

IACP Position Statement Regarding Service Dogs

The IACP supports public access and proper training for service dogs. The service dog must be able to mitigate the symptoms in the person with the disability and to reflect the proper standards of behavior. Any service dog or any service dog in training that does not reflect proper standards of behavior should be asked to leave the public environment. Trainers should be sure the dog can meet the standards of behavior before taking the dog into public access areas.

The mission of a trained service animal is to help its handler accomplish activities of daily living (ADL's) and is specially trained to assist a person with a disability. These animals are defined as dogs and, in some cases, miniature horses. The public access of these animals in the United States is covered by the American with Disabilities Act and is guided by standards of behavior for service animals.

These standards of behavior insure the animal is under control and calm while working:

- Housebroken
- Obedience trained (beyond Basic Obedience)
- Responsive to first commands of handler
- Should not eat off the floor
- Ignores other animals, people, food (unless scenting for allergies), and objects
- No aggression such as lunging, growling, snapping, biting, or posturing, showing teeth
- Clean and well-groomed
- No jumping, licking, or approaching other people
- Able to maintain composure despite multiple distractions
- Must have 4 paws on the floor unless completing specific tasks to aid handler

Service Animals in training are being educated to provide tasks for people with disabilities or ailments. These animals ***do not*** have access into public areas under the federal regulations addressing ADA. *However, most states have laws permitting these animals access into public areas. Check with your own state legislation for more information.*

Emotional Support Animals have the sole function is to provide emotional support, comfort, therapy, companionship, therapeutic benefits, or promote emotional well-being. These animals do not have public access under the DOJ CFR for ADA access, but can be approved for housing by following guidelines per Housing and Urban Development and on air flights by adherence to guidelines per Federal Aviation Association.