

Support Dog Information



Canine-Assisted Skills and Wellness is not therapy. The coaches are dog trainers, not therapists. They assist consumers in reaching long-term goals. This is not a program to train service dogs or emotional support dogs. However, the coaches can help the consumer work on basic skills needed for public access (e.g., Canine Good Citizen (CGC) exam) or help the consumer train the dog skills necessary to be a skilled companion dog.

Emotional Support Animal (ESA)

What is an Emotional Support Animal?

ESAs provide support for their owners for an emotional or mental disability. They are not trained to provide a specific service to their handlers, but do provide comfort through their presence. ESAs may be a dog or other animal.

Some Examples Include:

- Anxiety Disorders & Depression
- Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD)
- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- Motor Skills Disorder
- Learning Disabilities
- Phobias



Things to Know:

- Documentation from licensed medical professional is legally required stating the need for an ESA for a specific disability.
- Online ESA "registries" do not give your animal any legal rights. Many are scams.
- ESA Registration & Certification is not required for your animal to be your ESA, but training is highly recommended

What Rights Do They Have?

- Allowed in "No Pets" housing with proper ESA documentation
- Permitted in-cabin on flights with you (subject to airline rules)
- NOT permitted in "No Pets" public places, such as restaurants, stores

Service Dog (SD)

What is a Service Dog?

A Service Dog is specifically trained to perform a specific task(s) or service(s) for a single individual with a disability.

It is illegal in many states to falsely claim that your dog is a service dog.

Some Examples Include:

- Guiding those who are visually impaired or blind
- Aiding those who are hard of hearing or deaf
- Alerting medical needs or emergencies such as seizures or low blood sugar
- Assisting those with mobility impairments

Things to Know:

- SDs are NOT required to wear a vest or other ID
- Certification is NOT required for your dog to be a SD. However, a lot of training is needed to train excellent public manners & the specific tasks you need your dog to do.
- If your SD is causing a disruption in a public place, you may be asked to leave.

What Rights Do They Have?

- Those accompanied by their SD are protected by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- SDs are allowed in any space that is open to the public.
- Public places can ask what task(s) the dog has been trained to perform if it is unclear whether the dog is a service animal.