



PETS ON WHEELS of Scottsdale, Inc.

1700 North Granite Reef, Scottsdale, Arizona 85257

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Sharing Our Pets Love
since 1990

A Guide to Service Dogs in Your Life

For some people with disabilities, a service dog may open the world up for them. Service dogs can assist the blind and hearing impaired, as they are classically known for, but they can also help those with seizures, diabetes, a mobility impairment, and even post-traumatic stress disorder.

The Americans with Disabilities Act allows service dogs to travel with their owners and enter restaurants, hotels, planes, and other places that pets would not generally be permitted.



Types of Service Dogs

A service dog needs to have a good temperament, be easy to train, and be in good health. This excludes some breeds that are known for health problems or that are considered to be more difficult to teach. The most preferred breeds are Labrador Retrievers, Golden Retrievers, and German Shepherds.

Resources:

- Washington State Human Rights Commission: [Frequently asked questions about service animals and the ADA](#)
- Washington State University: [Dog breeding and training for helping disabled](#)

Qualifying for a Service Dog

To qualify for a service dog legally, a person must have a disability that substantially limits their ability to do one or more major life tasks without assistance. The dog must be trained to perform that life task (or tasks) in order to qualify as a service dog.

Resources:

- Massachusetts Attorney General: [Information about service animals](#)
- United States Veterans Administration: [Service and guide dogs](#)



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Obtaining a Service Dog

For the visually impaired, there are several organizations, such as The Seeing Eye and Southeastern Guide Dogs, that have been around for decades and help to provide trained guide dogs to those who need them. The recipient of the guide dog will also require some training by one of the organizations so that they can learn how to work with and command their new service dog.

Resources:

- Southeastern Guide Dogs: [Main page](#)
- The Seeing Eye: [Main page](#)
- Guiding Eyes for the Blind: [Main page](#)

Veterans with physical or mental disabilities can also get the help of organizations, such as America's Vet Dogs and Warrior Canine Connection. The dogs are trained to meet the needs of each individual veteran that they will be serving.

Resources:

- America's Vet Dogs: [Main page](#)
- Warrior Canine Connection: [Main page](#)
- Working Dogs for Vets: [Main page](#)

If you are seeking a service dog for another type of situation or impairment, consider reaching out to an organization such as Canine Companions for Independence. They specialize in matching trained canine companions with adults, children, and veterans with physical as well as mental disabilities.

Resources:

- Canine Companions for Independence: [Main page](#)
- Little Angels Service Dogs: [Main page](#)
- Freedom Service Dogs: [Main page](#)

To get or qualify for a psychiatric service dog, a licensed mental health professional will need to write a prescription stating that the dog is needed to perform certain tasks that the person will be unable to do during certain times.

Resources:

- Medical Home Portal: [Dogs for psychiatric abilities](#)
- US Department of Transportation: [Service animals \(including emotional support animals\)](#)

Traveling with a Service Dog

The Department of Homeland Security's Transportation Security Administration offers standard guidelines for travel with a service dog, so make sure to check their current rules before booking your next flight.



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Here are a few things to consider as well:

- Make sure that your dog is comfortable flying. Not all animals are.
- Check that their vaccines and worming are up to date.
- If you are traveling internationally, learn about the rules for bringing animals into each country you will be visiting.
- Bring proof, such as a doctor's note and marked harness, that your dog is a service animal.
- Check in at the airport and let them know that you will be traveling with a service animal.
- Arrive early to give yourself, and your service animal, time to get through security.

Resources:

- Transportation Security Administration: [Disabilities and medical conditions](#)
- Federal Aviation Administration: [Cabin safety: Pets in cabin frequently asked questions](#)
- US Department of State: [Pets and international travel](#)

Service Dogs vs. Emotional Support Dogs

Service dogs require specialized training to be able to do unique tasks that assist their disabled owners. They are allowed, by law, to go everywhere that their owner goes. Service animals, according to the Americans with Disabilities Act, are limited to dogs. However, there are cases in which exceptions are made for properly trained small horses.

Emotional support animals are **not service animals** under Title II and Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Emotional support animals **do not require** special training. Their role is to provide comfort and companionship to their owner. The idea is that the person will be able to function better because of that emotional support. These animals are allowed access to housing that does not allow pets and may enter the cabin of an airplane if they are accompanied by an ESA letter from a licensed mental health professional.

Resources:

- University of California Davis: [Service dogs are increasingly being used in mental health](#)
- West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources: [Service animals and emotional support animals: Where are they allowed and under what conditions?](#)
- Texas Health and Human Services: [Information about service animals and their access to public places](#)

Additional Resources

Are you still interested in learning more about service dogs? Here are some great places to start:

[Assistance Dogs International](#) is a worldwide coalition of non-profit organizations that both train and place assistance dogs with people who need them. If you are looking for an assistance dog, they are a good place to begin your search. They are also a great resource for information.

The [North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services](#) offers a clear and thorough guide that walks through what businesses and service dog owners need to know about their rights and responsibilities regarding the law. They common some frequently asked questions on the topic.

The [Centers for Disease Control](#) discuss the need to keep a healthy home, both for your health as well as your service animal's. They also discuss some of the health benefits and risks of having an animal.