service dog but would like to remain on the premises and/or continue to travel without the dog, the handler must make arrangements at their own cost for another person or local animal control to assume custody of the animal. The handler may be required to continue your VIA train trip at a later time or on a later date. There is also the option of placing the service dog in the baggage car – a crate must be provided by the service dog handler if this is required. (So, better to travel with one just in case).

Other passengers

Via notes that some passengers may be uncomfortable with the presence of a service dog due to factors such as allergies, cultural reasons, personal discomfort, or fear. To respond to conflicting needs, VIA personnel will consider options such as relocating passengers to separate areas of the train.

Paperwork

The service dog handler may be required to produce documentation indicating that the dog has been certified by an accredited institution to work as a guide or service dog.

Via also has some additional requirements for a subset of service dog handlers. In particular, they have adopted the problematic use of the term Emotional Support Animal when referring to the service dogs of people with mental health disabilities and have added an extra hurdle for these people with disabilities.

If a person with mental health disabilities WHOSE DOG IS NOT TASK TRAINED TO DO SOMETHING SPECIFIC beyond providing required emotional support are travelling on a VIA Rail train for the first time, they must:

- Have a mature dog of at least 18 months old.
- Provide a signed medical certificate from a licensed medical doctor or mental health professional (e.g., a psychiatrist or psychologist).
- Ensure the medical certificate states that you cannot travel alone without the service dog.
- Ensure the medical certificate is dated no more than one year prior to the date of travel, unless it states that functional limitation is permanent.
- Provide a signed and dated Conditions for Travel form.

Template for the medical certificate and conditions for travel documents: [Download the Confidential Medical Certificate for Passengers Requiring an Emotional Support Dog and Conditions for Travel with an Emotional Support Dog and have them completed. PDF](#)

Once completed, the forms must be submitted by email (support_services@viarail.ca) or fax (506-859-3943) for approval. VIA Rail may request up to 96 hours advance notice for all new requests requiring a medical certificate. They will contact the applicant within 48 hours to provide confirmation of approval and instructions on how to book a complimentary ticket for the handler and dog.

Tickets

Tickets can be purchased by telephone at 1 888 VIA-RAIL (1 888 842-7245) or in person and are advised to describe the handler's service dog and needs clearly. For those who are hearing-impaired or have speech disabilities, contact is via teletypewriter (TTY) at 1 800 268-9503, or by email to customer_relations@viarail.ca.

Relief Areas

Possible stops for service animal relief breaks during the trip are as follows:

Corridor trains: No breaks available.

Long-haul trains: If the train is running on time, Via will stop at the stations listed below.

- The Canadian (Trains 01 and 02):
Caperol, Hornepayne (no designated relief area), Sioux Lookout, Winnipeg, Saskatoon, Edmonton, Jasper, Kamloops
- The Ocean (Trains 14 and 15):
Moncton, Campbellton, Sainte-Foy

Important notice: If the train is not running on schedule or if the length of time between stops is unreasonable, arrangements must be made with the Service Manager on board to have the locomotive engineers stop the train at intermediate locations, when it can be done safely.

Passengers are advised of the applicable stops, and arrangements are made on board during the trip and before arrival at the stations. These guidelines are validated with each passenger's itinerary, and adjustments are made if needed.

Some Via stations may have service dog relief areas and/or quiet areas. Because our stations' infrastructure may vary, check the information about departure and arrival stations beforehand using Via's [Find a Station tool](#).

Airline Access

In Canada, an aircraft with 30 or more seats is obligated under regulations to accept a service dog for carriage **without charge**. It does not matter whether the handler of the service dog intends to travel in first, business or economy class. Air carriers are obligated to provide sufficient floor space to permit the service dog to remain on the floor at the handler's seat while ensuring that the person and the dog can travel safely and comfortably.

There are three basic requirements for acceptance on board the aircraft: the service dog must be required by a person for assistance with their disability; it must be certified, in writing, as having been trained by an organization or person specializing in service dog training **to perform a task to assist the person with a disability with a need related to their disability**; and it must be properly leashed, tethered and/or harnessed.

The dog does not have to be required for tasks during the flight, but rather must perform tasks or services for the person on a day-to-day basis. However, at any time, the dog can be denied transport if it poses any type of health and safety threat, has not been trained to behave in a public setting and may cause a significant disruption to cabin service.

Share and Get Information

Unlike in most public access situations within Canada, carriers are entitled to ask for information to help them assess whether a service dog is required by a person with a disability to provide assistance. It is important for carriers and passengers travelling with service dogs to engage in a discussion as early as possible before departure. This ensures that each party has the information it needs and helps avoid problems when it is time to travel.

Steps for a Smooth Flight

Air Canada Reservations: 1-888-247-2262 Medical Assistance Desk: 1-800-667-4732 Fax: 1-866-584-0380 Web: www.aircanada.com	West Jet Telephone: 1-888-937-8538 Fax: 1-855-648-8166 Web: www.westjet.com	Contact the airline at least 48 (and preferably 72) hours in advance of travel to inform them of the needs of the handler and the presence of the service dog. If the handler does not give airlines the requested notice, they are not obligated to accommodate the passenger.
--	---	--

In special cases, such as the WestJet Vacation package, the airline requires seven days' notice in order to book transfers, car rentals or other services included in needed accommodations.

- Tell the airline the weight, height and length of the service dog, as well as its ability to curl up for an extended period of time.
- Ask whether there will be enough space for the dog.
- Ask what documentation the airline requires (i.e., vaccinations, letter from medical professional, training certificate) and be prepared to fax or email copies.
- Ask how far in advance it is recommended arrive at the terminal or station. Allow extra time for check-in, boarding, and individualized safety briefings or orientations compared to normal passenger advice printed on ticket receipt.
- Ask where the designated relieving areas will be (see list below, confirm they are currently open).
- Ask whether there are special procedures for screening of your dog when entering secure zones and boarding areas.

- Ask what the process is for passing the dog through security screens and what equipment can be present (i.e. fabric collar with no metal parts or a slip leash vs. a leash with a metal collar clip)
- Take special care with a connecting flight. Tell the airline. Ask them to help make arrangements with the connecting airline – as the connecting airline’s policies may be different.

Designated Relief Areas (list is not exhaustive)

Alberta

Calgary: Calgary International Airport (YYC)

Dog relief areas are available outside of the terminal buildings. There are three areas located on the Arrivals Level outside Door 1, Door 9 and Door 17. YYC Calgary International Airport is one of the first airports in Canada to have an in-terminal pet relief area. The area is located post-security in Concourse B adjacent to Gate B34 in the Domestic Terminal Building.

Edmonton: Edmonton International Airport (YEG)

Pet relief areas available outside of Arrivals Level 1:

- Just outside of door 10 to the south
- Outside the north-west corner of the Easy Parkade (near metered parking and Rendez-vous) across from door 3
- Just outside of door 1 to the north

Fort McMurray: Fort McMurray International Airport (YMM)

There is a pet relief area located at the outdoor courtyard. The courtyard is equipped with plastic animal waste collections bags and disposal units.

British Columbia

Comox: Comox Valley Airport (YQQ)

There are designated animal relieving area on the lawns adjacent to both sides of the Terminal. Waste bags and receptacle are located on the curb, adjacent to the lawn. Post Security, there is a designated animal relieving area airside. Please contact a CVAC representative for assistance, or call 250-218-3583 and a staff member will provide an escort and mobility assistance to access this site. Re-screening (through security) will not be required if this protocol is followed. There is no access to this area without an authorized (airside) escort

Kelowna: Kelowna International Airport (YLW)

At YLW, a relieving area for pets has been designated in the landscaping to the right of the Arrivals exit doors.

Victoria: Victoria International Airport (YYJ)

Victoria International Airport has two designated pet relief areas on the grass berm located directly across from the air terminal building. These areas are equipped with waste bags and receptacles.

Vancouver: Vancouver International Airport (YVR)

Customers travelling with dogs will find a dog relief area outside International Arrivals at the entrance to Chester Johnson Park. Certified service dogs and guide dogs are welcome throughout YVR's terminal facilities. YVR has also just recently opened a full-service pet relief area in the U.S. Departures Terminal, post-security near gate 76 and 77.

Manitoba

Winnipeg: Winnipeg James Armstrong Richardson International Airport (YWG)

Outside Door #3 on Arrivals Level 1 is a designated park like setting for service animals and other animals in transit. Turn right on exiting the terminal and follow the sidewalk to the green space.

New Brunswick

Lincoln: Fredericton International Airport (YFC)

Fredericton International Airport has a designated animal relief area outside near the Arrivals exit.

Moncton: Greater Moncton International Airport (YQM)

A designated pet relief area is located next to the arrivals door of the terminal building. This area is also equipped with disposable dog waste bags for your convenience.

Newfoundland and Labrador

St. John's: St. John's International Airport (YYT)

Service animals are permitted inside the Airport Terminal Building. Although there are no specific areas designated for relieving service animals, there are various areas that can be utilized for this purpose outside the Airport Terminal Building.

Stephenville: Stephenville International Airport (YJT)

If your service animal needs to relieve itself, please use the designated animal relief areas. Please ask our airport staff for directions or assistance. If you need to leave the secure boarding area to relieve your animal, you must go through the security screening process again.

Gander: Gander International Airport (YQR)

Gander International Airport has a sprawling green area where you can circulate your dog before your flight.

Northwest Territories

Yellowknife: Yellowknife Airport (YZF)

Yellowknife Airport has a designated animal relief area located outside the main terminal across the street from the revolving door at the Departure area.

