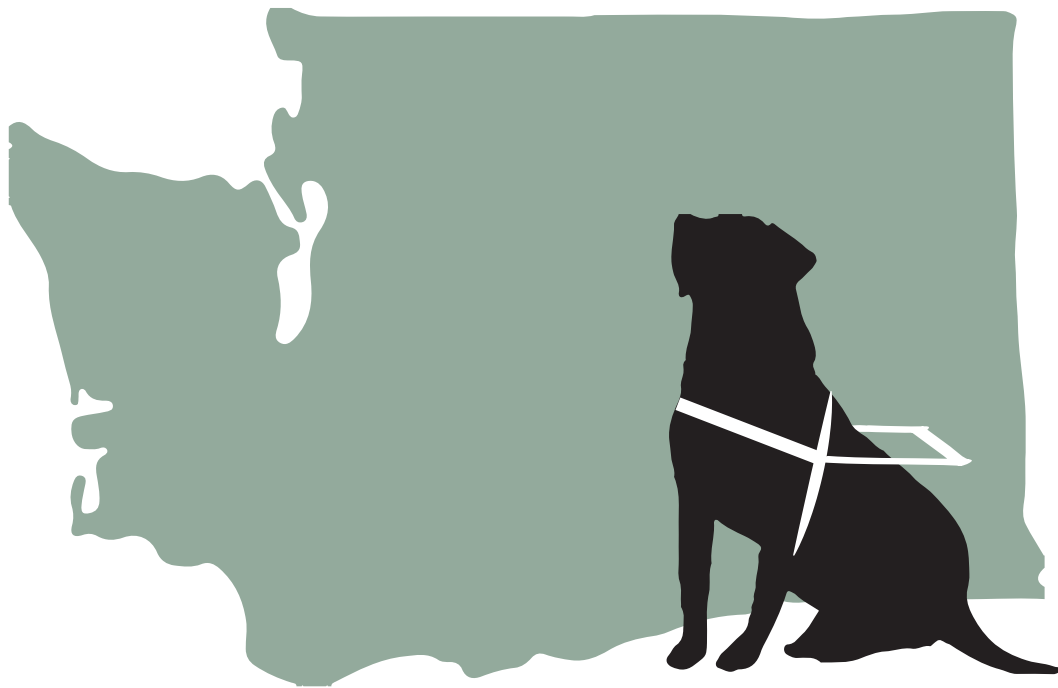

SERVICE ANIMALS

WELCOME

Under state and federal law, individuals with disabilities are allowed to bring service animals into places of public accommodation such as businesses, government offices, and other areas open to the general public.*

(Americans with Disabilities Act; RCW 49.60.215)



Service animals are always welcome, but other animals are prohibited by law in food establishments. Other businesses may decline to permit animals other than trained service animals.

(WAC 246-215-06570; RCW 49.60.215)

Washington State Attorney General's Office
Wing Luke Civil Rights Unit
www.atg.wa.gov/wing-luke-civil-rights-unit



This informational flyer is provided as a resource for general education and is not provided for the purpose of giving legal advice of any kind.

**This informational flyer addresses the rights of service animal handlers in places of public accommodation.*

For issues related to service animals and housing please refer to the Fair Housing Act and the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

What is a Service Animal?

Service animals are trained for the purpose of assisting or accommodating a person with a disability. Service animals are not pets.

A service animal is defined as a dog or miniature horse “individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability.” (RCW 49.60.040; RCW 49.60.215)

The work or tasks performed by the service animal must be directly related to the individual’s disability. The crime deterrent effects of an animal’s presence and the provision of emotional support, well-being, comfort, or companionship do not constitute work or tasks under the law.

Rights & Responsibilities

Of Businesses

- A business may not ask about a person’s disability or for medical documentation.
- A business may only ask:
 - ✓ If the animal is a service animal, and if so;
 - ✓ What task the animal is trained to perform.
- A service animal can be excluded if its handler does not answer both questions.
- Businesses may ask that a service animal be removed in certain circumstances, such as if the animal is out of control or is not housebroken.

Of Service Animal Handlers

- If asked to do so, an owner of a service animal must describe what task the service animal is trained to do.
- Owners must be able to effectively control their animal.
- Service animals are not required to wear harnesses or have any kind of certification.
- Service animals are allowed to accompany a disabled person into places of public accommodation, this includes food establishments, doctors’ offices, and other areas that fall within the categories outlined in ADA Regulations or RCW 49.60.

Misrepresenting an animal as a service animal is illegal and subject to a maximum penalty of \$500.

For additional information or to make a complaint about service animal discrimination, contact the Washington State Human Rights Commission:

Toll Free: 1-800-233-3247

TTY: 1-800-300-7525

www.hum.wa.gov