

Assistance Animals - Rights and Responsibilities



The Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth) (DDA) in Section 9, sets out the legal definition of an assistance animal as a dog or other animal that:

(a) is accredited under a State or Territory law to assist a person with a disability to alleviate the effects of disability;

OR

(b) is accredited by an animal training organisation prescribed in the regulations;









OR

(c) is trained to assist a person with a disability to alleviate the effect of the disability and meets standards of hygiene and behaviour that are appropriate for an animal in a public place.

For more information visit www.animaltherapies.org.au



Some important points to remember:

-  Assistance animals assist a person with a disability alleviate the effect of the disability. Many disabilities are invisible. Do not ask a handler what their disability is.
-  Assistance animals must meet standards of hygiene and behaviour that are appropriate for an animal in a public place. You can ask a handler to leave your premises if they don't meet these requirements.
-  Talk to the handler not the animal and do not distract the animal from their job.
-  Assistance dogs can be any breed that is not a breed banned in the dangerous dog act.
-  An assistance animal can't go into food preparation and infection control areas.
-  You can ask a handler to provide evidence that their animal is an assistance animal; or trained to meet standards of hygiene and behaviour that are appropriate for an animal in a public place. Evidence may include: ID card, training log, Public Access Test, veterinary report, assistance animal trainer report, doctors certificate and more.
-  You may refuse access to a person claiming to have an assistance animal if the animal is not under control, if the animal has an infectious disease or if the person does not produce evidence to show they are an assistance animal.
-  If you refuse entry to an assistance animal handler to your premises, a complaint can be brought against you in the Human Rights Commission.

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