Nova Scotia

Halifax: Halifax Stanfield International Airport (YHZ)

A pet relief area is located outside the middle tunnel, under the pedway

Ontario

Ottawa: Ottawa International Airport (YOW)

A designated pet relief area is located across the street from the passenger terminal (Level 1) along the Parkade (P1). The area is clearly marked and plastic bags and garbage containers are available for disposal. Passengers travelling with service animals or small pets as carry-on can access the pet relief area(s) past security. In order to do so, passengers must speak with their gate agent or respective airline personnel.

Toronto: Toronto Pearson International Airport (YYZ)

Terminal 1 – Departures level – Exit door at Aisle 15, turn right

Terminal 1 – Ground level – Exit Door S, turn right

Terminal 1 – After security – Near Gate D30

Terminal 3 – Arrivals level – Exit Door A, turn left

Terminal 3 – After security – Near Gate B26

Prince Edward Island

Charlottetown: Charlottetown Airport (YYG)

Charlottetown Airport has no specific areas designated as animal relief areas, however, there are various grass areas located directly outside the Airport Terminal Building.

Quebec

Montreal: Montréal-Pierre Elliot Trudeau International Airport (YUL)

There is a relief area for guide dogs across from the terminal building, near the west tower of the multi-level parking garage

Quebec City: Quebec City Jean Lesage International Airport (YQB)

Quebec City Jean Lesage International Airport has no designated animal relief areas, however, there is a grass area located near the general parking area of the Airport Terminal Building.

Saskatchewan

Saskatoon: Saskatoon John G. Diefenbaker International Airport (YXE)

A pet relief area is located outside in front of the building on the south side of our curb near the car rental parking lot.

Yukon

Government of Yukon: Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport (YXY)

There are two designated animal relief areas: one is the grassy area on the south side of the Airport Terminal Building and the second is the gravel area on the west side of the parking lot.

Is this an International Flight?

- Contact the consulate or embassy in the country of travel to (or through!) as the regulations of the country whose airspace you enter will apply. Find out:
 - Vaccination requirements
 - Documentation requirements (i.e., vaccination certificates, international health certificate, training certificate, letter from a medical professional)
 - Import and export regulations for service dogs

- Call the airline to find out about regulations or restrictions related to dog breed, travel, quarantine, or permit requirements that might apply in destination or transit countries. For example, WestJet flights to or from Bridgetown, Barbados, and Montego Bay and Kingston, Jamaica, do not accept service dogs.

Overview – United States Regulations

On December 2, 2020 the U.S. Department of Transportation announced its revision of the **Air Carrier Access Act (ACAA)** regulation on the transportation of service animals by air to ensure a safe and accessible air transportation system.

The ACAA 's definition of Service Animal as dog now matches the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA). The new regulations now eliminates Emotional Support Animals and categories them as pets. The information below is from the Department of Transportation's website as of February 2021. <https://www.transportation.gov/sites/dot.gov/files/2020-12/Service%20Animal%20Final%20Rule.pdf>

This final rule defines a service animal as a dog, regardless of breed or type that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of a qualified individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability.

It allows airlines to recognize emotional support animals as pets, rather than service animals, and permits airlines to limit the number of service animals that one passenger can bring onboard an aircraft to two service animals. The final rule also allows airlines to require passengers with a disability traveling with a service animal to complete and submit to the airline a form, developed by DOT, attesting to the animal's training and good behavior, and certifying the animal's good health.

For flight segments of eight hours or more, the rule allows airlines to require passengers to complete and submit a DOT form attesting that the animal has the ability either not to relieve itself on a long flight or to relieve itself in a sanitary manner.

In addition, this final rule allows airlines to require a service animal handler to provide these forms up to 48 hours in advance of the date of travel if the passenger's reservation was made prior to that time. As an alternative, airlines may require a passenger with a disability seeking to travel with a service animal in the cabin to provide the forms at the passenger's departure gate on the date of travel.

However, the final rule prohibits airlines from requiring that a passenger physically check-in at the airport solely on the basis that the individual is traveling with a service animal, thus ensuring that service animal handlers are not prevented from enjoying the same convenience-related benefits provided to other passengers, such as online and curbside check-in. Service animal handlers may use the online check-in process available to the general public.

This final rule also better ensures the safety of passengers and crew members by allowing carriers to require that service animals are harnessed, leashed, or otherwise tethered onboard an aircraft and includes requirements that would address the safe transport of large service animals in the aircraft cabin. Further, it specifies the circumstances under which the handler of a service animal may be charged for damage caused by the service animal and addresses the responsibilities of code-share partners.

The statute requires airlines to provide accommodations that are reasonable given the realities and limitations of air service and the onboard environment of commercial airplanes. Animals on aircraft may pose a risk to the safety, health, and well-being of passengers and crew, and may disturb the safe and efficient operation of the aircraft. Any requirement for the accommodation of passengers traveling with service animals onboard aircraft necessarily must be balanced against the health, safety, and mental and physical well-being of the other passengers and crew, and must not interfere with the safe and efficient operation of the aircraft.

Final Rule Summary

- **Definition of Service Animal:** A service animal is as a dog, regardless of breed or type that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of a qualified individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability.
- **Emotional Support Animals:** Carriers are not required to recognize emotional support animals as service animals and may treat them as pets.
- **Treatment of Psychiatric Service Animals:** Psychiatric service animals are treated the same as other service animals that are individually trained to do work or perform a task for the benefit of a qualified individual with a disability.
- **Species:** Carriers are permitted to limit service animals to dogs.
- **Health, Behavior and Training Form:** Carriers are permitted to require passengers to remit a completed hardcopy or electronic version of the Department's "U.S. Department of Transportation Service Animal Air Transportation Form" as a condition of transportation. Relief Attestation Carriers are permitted to require individuals traveling with a service animal on flights eight hours or longer to remit a completed hardcopy or electronic version the Department's "U.S. Department of Transportation Service Animal Relief Attestation" as a condition of transportation.
- **Number of Service Animals per Passenger:** Carriers are permitted to limit the number of service animals traveling with a single passenger with a disability to two service animals.
- **Large Service Animals:** Carriers are permitted to require a service animal to fit on their handler's lap or within its handler's foot space on the aircraft.
- **Control of Service Animals:** Carriers are permitted to require a service animal to be harnessed, leashed, or otherwise tethered in areas of the airport that they own, lease, or control, and on the aircraft.
- **Service Animal Breed or Type:** Carriers are prohibited from refusing to transport a service animal based solely on breed or generalized physical type, as distinct from an individualized assessment of the animal's behavior and health.

- **Check-In Requirements:** Carriers are not permitted to require a passenger with a disability to physically check-in at the airport, rather than using the online check-in process, on the basis that the individual is traveling with a service animal. Airlines may require a passenger with a disability seeking to travel with a service animal to provide the service animal form(s) at the passenger's departure gate on the date of travel.
- **Advance Notice Requirements:** Carriers may require individuals traveling with a service animal to provide a U.S. Department of Transportation Service Animal Air Transportation Form and, if applicable, a U.S. Department of Transportation Service Animal Relief Attestation up to 48 hours in advance of the date of travel if the passenger's reservation was made prior to that time.
- **NOTE:**
In the U.S., if staff at the gate will not let you board a plane, you have the right to request a Conflict Resolutions officer:
https://www.transportation.gov/sites/dot.gov/files/docs/AirTravel_with_ServiceAnimals-TriFold.pdf

FOR ALL DOMESTIC & INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS

Day of Travel - Ensure that the handler has the:

- Service dog's jacket and carry tags carry tags (rabies vaccination, identification/address – you may also wish to ensure a tag carries a number where someone will be home to receive any calls should the dog go missing)
- Service dog's identification card or proof of training
- Documented proof that vaccines are
- A letter from a licensed physician or mental health professional as proof the dog is required during travel to perform a task that mitigates the handler's disability(s).

Passing through a security checkpoint with a metal detector

Airports have exceptional levels of security and carefully check all passengers and carry-on personal belongings. A service dog and handler can be accommodated by security in different fashions. Existing policies do not generally require removal of any of the service dog's equipment, although the handler may choose to send the equipment through luggage scanners and simply retain a flat collar with a plastic buckle and a slip leash without metal attachments to enable them to peacefully pass through the scanner.

Alternatively, the service dog team can go through metal detector as a team, which should set off the alarm and result in an x-ray and/or pat-down of both the handler and the dog.

A second option is for the handler to go through the metal detector first while holding the leash of the service dog (who is instructed to stay and should wait patiently), and then to call the service dog to go through the metal detector; this may result in no alarm for the handler, although possibly for the service dog, depending on the equipment they are wearing.

A third option - travelling with a travel companion – can enable one person to go through the scanner while the other controls the service dog, then calling the service dog, whose equipment has been removed and sent through the scanner, to go through the metal detector to the first person, with the remaining person then going through the metal detector.

[Access to Military Installations](#)

The Department of National Defence Administrative Order and Directive DAOD 2005-0 was developed to accommodate service dog teams being used by Department of Defense employees, along with officers and non-commissioned members of the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF members).

A DND employee or CAF member with a disability must submit an accommodation request for service dog access to a defence establishment in writing to the appropriate DND manager or CAF officer having control over the defence establishment or area of the defence establishment to be accessed by the service dog. The requests are to be considered on a case-by-case basis at the lowest suitable managerial or chain of command level in accordance with the Authority Table in DAOD 2005-0, *Service Dogs*, and in consideration of the complexity of each situation.

In considering requests for service dogs being used by employees and service members, there are three areas that will be considered:

- a) any service dog being considered for access to a defence establishment is required for providing assistance to a person with a disability;
- b) each service dog team is certified in writing as having been trained by an accredited service dog training institution; and
- c) the health and safety of other persons at a defence establishment are not compromised by the presence of a service dog.

