

# Service Animals in the Workplace

## WORKFORCE Fact Sheet

### WORKPLACE SPOTLIGHT



Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), a service animal is any dog that is trained to perform a specific task or tasks in order to help someone with a disability. Service animals help people with a variety of disabilities in a variety of ways. For example, a service animal may help someone who is blind to navigate through a building or help someone with post-traumatic stress disorder to avoid an anxiety attack. The key factors for an animal to be a service animal under the ADA are that the animal benefits someone with a disability and that the animal performs a specific task or tasks.

There are additional requirements for service animals, such as being under the control of their handler at all times.

Entities covered under Titles II and III of the ADA can, and should, inquire about someone's service animal. Entities may ask:

- Is the animal required because of a disability?
- What work or tasks is the animal trained to perform?



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*I got my service dog when I was medically retired out of the military, and it was the best thing that every happened to me.*

*Marcus Luttrell*

Entities must interpret the answers to these questions on a case-by-case basis.

In employment settings, employers often allow service animals as a reasonable accommodation. This is typically a change to a policy that states that pets or animals are not allowed in the employment setting. Employers may request documentation that explains how a service animal will help a person with a disability to do his or her job.

As with any reasonable accommodation, employers do not have to make the accommodation if it creates an undue burden or causes a direct threat in the workplace.

#### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Read about [service animals under the ADA](http://googl/7OyH0) (<http://googl/7OyH0>) from the Department of Justice and from the [Job Accommodation Network](https://askjan.org/) (<https://askjan.org/>).



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