


# WELCOME SERVICE ANIMALS



The only animals allowed in a food service establishment are service animals. The definition of a service animal, under the ADA, is “a dog or miniature horse that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for a person with a disability.” This means that service animals are working animals that have been trained to perform a specific task directly related to their individual disability. They are not pets. An animal that provides emotional comfort is not considered a service animal as they do not perform a specific task.

Some examples of work or tasks include, assisting individuals who are blind or have low vision with navigation and other tasks, alerting individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to the presence of people or sounds, providing nonviolent protection or rescue work, pulling a wheelchair, assisting an individual during a seizure, alerting individuals to the presence of allergens, retrieving items such as medicine or the telephone, providing physical support and assistance with balance and stability to individuals with mobility disabilities, and helping persons with psychiatric and neurological disabilities by pre-venting or interrupting impulsive or destructive behaviors.

As of January 2019, it is a civil misdemeanor to intentionally misrepresent a pet as a service animal. This misdemeanor can result in a \$500 fine. A service animal is only allowed to be in areas where the public is allowed to go. It is not allowed to go into a kitchen or food

**Sorry, no pets allowed**

storage area. They must be kept in control by their owners. They can be kept under control by a leash or harness, unless that would keep the animal from performing the task it is needed to do. If that is the case, they would need to be controlled by voice or signal controls.

Service animals are not required to be certified or trained in a specific way. They are also not required to wear identification. It might be hard to identify a service animal. Under the ADA, you are only allowed to ask 2 questions to help you identify a service animal:

- Is the dog a service animal required because of a disability?
- What work or task has the dog been trained to perform?

You cannot ask someone about their disability or ask that the animal demonstrate how they help that person. You cannot ask to see medical documents.

For more information, go to the ADA website for “frequently asked questions” on service animals:  
[http://www.ada.gov/regs2010/service\\_animal\\_qa.html](http://www.ada.gov/regs2010/service_animal_qa.html)

This material is adapted from the Snohomish Health District, [www.snohd.org](http://www.snohd.org).