Service dogs are expected to be certified through accreditation for service dog training institutions is provided by national and international organizations, including Assistance Dogs International, the International Guide Dog Federation, and Meghan Search and Rescue (MSAR). For more information, please click on these links:

Directives: [2005-0, Service Dogs](#) and [2005-1, Service Dog Access to Defence Establishments](#)

Information for Medical and Healthcare Professionals

Medical and healthcare professionals may be wondering whether the presence of a service dog might assist their clients and whether they can prescribe a service dog as part of a person's treatment for their disability.

As noted under the Disability Certification section, many regulations require that Canadians have a letter from a qualified (medical) practitioner attesting that they have been diagnosed with a disability and noting that the symptoms of that disability are specifically mitigated by the presence of a service dog. It is important to note that how these legislated requirements are written in the practicing jurisdiction of the healthcare professional.

In general - **unlike** the U.S. requirements that "service dogs" have specific trained behaviors that mitigate disability while a dog's supportive presence and/or social buffering put them into a separate category as an "emotional support dog" – in Canada both roles can be part of a treatment plan to mitigate disability. Dogs who offer emotional support services are considered service dogs if they help the person mitigate a disability. A medical professional is required to make the determination whether the person is experiencing non-pathological transient emotional upset versus a disorder that requires mitigation via medication and/or supports such as a dog.

Healthcare support workers who are not able to make those determinations may help the client learn more about the process and pros/cons of having a service dog (as outlined in this document). In general, it's important to help the client understand that the process of getting and having a dog as a disability support can be complex. There is also an added emotional cost in bring a dog out in public – dealing with other people's interest in the dog, increased attention from other people about whether the dog is "a legitimate service dog", having to constantly be alert for threats to the dog's safety and providing sufficiently for rest breaks, food, water and ongoing training are only a few of the costs involved. It's important to be aware there may be a variety of other – less personally demanding – coping mechanisms that could be introduced to help a client mitigate their disability. In addition to possibly providing sufficient self-regulatory support, introducing these mechanisms and documenting their success or failure can help make the case with a medical provider who is able to prescribe a service dog.

In order to obtain a service dog, an individual with a disability must receive documentation from an authorized prescriber noting that their symptoms qualify as a disability. As with any other intervention, it is vital that the prescriber determine that a service dog is an appropriate treatment approach and method of supplying the intervention to minimize the risk of harm to the person with a disability, the service dog and to the public.

For example, in Ontario, the following are allowed to write an attestation letter:

- Ontario Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists
- Ontario Members of the Colleges of Chiropractors, Nurses, Occupational Therapists, Optometrists, Physicians and Surgeons, Physiotherapists, Psychologists, Registered Psychotherapists and Registered Mental Health Therapists.

A recent study (Singleton et al., 2019) notes that there are key characteristics that would ideally be assessed to determine if a patient with disabilities is a good candidate to be teamed with a service dog. There are also contraindicating factors (Wounded Warriors Canad, 2019).

Consistent with the material in this report, the person should comprehend and have:

- an interest, deep desire for, and realistic expectations about being teamed with a service dog
- the mental capacity and speed of reaction to keep themselves safe in public and to make safe decisions for the dog
- generally, be reliable, committed to improving their own health, and participating in the plan of care-treatments, medications, appointments, and follow up. Participation in this area indicates their likely adherence to the plan of care for the dog.

Other considerations include:

- whether the person is able to make appropriate decisions with or without medications
- whether the individual has an active support system that includes family/significant others/friends and an assigned substitute handler who can care for the dog, and follow the dog's regular routine if needed
- the service dog candidate needs to have the ability and financial resources to support the dog which includes daily grooming, feeding, exercising and play, and veterinarian expenses. The amount of home space is not relevant if they are able to meet the dog's mental and physical needs
- if the person has canine phobias, sensory issues with dogs (smell, touch of fur, etc.) or serious allergies they will not likely not be a good candidate for a service dog
- service dogs are generally contraindicated in situations where the patient has a history of violence or abuse towards animals, including any criminal convictions for same
- service dogs are generally contraindicated in situations behavioural instability due to active psychosis or being under the influence of medications or non-prescribed substances that contribute to significant behavioural variability
- service dogs are contraindicated for individuals with a history of convictions for the physical or sexual abuse of minors or other vulnerable persons as this heightens the safety risk to the service dog and public risk if the service dog can be used as a lure for

vulnerable persons (a recent police “vulnerable sector” check should be requested from the person with a disability)

- contraindications also include current symptoms that would significantly impair the prospective handler’s ability to care for the service dog (indicators this may be a problem include recent and/or likely hospitalizations, among others)
- the current status of the potential service dog handler’s treatment plan should indicate the timing is reasonable to introduce a dog – for example:
 - the potential use should not be considered an appropriate treatment to get an agoraphobic client out of their home and is best added when trial departures in the presence of a companion have been successful
 - fear of being around people must be managed to the point the patient does not wish the service dog to act as an aggressive deterrent to perceived threat as this increases public risk

Healthcare professionals must take care in making their overall decision to prescribe based on factors as noted above that unconscious bias against people with disabilities does not adversely impact their assessment. One example of this bias might include strictly favouring persons with physical disabilities over those with mental health issues, while discounting the fact that many persons with mental health disabilities are often more than capable of being excellent service dog handlers.

It is also important for the healthcare professional to be aware that the patient may already have been sensitized by previous discussions with other institutions when seeking disability-related supports. In its own consultations with people with disabilities, in 2012 the Law Commission of Ontario reported:

“...many participants talked about the suspicion and often contempt with which persons with disabilities are treated when seeking services and supports. Services which are designed to assist persons with disabilities in meeting their basic needs or improving their autonomy, independence and participation may in practice be implemented through an adversarial mindset, which assumes that those seeking services are attempting “to game” the system, or obtain benefits to which they are not entitled. This is particularly the case for persons with disabilities who are also poor.”(LCO consultation report, 2012)

There are reports of situations where people may attempt to exaggerate symptoms in order to obtain a disability diagnosis and prescription of a service dog. These can include wanting their pet dog to fly in the passenger cabin of an airplane with them, wanting to have their pet live with them in housing (for example – condominiums where pets are prohibited), or finding their pet an emotional comfort in public despite the absence of a diagnosable mental health condition. None of these reasons fit the test of disability and mitigation and it is against the law to falsely claim a dog is needed if it is not.

To assess requests or to suggest including a service dog in a patient wellness plan, the patient's files should be consulted to determine whether there are previous reports of conditions that may have become disabling. Taking the time to ensure the patient is aware of the difference between normal emotional responses (become slightly anxious) and clinical disorders (such as generalized anxiety disorder) is usual in many discussions about emotional state and mental health. In addition, highlighting the significance of having a diagnosis in medical records and the healthcare professional's responsibility to then follow appropriate clinical guidelines and process in diagnosis, treatment and documentation of a diagnosed disorder can help the client understand the clinician's commitment to quality care in future appointments.

Providing the requestor with a copy of this booklet and suggesting they return for a follow-up visit to focus on the issue may be helpful to build the patient's understanding of service dog pros and cons and lead to improved patient care and dialogue.

Once a diagnosis is made and a role for a dog to play in improving the patient's quality of life, a prescribing letter can be prepared.

To protect the privacy of the person receiving the letter, the patient's diagnosis and identifying details (beyond their name) should not be included in the letter unless the letter is for a detailed request (such as school accommodation or foreign travel where the client is willing to provide personal information to support access requests).

Like any other treatment plan component (such as medication renewals) healthcare providers are encouraged to renew the letter annually during a client's regularly scheduled examination. However, once a service dog has been provided to the person with a disability, it is generally not advisable to withhold the renewal letter unduly, as doing so could cause the client additional stress. A threat to the human-animal bond can be extremely disruptive. Dialogue around the continued use of a service dog is best framed within a discussion of transitioning the dog from active duty to pet dog. Some clients may themselves suggest rehoming the service dog with someone else who may benefit from a trained animal.

If there has been a substantial change in the person's capacity to care for the service dog or if the client reports trouble with the dog in the areas below:

- being displeased with the dog and/or handling it roughly
- being perturbed at the dog's behaviour – particular with typical "normal dog" issues such as counter-surfing, jumping up or concerning issues such as signs of fear or aggression

- being unable to keep the dog's standard of performance adequate and being unable to obtain wanted tasks and behaviours that should have been taught to the dog in early training and kept current through regular maintenance training
- wanting the dog to "magically" know how to do new tasks (i.e. "sense when I'm feeling blue and help me out" – a task now desired but not originally contemplated during the dog's initial training)

the client should be referred to appropriate specialists. Unlike veterinarians, healthcare professionals have no statutory requirement under their professional framework to report abuse, however may report suspected animal abuse that contravenes the Criminal Code or local jurisdictional laws and regulations.

- Anger/rage and disappointment when directed at the dog versus the dog's performance as a service dog or typical conduct as a dog whose training is not being maintained (i.e. jumping on counters and visitors) are an indicator the client requires mental health support and counselling in addition to receiving help in maintaining the dog's ongoing training needs. This need for referral, support and possibly medication should be handled as with any other mental health issue.
- For ongoing behaviour and training issues, the client should also be referred to a training professional or the school where they obtained the dog in order to troubleshoot issues and ensure the dog is functioning as required.

The original trainer may be sought out if the client notes they are confident in the trainer's ability to achieve results. If the client is seeking a new trainer, the Canadian Association of Professional Dog Trainers offers a directory of service-dog-specific trainers on their website www.capdt.ca.

- In addition, the handler should receive a recommendation that the dog see their regular veterinarian for an examination prior to undertaking any remedial training. A recent study by a large group of veterinarians found that in many cases, behaviour issues can be traced back to pain (Mills et al., 2020).

APPENDIX A – Sample Patient Letter – Domestic

(The letter should be on the attending professional's letterhead)

(Date)

Re: (Name of Patient)

To Whom it May Concern:

(Name of Patient) is my patient (and has been for "x" years).

I am satisfied that (Name) has a disability that can be mitigated by the presence of a service dog.

Sincerely,

(Signature)

[The signature should include the type of license held by the professional, the name of the College if applicable and the jurisdiction where the licence is issued. Please include College registration or membership numbers where possible]

APPENDIX B – Sample Patient Letter – Foreign Travel

(The letter should be on the attending professional's letterhead)

(Date – the letter should be less than one year old)

Re: (Name of Patient)

To Whom it May Concern:

(Name of Patient) is my patient (and has been for “x” years) and is currently under my care.

(Name) has a disability recognized in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders Fifth Edition (DSM V) [note: provide the International Classification of Disease Code where possible.]

(Name) requires a service dog as an accommodation for air travel and/or for an activity at their intended destination.

The service dog performs the following task(s) for (Name) when travelling (for example – the service dog performs a “visit” deep pressure cue to reduce flashbacks)

Sincerely,

(Signature)

[The signature should include the type of license held by the professional, the name of the College if applicable and the jurisdiction and country where the licence is issued. Please include College registration or membership numbers where possible]

APPENDIX C — Service Dog Handler's Proposed Bill of Rights re Service Dog Training/Use

In addition to other typical terms of a contract between a potential service dog handler and a training program (i.e. application process and fee, who is providing the dog, cost of the dog, number of training sessions and fees, etc.), the following points should be considered, clarified and agreement reached. We are grateful to Marion Gwizdala for his 2011 article laying out the first known version of a service dog handler's Bill of Rights.

1. General

a. If a service dog is sourced from a service dog training program, the service dog training program shall seek input from the handler concerning the type of dog desired throughout the matching process.

b. Handlers shall expect that every effort will be made to provide dogs:

- in excellent health and between twelve months and three years of age,
- with industry-accepted standards of competence in and fitness for common public access requirements (in public settings a minimum of 90-95% average fluency* and proficiency, without significant reactivity to people, other dogs or common situations such as dropped food on the floor)
- with industry-accepted standards for the performance of the task/support use intended (90% or higher average fluency and proficiency of the behaviour in most common settings in which the dog was trained by the service dog program to operate)
- and with appropriate calm demeanour.

The criteria for and definition of behaviours and skills for which the dog is trained shall be readily available from the service dog training program prior to the handler's application and shall be included in a contract between the potential service dog handler and the service dog training program either:

- (a) when training in service dog public access and/or skills and tasks begins for a specific dog under a direct contract with an independent service dog trainer, OR
- (b) when a potential service dog handler has applied for and been placed on the waiting list for a dog from a service dog training program which provides dogs by direct assignment.

Prior to placement with the service dog handler the training program shall fully disclose to the handler in writing and in the accessible format of the handler's choice all known issues of unfitness concerning the dog's health, temperament, behavior, and training.

Based on this information, the handler may:

- accept the placement based on this information
- require additional information, by seeing the dog perform required public access and/or trained skills (or handle the dog once they have received training on typical handling

skills) while the dog is not wearing behaviour-modifying equipment beyond a leash, collar, harness or head halter, in order for the handler to witness and observe the extent to which the dog does not meet the industry-accepted standard, or

- refuse the placement.

If the handler does not accept the placement the handler shall not lose their place on the waiting list and shall be assigned the next available dog that is suited to their needs as identified in (a) during the matching process and (b) as completing training by meeting fluency and proficiency targets.

c. The handler shall expect a high level of competence from the training staff as they develop the sound working skills of a service dog. This includes using skillful training to obtain behaviour that is in line with the Humane Hierarchy (and LIMA –Least Invasive, Minimally Aversive principles) – see [Training Methods for more information](#).

The handler should not be expected to work the dog they receive in a choke, prong, pinch or shock collar to suppress unwanted behaviours and maintain standards of fluency and proficiency.

d. The service dog training program shall correspond with individual handlers in an accessible format of their choice.

e. Service dog training programs shall maintain their websites and online media, including newsletters, press releases, and other collateral materials, in a format accessible to people with disabilities.

f. The handler shall be required to maintain the dog's training and skill proficiency on an ongoing basis with training, and must be provided with prior to placement with an initial understanding of the basics of dog behaviour and training and the Humane Hierarchy/LIMA, along with an understanding of the program's criteria/fluency and proficiency requirements.

The program's public access criteria/fluency and proficiency requirements shall be made available to the handler prior to application. The handler may seek (and shall be provided) support regarding maintenance training subject to reasonable limits that the program may impose.

g. The handler shall hold the service dog training program, its staff, heirs and assigns harmless if the dog's behaviours begin to fail or fails after permanent placement or ownership transfer.

2. Equitable Treatment

a. The handler's freedom of independent travel using assistive devices (such as a white cane) shall not be restricted by the training program, unless doing so would interfere with the training process or adversely affect other handlers.

b. Handlers shall be free to monitor and manage their personal health independently, including, but not limited to, blood pressure monitoring, blood glucose testing, insulin injections, pain-management regimens, and all other health maintenance routines. Assistance may be offered; however, the handler has the right to refuse such assistance.

c. With the permission of the dog's primary puppy raiser and the service dog training program, handlers shall be provided an opportunity to meet the raiser after the completion of the probationary period at a venue of the service dog training program's choice. Further contact, such as meetings, phone calls, etc., are at the sole discretion of the service dog handler and will not be required, expected, or discouraged by the training program.

However, the service dog training program may include in their placement agreement a clause requiring the handler to notify the program if the puppy raiser has violated the confidentiality agreements the raiser signed (agreements which must be disclosed to the service dog handler).

d. The handler has the right to choose not to participate in post-placement media and fundraising for the service dog training program. Their consent for use of images (outside of those taken at public events) or testimony may be withdrawn at any time after the end of the probationary period.

3. Informed Choice/Due Process

a. All binding contracts, agreements, and other documents shall be available for review in the accessible format of the handler's choice before making a commitment for services.

b. Before handlers apply to receive services, they shall be provided in the accessible format of their choice all policies, practices, and procedures governing their behavior while participating in services, e.g., requirements and costs of training sessions; use of cell phones, computers, or other technology; and furloughs.

c. Handlers shall have the right to request one advocate of their choice join them in discussions regarding the program. The advocate's presence shall be at the discretion of the handler in all instances. The designation of a handler advocate shall be made in writing to the service dog training program and the advocate may be changed with two week's notice to the program.

d. Specific written due process procedures, including mediation options, shall be developed covering all decisions and actions of the training program that affect its relationships with handlers, individually or collectively. Due process may be initiated by a handler or their designated advocate.

e. All decisions and actions of the training program, such as denial or discontinuation of services, removal of a dog, or repossession of a harness, shall be made in writing in the accessible format of the handler's choice with a detailed explanation of the decision made or

the action taken and the basis for that decision provided within 24 hours from the time when the handler was notified of the issue in the due process described in (d) above.

f. The removal or repossession of a service dog for reasons of safety or health of the dog shall include an assessment of the working team through direct personal observation by an individual competent to make such an assessment.

The criteria for individual competent to make an assessment include over 3 years experience in dog training, having completed a minimum of 10 public access tests consisting of industry-standard requirements, and obtaining a written opinion from the dog's current veterinarian (and any immediate previous veterinarian). The individual must have received training on the handler's disability and have been provided with the service dog training program's initial end-of-probation assessment of the service dog team's capabilities.

The specific safety concerns that serve as grounds for the removal or repossession shall be provided in writing to the handler in the accessible format of his or her choice at the time of the removal or repossession, and/or to the identified advocate acting on behalf of the handler.

4. Confidentiality

a. All personal information about a handler, whether oral or in writing, shall be kept confidential. This confidentiality policy extends to all staff and volunteers of the service dog training program.

b. A handler's refusal to allow other training programs to share information during the application process shall not be used as the sole grounds for denial of services. However, the handler may be asked to explain their experience with other training programs and this information may be included in the overall assessment of the applicant.

c. A handler's personal information and records shall not be shared without the express written permission of the handler to authorize the training program to release information, although may be used in any legal proceeding regarding the handler and the service dog training program.

d. No personal information shall be shared with any other person or organization without the express written and signed consent of the handler. In such cases only the information authorized for release may be shared.

e. Individual handlers shall have the right to access any and all of the information gathered or collected about them by the service dog training program and contained in their files and may choose to file a dispute regarding the information and add comment to their files that must be maintained as part of the permanent file.

5. Ownership and Disposition

a. The handler may be given legal title, ownership, and possession of the dog upon completion of a probationary period once the dog is placed.

During this probationary period, the organization may require the handler to complete ongoing milestones – such as regular veterinary visits, maintaining the dog's weight within a narrow range of an acceptable level and maintaining the dog's training.

Once title is transferred, such title, ownership, or possession shall not be revoked, suspended, or otherwise interfered with without due process and in accordance with other provisions of this document.

The service dog training program will retain the right to have the dog attend a public access test every two years with one of their assessors to assess the dog's health, welfare and performance to determine if the program is willing to continue to have the dog identified as part of their program, and to provide identification and support. Once the dog has turned 10 years old, the test shall be conducted annually. The test must be arranged and take place within two months after the handler is notified that the assessment is due. The handler must make every good faith effort to attend the assessment, while the service dog training program must make every good faith effort to accommodate the handler's abilities and financial needs (such as not requiring travel past 150 km outside of the handler's area).

Should the handler/owner choose not to attend the assessment, or the safety, training level or health of the dog be assessed as unfit for continued service to the standards of the service dog training program, the program will retain the right to remove their affiliation with and equipment from the dog.

b. Follow-up services shall be optional for dogs outside of the probationary period who are entitled to wear the jacket of the program. Invitations for follow-up services may be made when a representative will be in the area with the understanding that the handler may decline the offer without consequences.

c. The retirement and disposition of the service dog shall be at the discretion of the handler. Training programs may offer advice and guidance but may not impose mandatory retirement, unless doing so is necessary to protect the dog from abuse, maltreatment, or neglect or for reasons of safety as provided for in this document.

6. Abuse, Maltreatment, or Neglect

a. Handlers shall have the right to be notified if the service dog training programs staff or members of the public suspect abuse, maltreatment, or neglect or have filed a legal complaint against the handler within 48 hours of the allegation.

b. Section (a) is not in effect when a service dog training program, law enforcement officer, animal control officer or veterinarian believes the dog to be in imminent danger of life or limb if the removal were not immediate. Temporary removals in these situations must be conducted by or in the presence of an authority with the ability to lay the appropriate charges directly, rather than through the sole action of the service dog training program. The dog must be placed in a safe setting while the circumstances surrounding the allegations are investigated by a competent third party.

c. In the absence of imminent danger of life or limb, the handler shall be given the opportunity to provide clarification and an answer within 72 hours after such allegations are made to the service dog training program before the training program commences any action to remove their certification.

d. The permanent removal of a service dog's certification by an organization based on (a) or (b) shall be done only after a thorough investigation by an objective third party of competent jurisdiction. A detailed explanation of the investigation and decision to remove certification shall be given provided to the handler or the designated handler advocate in writing, in the accessible format of the handler's choice.

=====

*fluency means that the dog's behaviour meets reasonable criteria (commonly set by experienced dog trainers) and:

1. Is Precise – The behaviour meets a clear definition of criteria that people easily agree makes sense. The definition makes clear exactly what the dog is expected to do.

For example, consider "come when called". When a person calls a dog's name and adds the word "come", they want the dog to come to them. But is moving towards the person good enough? Does the criteria include sitting on arrival? How close should the sit be, if there is one? In front or at the side? A common "come" criteria used by experienced trainers is that when the dog's name + the cue "come" are called in a voice loud enough for the handler to be readily heard by the dog, the dog moves at a trot or run toward the handler, and when the dog arrives the handler is able to reach out and easily touch the dog's collar (the dog can be sitting or standing on arrival and while being touched).

2. Has LOW Latency – Dog begins doing the behaviour within at most a few second of a request.
3. Has Reasonable Speed – Once dog starts the behavior, it happens within a set, short timeline.
4. Occurs during Distraction – Dog can do behavior in the vast majority of common circumstances.
5. Occurs with Duration – The behaviour lasts as long as required, until a release cue is given.
6. Occurs at a Distance – The dog will do the behaviour even when at some distance from the handler.

Appendix D – Additional Information on Training Methods

In general, training should follow the process laid out in the Humane Hierarchy and LIMA methods included in the CAPDT Code of Ethics and summarized here. This Hierarchy serves to guide dog trainers and handlers in their decision-making process during dog training and behaviour modification. Additionally, it should be the minimum standard of care for dog training and behaviour professionals when selecting training practices and methodologies. Trainers who do not follow this standard of care are not recommended as service dog trainers.

First Steps

- **Health, nutritional, and physical factors:** Ensure that any indicators for possible medical, nutritional, or health factors are addressed by a licensed veterinarian. Also ensuring that factors in the physical environment that have a potential to impact the dog's health, nutrition and physical condition are addressed
- **Antecedents:** Implement environmental management strategies to prevent behaviour
- **Positive reinforcement, classical conditioning** (not listed in order of preference)
 1. **Positive reinforcement:** Ensure reinforcement is delivered for the desirable alternative behaviour and that such reinforcement is of higher value to the dog than the reinforcement the dog received in the past for the unwanted behaviour
 2. **Classical conditioning:** Helping a dog to associate a neutral stimulus (like a sound, or a light) with a positive consequence (receiving a piece of food)

Beyond the First Steps

In no specific order of preference:

- **Live with or manage the behaviour:** Electing to cease modification techniques and implement a management plan
- **Consult another professional:** At times, it may be beneficial to consult another professional such as a dog trainer, veterinarian, veterinary behaviourist or behaviourist for additional advice, particularly when a problem behaviour does not resolve with the previously mentioned interventions
- **Negative punishment:** Withdrawing a positive reinforcer when the undesirable behaviour occurs to reduce the probability that the behaviour will occur in the future
- **Extinction:** Withholding reinforcement of a previously reinforced behaviour with the goal of extinguishing the behaviour

These training methods have been shown in research to improve the human-canine relationship, increase the amount of time the dog pays attention to their handler, predictability of behaviours and produce enthusiastic learners who are flexible in their behaviours (Dour et al., 2016; Lindsay, 2000). They are also traits important to the success of service dogs.

Methods Not Recommended

CAPDT trainers are encouraged to only use LIMA methods and those on the lower end of the Humane Hierarchy Scale. This is due to the side effects the following methods can cause to the bond between the service dog and service dog handler:

- **Negative reinforcement:** Withdrawing a significantly aversive stimulus when the desired behaviour occurs to increase the probability that the behaviour will occur in the future.
- **Positive punishment:** Delivering a significantly aversive consequent stimuli in response to undesirable behaviour to reduce the probability that the behaviour will occur in the future

Being associated/paired with significantly aversive stimuli to the dog can weaken the bond between the handler and service dog. It can even cause a dog in training to become afraid of the equipment they are wearing when the aversive stimulus is used.

For this reason, service dog trainers following the Humane Hierarchy stop before using positive punishment. CAPPDT members MUST refrain from using positive punishment and refer the case to CAPDT's Expert Panel to find alternate recommended methods of achieving the same goal that the trainer may not be aware of currently.

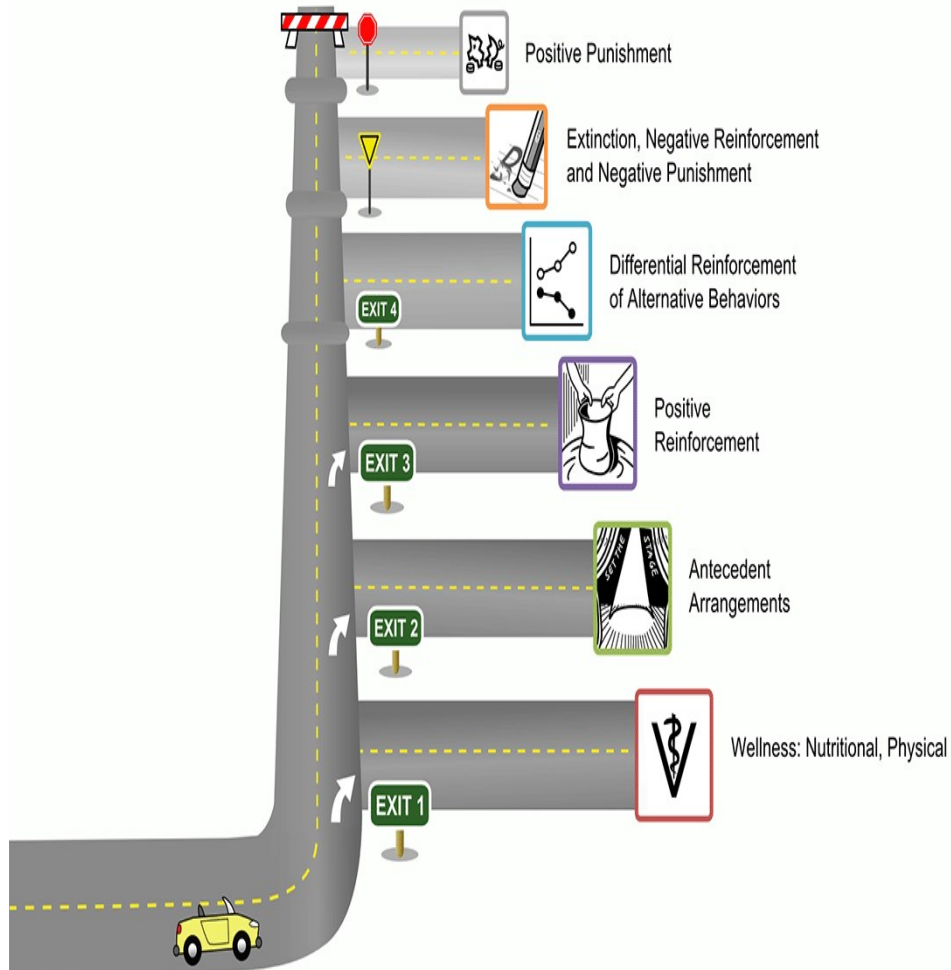
A dog handler or trainer may believe that a prospective service dog needs the methods of training listed as not recommended above in order to be trained and managed successfully as a service dog. However, if this is the case then there is strong evidence that either acceptable methods of training are not being correctly applied or the dog is simply not a suitable candidate to be a service dog (Blackwell and Casey, 2006; Blackwell et al., 2008; Cooper et al., 2011, 2014; Herron et al., 2009; Hiby et al., 2004; Hsu and Sun, 2010; Meyer and Forkman, 2014; Rooney and Cowan, 2011; Schalke et al., 2009; Schilder and Van Der Borg, 2004). Either case requires a re-examination of the dog's learning needs and a revision to the training plan – perhaps by including a trainer with greater experience in using recommended Humane Hierarchy training.

Here are just a few examples of positive punishment tools that should not be used:

- Leash lasso around the groin
- Hanging
- Helicopter
- Alpha rolls
- Ear pinch/toe hitch/tail step
- 'Poking' or jabbing
- Kicking
- Kneeing a dog
- Throwing chains
- Metal collars that cause fear of pain, injury or strangulation
- Electrical producing devices (either set to a low voltage or those that provide a significant voltage) such as e-collars, cattle prods, scat mats
- Mouse traps and modified mouse traps
- Whip/crop or Shepherd's crook

Hierarchy of Behavior-Change Procedures

Most Positive, Least Intrusive Effective Intervention



2015 Friedman, Fritzler

Useful Terms

Wellness is at the base of the hierarchy to ensure that a trainer does not implement a learning solution for behaviour problems caused by pain or illness (for example, a dog who growls when people come near because they have a broken leg or who has Generalized Anxiety Disorder should not undergo efforts to “train out” the growling or anxiety-related behaviours – a trip to the veterinarian is in order!). The hierarchy is a cautionary tool to reduce both dogmatic rule following and practice by familiarity or convenience. It offers an ethical checkpoint for trainers to carefully consider the process by which effective outcomes can be most humanely achieved on a case-by-case basis. Rationale like, “It worked with the last dog!” is not appropriate. The evaluation and behaviour change program of every animal should be a study of the individual (i.e., individual animal, setting, caregiver, etc.). Changing behavior is best understood as a study of one.

Antecedent Arrangements are any generally actions taken by the handler prior to a dog's unwanted behaviour that changes so as to prevent the behaviour.

One example of an antecedent arrangement/change would be baby-gating off the kitchen area where an autistic child scatters food on the floor during mealtimes so that the dog can't eat food off the floor.

Least Invasive, Minimally Aversive (LIMA) refers to the concept developed by Dr. Susan Friedman that highlights it is not enough simply to consider whether a tactic temporarily stops a behaviour or fixes a problem when planning training. Clearly, beating a dog for disobeying a simple request until it lies bleeding on the ground is now generally accepted as unnecessary, in the same way that backhanding a child across the room for asking to get up from the table would be considered cruel. Most people have no problem judging these strategies as inappropriate and physically abusive.

However, these tactics do tend to stop behaviour. Perhaps the person using these tactics might say "well, as long as it works". However, people with foresight will understand that neither of these tactics will fix the issue that led to the behaviour. For example, if the dog has not learned that the cue is a signal for them to do something, no amount of beating will help them make that connection. And if the child is backhanded for making a request, they may never ask THAT person again (and may end up in long term therapy, perhaps with issues around aggression toward THAT person...or other people in general). So an INTRUSIVE "fix" that may be effective at stopping a behaviour may be one factor to be considered in training – but effectiveness alone is not enough (to quote Dr. Friedman).

In order to be maximally humane and to actually resolve (and not just temporarily stop) a problem, authors in the field suggest that interventions should also consider two key criteria:

- 1) The first criteria the intervention's ability to effect change without serious unwanted side effects (often described as "social acceptability").

The downside effects that we primarily seek to avoid in dogs – and especially in potential service dogs – are usually increased aggression, generalized fear, apathy, and escape/avoidance behaviors. Studies have found that dogs trained using prong and choke collars have a higher overall incidence of aggression (often toward the person wielding the equipment). In addition, escape/avoidance behaviours may well show up when "poisoned cues" are used. This is when a cue for a behaviour becomes associated with punishment. Dogs learn by making associations between things (leash = walks) ... and sometimes these are not always the associations we want to create. For example, when a puppy raiser says "sit" to their puppy and then adds a jerk to the puppy's neck within a second or two if the sit is not prompt enough, the puppy will likely sit. But the next time the cue is given the dog may act distracted (often a general sign in animals indicating avoidance) and ignore the handler.

Dr. Friedman notes that:

“...punishment doesn’t teach learners what to do instead of the problem behavior.

- *Punishment doesn’t teach caregivers how to teach alternative.*
- *Punishment is really two aversive events – the onset of a punishing stimulus and the forfeiture of the reinforcer that has maintained the problem behavior in the past.*
- *Punishment requires an increase in aversive stimulation to maintain initial levels of behavior reduction.*
- *Effective punishment reinforces the punisher [via a surge of pleasurable chemicals in the brain], who is therefore more likely to punish again in the future, even when antecedent arrangements and positive reinforcement would be equally, or more effective.”*

2) The third criteria that should be used as well as effectiveness and the need to avoid unwanted side effects is the degree to which the learner maintains control while the intervention is in effect.

This third factor is added is because when a dog or human’s ability to change their environment through their behaviour is prevented, their desire for effectiveness and control is not removed. Dr. Friedman notes that the expression of that desire is simply blocked – and because of that block their risk of a number of health issues increases sharply. Areas where increased risks are seen are in learning deficits, emotional problems such as depression or learned helplessness, suppressed immune system activity and more.

The bottom line is that using the Humane Hierarchy and LIMA approach provide owner-trainers, independent trainers and trainers in established schools a way to choose effective behaviour change strategies that do not have risky downsides for the long-term behaviour of the service-dog-in-training.

APPENDIX E - If Your Service Dog is Attacked

1. If your dog is attacked by a person:

The Justice for Animals In Service Act (Quanto's Law) is a Federal Law that protects service animals, law enforcement animals and military animals in any province or territory. It is an offense to kill, wound, maim, poison or injure one of these animals while they are carrying out their duties.

2. If your dog is attacked by another dog:

Avoiding an attack:

- Where possible avoid areas where you know dogs are off leash.
- Alert by-law officers or police about dogs who are off-leash or left unattended.
- If you sense an issue ahead, turn around and avoid it by going another route. It can be frustrating, but you and your dog's safety is more important.
- If you are a person who is not vision-impaired and you can see an off-leash dog coming towards you, reach for a handful of your dog's treats and throw them in front of the oncoming dog. This may give you sufficient time to retreat.

Dealing with an attack:

- Do your best to get your dog away from the other dog. If possible, get your dog behind something to block them.
- Do NOT pick up your dog. Avoid reaching between the two dogs – you won't be able to get your dog to the veterinarian if you are severely injured yourself.
- If there are bystanders, ask for help

Immediately after the attack:

- Ask bystanders to help assess the health of your dog (and yourself if necessary)
- If you or your dog are injured, call 911. Even if only your dog was hurt. You are one unit and if your dog is impaired, you are as well. Call the police and inform them you and your guide dog have been attacked.
- Get as much information as you can about the dog and owner.
- Get your dog checked over by your veterinarian even if they seem to be okay.
- If you do not need to call the police, the attack should still be reported to animal services.

Advice from the police in reporting a dog attack includes:

- Get names of police officers or by-law officers in case you need to follow up.
- If your province/municipality has specific dog laws around attacks, keep a copy in your wallet/purse and show it to officers in case they are unaware.
- A report should be filed either by the police or animal control.
- If you believe proper protocol was not followed, the appropriate follow up is to contact the respective Chief of Police.

Getting help recovering after a dog attack:

- Contact your dog trainer or someone who is familiar with you and your dog and your history. It will help to have someone who understands your relationship to listen to you.
- Work with a trainer on ways to decrease any fear your dog has of other dogs as a result of the attack.
- It may be beneficial to speak to a mental health professional or social worker if you feel that memories of the attack are affecting you (e.g., avoiding going out with your dog, avoiding the place of the attack, difficulty sleeping etc.).
- If you have any tips to share about how you have dealt with the emotional issues resulting from the event, you can help empower others by:
 - Educating the public about leash laws.
 - Informing the public about dog attacks through media.
 - Writing letters to the editors of local newspapers.
 - Meeting with representatives of local law enforcement or animal control agencies.

Appendix F - Terms and Definitions

Note: This list provides some common terminology regarding service dogs but the definitions in this list must be checked with local jurisdictional laws.

alternate handler

person who replaces the substitute handler in specific, protected environments such as schools.

assessor

independent person who evaluates an individual seeking to become a handler, to determine if the individual 1) is appropriate to be paired with a service dog, 2) has the capacity to manage a service dog in public, and 3) has the resources to look after the service dog.

complex teams

constituted by an individual who has a disability (handler) that is mitigated by the service dog, a service dog and an additional handler (e.g. parent) who must be present for safety or to support the team

disability

any previous or existing mental or physical disability, including disfigurement, and previous or existing dependence on alcohol or a drug

emotional support dog

companion dog that may not have any specialized training, but provides comfort and support to a person. Sometimes referred to as a comfort animal.

facility dog

specially trained dog that is working with a volunteer or professional. The work of a facility dog may include visitations or professional therapy in one or more locations.

handler

person who has care and control of the service dog. The person with a disability who requires the dog may not always be the handler **Note:** Public access is permitted only when the dog and the handler, who is a trained volunteer or professional, is directly working with a client with a disability.

person with a disability

individuals who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

public access

right of a person with a disability to be accompanied by a service dog in public spaces. Public access is given to the individual with the disability and not to the service dog alone.

public space

space or gathering place that is generally open to people, promoting social interaction and a sense of community. Examples of public spaces may include, but are not limited to buildings (malls or plazas, convention centres, accommodations, schools, hospitals or other medical facilities, restaurants or cafes, or theatres), places of worship, recreational facilities, public transportation, outdoor facilities (beaches, parks, town squares, amusement parks, or golf courses) or private spaces where service dog accommodations are required under applicable legislation.

qualified practitioner

licensed medical professional who practices in the jurisdiction where the person with a disability resides, and has the authority to indicate that a person has a disability.

service dog

dog specifically trained to minimize limitations of a person with a disability. Service dogs may also commonly be referred to as assistance dogs.

Note: Includes, but not limited to: guide, mobility, medical alert, medical response, hearing, psychiatric, autism, Posttraumatic Stress. Does not include: therapy, emotional support, companion, facility, comfort dogs.

service dog team

working combination of a specific handler and/or handler and the service dog.

simple teams

one handler with a disability paired with one service dog.

substitute handler

person who manages the service dog when the person with a disability is a handler, and the service dog team is in a public space.

support person

individual without a disability that assists the service dog handler with tasks associated with care and maintenance of the service dog.

task(s)

various skills that the service dog has acquired through training and includes specific actions, guiding, alerts, detection, and other activities.

therapy dog

personal pets who offer support and companionship to individuals or groups of individuals in long-term care facilities, hospitals, or even in schools. Typically, the dog has to pass a temperament test, and then the owner has to show that they can properly handle their dog in a variety of situations.

handler

a person with a disability who cannot independently handle the service dog, and is part of a service dog team when accompanied by a substitute handler who manages the service dog (see complex teams).

APPENDIX G – Signs of Dog Fear, Anxiety or Stress (FAS)

Typical observable signs in dogs who are experiencing fear, anxiety or stress include:

- Avoidance
- Defensive aggression
- Panting
- Salivation
- Pacing
- Excessive activity
- Visual scanning
- Elimination
- Dilated pupils
- Vocalization
- Hiding
- Seeking out human contact
- Seeking out contact with other dogs or pets
- Attention-seeking behaviours such as pawing at a person
- Lowered body posture, flattened ear position, low tail position
- Anorexia
- Digging
- Lip licking
- Lip smacking
- Trembling
- Aggression
- Agitation
- Hiding
- Withdrawal
- Sudden appearance of new behaviours (pica; aggression; anxious behaviours), especially in middle-aged or older animals, points to an underlying medical condition.

Many of these signs, though associated with various stressful stimuli, can also be associated with disease. Lip licking, repeated swallowing, and smacking can occur in animals that are nauseous.

Trembling can be seen in animals with fever (shivering) or neurologic disorders (tremors).

Restlessness, pacing, or increased activity can be seen in dogs with painful or neurologic conditions.

Appendix H – Key Program Disability Criteria

Canada Pension Plan Disability Benefits –

To qualify for disability benefits (disability pension and post-retirement disability benefit) under the Canada Pension Plan (CPP), a disability must be both "severe" and "prolonged," and it must prevent the person from being able to work at any job regularly. Severe means a mental or physical disability that regularly stops the person from doing any type of substantially gainful work. Prolonged means that the disability is long-term and of indefinite duration or is likely to result in death.

Department of National Defence -

Service-Dogs – disability: Any previous or existing mental or physical disability and includes disfigurement and previous or existing dependence on alcohol or a drug. (Section 25 of the Canadian Human Rights Act)

Duty to Accommodate -- The obligation of the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces to adopt measures to eliminate disadvantage to current and prospective Department of National Defence employees, Canadian Armed Forces members, and applicants to the Canadian Armed Forces, as a result of a rule, policy, practice or barrier that has or may have an adverse impact on individuals or designated groups protected under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Canadian Human Rights Act or the Employment Equity Act. (

Veterans Affairs Canada –

Disability Assessment "is the sum of the Medical Impairment rating and the Quality of Life rating. In accordance with the *Pension Act* and the *Veterans Well-being Act*, disability is defined as the loss or lessening of the power to will and to do any normal physical or mental act." As impairment refers to a loss of function that can be measured and documented objectively, disability, as defined in the Pension Act and the Veterans Well-being Act, exceeds the physical limitations of impairment and thus requires both medical (impairment) and non-medical (QOL) information to determine the final assessment of disability."

An Act to Ensure a Barrier-free Canada –

Disability means any impairment, including a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication, or sensory impairment — or a functional limitation — whether permanent, temporary or episodic or evident or not, that, in interaction with a barrier, hinders a person's full and equal participation in society. (handicap)

Duty to Accommodate: See Section 3 Compliance with Regulations

Appendix H - References

- Allen, K., Blascovich, J., 1996. The value of service dogs for people with severe ambulatory disabilities a randomized controlled trial. *J. Am. Med. Assoc.* 275, 1001–1006.
- Allen, K.M., Blascovich, J., Tomaka, J., Kelsey, R.M., 1991. Presence of Human Friends and Pet Dogs as Moderators of Autonomic Responses to Stress in Women. *J. Pers. Soc. Psychol.* 61, 582–589. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.61.4.582>
- Beetz, A., Schöfmann, I., Girgensohn, R., Braas, R., Ernst, C., 2019. Positive Effects of a Short-Term Dog-Assisted Intervention for Soldiers With Post-traumatic Stress Disorder—A Pilot Study. *Front. Vet. Sci.* 6, 170. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fvets.2019.00170>
- Blackwell, E., Casey, R.A., 2006. The use of shock collars and their impact on the welfare of dogs : a review of the current literature, University of Bristol.
- Blackwell, E.J., Twells, C., Seawright, A., Casey, R.A., 2008. The relationship between training methods and the occurrence of behavior problems, as reported by owners, in a population of domestic dogs. *J. Vet. Behav.* 3, 207–217. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jveb.2007.10.008>
- Burrows, K.E., Adams, C.L., Spiers, J., 2008. Sentinels of safety: Service dogs ensure safety and enhance freedom and well-being for families with autistic children. *Qual. Health Res.* <https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732308327088>
- Canadian General Standards Board, 2017. Service Dog Teams - Draft National Standard of Canada.
- Cooper, J., Cracknell, N., Hardiman, J., Mills, D.S., 2011. Studies to assess the effect of pet training aids, specifically remote static pulse systems, on the welfare of domestic dogs; field study of dogs in training: AW1402a. DEFRA Proj. AW1402A.
- Cooper, J.J., Cracknell, N., Hardiman, J., Wright, H., Mills, D.S., 2014. The welfare consequences and efficacy of training pet dogs with remote electronic training collars in comparison to reward based training. *PLoS One* 9, e102722. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0102722>
- CTV News - Families seeking autism service dogs face years-long wait lists, 2017. <https://www.ctvnews.ca/health/families-seeking-autism-service-dogs-face-years-long-wait-lists-1.3433371>
- Dalziel, D.J., Uthman, B.M., McGorray, S.P., Reep, R.L., 2003. Seizure-alert dogs: a review and preliminary study. *Seizure* 12, 115–120. <https://doi.org/10.1016/S105913110200225X>
- Davis, B.W., Natrass, K., O'Brien, S., Patronek, G., MacCollin, M., 2004. Assistance dog placement in the pediatric population: Benefits, risks, and recommendations for future application. *Anthrozoos.* <https://doi.org/10.2752/089279304786991765>
- Doctor, K., Meggs, C., 2017. Lending a Helping Paw: An Overview of the Law of Service Animals in Ontario.
- Dominguez-Ortega, L., Díaz-Gállego, E., Pozo, F., Cabrera García-Armenter, S., Serrano Comino, M., Dominguez-Sanchez, E., Civil Guard's collaboration, 2013. Narcolepsy and odor: Preliminary report. *Semer. - Med. Fam.* 39, e41–e46. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.semerg.2013.06.002>
- Dour, H.J., Brown, L.A., Craske, M.G., 2016. Positive valence reduces susceptibility to return of fear and

- enhances approach behavior. *J. Behav. Ther. Exp. Psychiatry* 50, 277–282.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbtep.2015.09.010>
- Ensminger, J., 2010. Service and therapy dogs in American society: Science, law and the evolution of canine caregivers. Charles C. Thomas Publisher Ltd., Springfield, Illinois, U.S.A.
- Friedman, S.G., 2009. What's Wrong with this Picture? Effectiveness is not enough. *J. Appl. Companion Anim. Behav.* 3, 41–45.
- Fry-Johnson, Y.W., Powell, S., Winokur, D.K., 2011. Service dogs: Taking the “dis” out of disabilities in children with with intellectual or behavioral disabilities. *Child Adolesc. Heal. Yearb.* 2009.
- Fry-Johnson, Y.W., Powell, S., Winokur, D.K., 2009. Service dogs: Facilitating the abilities of children with intellectual or behavioral disabilities. *Int. J. Child Adolesc. health.*
- Guelph General Hospital - Policy: Accessibility standards customer service, service animals, 2013. .
 Guelph, Ontario, Canada.
- Gwizdala, M., 2011. A Guide Dog Consumers' Bill of Rights. Braille Monit. as adopted by the National Association of Guide Dog Handlers (U.S.)
- Hardin, D.S., Anderson, W., Cattet, J., 2015. Dogs Can Be Successfully Trained to Alert to Hypoglycemia Samples from Patients with Type 1 Diabetes. *Diabetes Ther.* <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13300-015-0135-x>
- Herron, M.E., Shofer, F.S., Reisner, I.R., 2009. Survey of the use and outcome of confrontational and non-confrontational training methods in client-owned dogs showing undesired behaviors. *Appl. Anim. Behav. Sci.* 117, 47–54. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.applanim.2008.12.011>
- Hiby, E.F., Rooney, N.J., Bradshaw, J.W.S., 2004. Dog training methods: Their use, effectiveness and interaction with behaviour and welfare. *Anim. Welf.* 13, 63–69.
- HRSDC, 2009. Advancing the Inclusion of People with Disabilities - 2009 Federal Disability Report. Ottawa, Canada.
- Hsu, Y., Sun, L., 2010. Factors associated with aggressive responses in pet dogs. *Appl. Anim. Behav. Sci.* 123, 108–123. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.applanim.2010.01.013>
- Hunter, M., 2017. A few thoughts about poisoned cues [WWW Document]. Stale Cheerios. URL <http://stalecheerios.com/training-concepts/thoughts-poisoned-cues/> (accessed 3.9.21).
- Kwong, M.J., Bartholomew, K., 2011. “Not just a dog”: an attachment perspective on relationships with assistance dogs. *Attach. Hum. Dev.* 13, 421–436. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14616734.2011.584410>
- LaFollette, M.R., Rodriguez, K.E., Ogata, N., O'Haire, M.E., 2019. Military Veterans and Their PTSD Service Dogs: Associations Between Training Methods, PTSD Severity, Dog Behavior, and the Human-Animal Bond. *Front. Vet. Sci.* 6, 23. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fvets.2019.00023>
- Lane, D.R., McNicholas, J., Collis, G.M., 2001. Unrealistic or unfulfilled expectations in recipients as consideration in placing trained assistance dogs., in: World Small Animal Veterinary Association World Congress Proceedings.

- Law Commission of Ontario - A framework for the law as it affects persons with disabilities [WWW Document], 2012. . Law Comm. Ontario. URL www.lco-cdo.org/en/disabilities-final-report-framework-introduction (accessed 7.9.15).
- Leonard, M., 2017. A Child's Best Friend? : A Review of Canine Interventions for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder. *Educ. Psychol. Res. Pract.* 3, 36–43.
- Lindsay, S.R., 2000. *Handbook of applied dog behavior and training: Volume 1 - Adaptation and Learning*. Blackwell Professional Publishing.
- Lloyd, J., Johnston, L., Lewis, J., 2019a. Psychiatric Assistance Dog Use for People Living With Mental Health Disorders. *Front. Vet. Sci.* 6, 166. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fvets.2019.00166>
- Lloyd, J., Johnston, L., Lewis, J., 2019b. Psychiatric Assistance Dog Use for People Living With Mental Health Disorders. *Front. Vet. Sci.* 6, 166. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fvets.2019.00166>
- Lofgren, S., Wiener, P., Blott, S., Sanchez-Molano, E., Woolliams, J., Clements, D., Haskell, M., 2014. Management and personality in Labrador Retriever dogs. *Appl. Anim. Behav. Sci.* 156, 44–53.
- McCaig, K., 2008. Legal Rights For People Who Use Service Animals Protection For Guide Dog Handlers : Blind Persons ' Rights Act Potential For Expanded Protection For Service Dog Handlers : Bill Non-Dog Service Animals Human Rights Protections For Service Animal Handlers Service An [WWW Document]. ARCH Issue. URL <https://www.aoda.ca/legal-rights-for-people-who-use-service-animals/> (accessed 6.13.20).
- Meyer, I., Forkman, B., 2014. Dog and owner characteristics affecting the dog-owner relationship. *J. Vet. Behav. Clin. Appl. Res.* <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jveb.2014.03.002>
- Mills, D.S., Demontigny-Bédard, I., Gruen, M., Klinck, M.P., Mcpeake, K.J., Barcelos, A.M., Hewison, L., Haeuvermaet, H. Van, Denenberg, S., Hahandler, H., Koch, C., Ballantyne, K., Wilson, C., Mathkari, C. V, Pounder, J., Garcia, E., Darder, P., Fatjó, J., Levine, E., 2020. Pain and Problem Behavior in Cats and Dogs. *Animals* 10, 318. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ani10020318>
- O'Brien, S., 2018. Personal Communication.
- O'Haire, M.E., Rodriguez, K.E., 2018. Preliminary efficacy of service dogs as a complementary treatment for posttraumatic stress disorder in military members and veterans. *J. Consult. Clin. Psychol.* 86, 179–188. <https://doi.org/10.1037/ccp0000267>
- PALS, 2006a. Participation and Activity Limitation Survey 2006: Technical and Methodological Report - Catalogue no. 89-628-XIE - No. 001. Ottawa, Canada.
- PALS, 2006b. Participation and Activity Limitation Survey 2006: Analytical Report, Catalogue no. 89-628-XIE - No. 002. Ottawa, Canada.
- Raffan, E., Dennis, R.J., O'Donovan, C.J., Becker, J.M., Scott, R.A., Smith, S.P., Withers, D.J., Wood, C.J., Conci, E., Clements, D.N., Summers, K.M., German, A.J., Mellersh, C.S., Arendt, M.L., Iyemere, V.P., Withers, E., Söder, J., Wernersson, S., Andersson, G., Lindblad-Toh, K., Yeo, G.S.H., O'Rahilly, S., 2016. A Deletion in the Canine POMC Gene Is Associated with Weight and Appetite in Obesity-Prone Labrador Retriever Dogs. *Cell Metab.* <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cmet.2016.04.012>
- Rodriguez, K.E., Bibbo, J., O'Haire, M.E., 2018. The effects of service dogs on psychosocial health and wellbeing for individuals with physical disabilities or chronic conditions. *Disabil. Rehabil.* 0, 1–9.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/09638288.2018.1524520>

- Rooney, N.J., Cowan, S., 2011. Training methods and owner-dog interactions: Links with dog behaviour and learning ability. *Appl. Anim. Behav. Sci.* <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.applanim.2011.03.007>
- Rooney, N.J., Morant, S., Guest, C., 2013. Investigation into the value of trained glycaemia alert dogs to clients with type I diabetes. *PLoS One* 8, e69921. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0069921>
- Schalke, E., Ott, S., Salgirli, Y., Böhm, I., Hackbarth, H., 2009. Comparison of stress and learning effects of 3 different training methods in dogs. *J. Vet. Behav.* <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jveb.2009.05.014>
- Schilder, M.B.H., Van Der Borg, J.A.M., 2004. Training dogs with help of the shock collar: Short and long term behavioural effects. *Appl. Anim. Behav. Sci.* 85, 319–334. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.applanim.2003.10.004>
- Service Dog Central Community Forum - Handling access disputes [WWW Document], 2011. . Serv. Dog Cent. - Community Forum. URL <https://servicedogcentral.org/content/access-disputes>
- Sillaby, B.N., 2016. Redefining ‘service dog’ in canada. McMaster.
- Singleton, J.K., Picard, L., Ferrara, L., 2019. Canines assisting in health: Service dogs, essential information for healthcare providers. *J. Interprofessional Educ. Pract.* 17, 100290. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.xjep.2019.100290>
- UN, 2006. Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Resolution 61/106.
- UN, 1975. Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons. Geneva, Switzerland.
- Valentine, D., Kiddoo, M., LaFleur, B., 1993. Psychosocial Implications of Service Dog Ownership for People Who Have Mobility or Hearing Impairments. *Soc. Work Health Care* 19, 109–125. https://doi.org/10.1300/j010v19n01_07
- Viau, R., Arsenault-Lapierre, G., Fecteau, S., Champagne, N., Walker, C.D., Lupien, S., 2010. Effect of service dogs on salivary cortisol secretion in autistic children. *Psychoneuroendocrinology*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psyneuen.2010.02.004>
- Vincent, C., Dumont, F., Dh, G., Belleville, G., Auger, E., Lavoie, V., Besemann, M., Champagne, N., Bourassa, J., 2011. Psychiatric Service Dog Outcomes for Veterans with Posttraumatic Stress Disorder over an 18 month-period : A pilot study 1, 1–12.
- Vincent, C., Gagnon, D.H., Dumont, F., Auger, E., Lavoie, V., Besemann, M., Champagne, N., Belleville, G., Béland, E., Bernier-banville, É., Bourassa, J., 2019. Neurophysiology and Rehabilitation Service Dog Schools for PTSD as a Tertiary Prevention Modality : Assessment Based on Assistance Dogs International-Criteria and Theoretical Domains Framework 2, 29–41.
- Walker, J., 2013. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities: An Overview.
- Wounded Warriors Canada - Service dog prescriber guidelines, 2019.
- Yamamoto, M., Hart, L.A., 2019. Professionally- and Self-Trained Service Dogs: Benefits and Challenges for Partners With Disabilities. *Front. Vet. Sci.* 6, 179. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fvets.2019.00179>
- Zapf, S.A., Rough, R.B., 2002. The development of an instrument to match individuals with disabilities and service animals. *Disabil. Rehabil.* 24, 47–58. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09638280110066316>

Additional Reference Notes:

Due to reference manager software limitations, the following notes reflect fuller detail (links, job title) on a limited number of the references provided above:

Canadian Human Rights Commission [CHRC] (2012), [Report on Equality Rights of People with Disabilities](#) (3.2 MB, 124 pages). This report cites these numbers, taken from the 2006 PALS survey.

O'Brien, Sheila – Personal communications from the 2020 Chair of Assistance Dogs International North America Division.

Statistics Canada [StatsCan] (2006), [Participation and Activity Limitation Survey 2006: Technical and Methodological Report 2006](#) (472 kB, 49 pages), Catalogue no. 89-628-XIE - No. 001, Ottawa, 2007, p. 8;

Statistics Canada, [Participation and Activity Limitation Survey 2006: Analytical Report 2006](#) (647 kB, 38 pages), Catalogue no. 89-628-XIE - No. 002, Ottawa, 2007, p. 9.

United Nations, 2006. [Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#), Resolution 61/106, 13 December 2006;

and UN, [Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#), Resolution 61/106, 13 December 2006. All UN treaties are available at OHCHR, [Universal Human Rights Instruments](#).

United Nations, 1975. [Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons](#), Resolution 3447 (XXX), 9 December 1975