

Untangling the Web of Service, Emotional Support, and Therapy Animals

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3 TYPES OF

SUPPORT ANIMALS



COMPARISON	SERVICE DOGS	THERAPY DOGS	EMOTIONAL SUPPORT
ADA covered: Rights to bring animal into public establishments			
Needs to tolerate a wide variety of experiences, environments, people			
May live with their Disabled owners, even if "No Pets" policy in place			
Primary function is to provide emotional support, through companionship			
Specifically trained to assist just one person			
Provide emotional support and comfort to many people			

Legal Info

- Federal laws are sparse: www.ada.gov/service_animals_2010.htm
- State laws vary.
- The most important thing to know is:

THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS LEGAL SERVICE DOG
“REGISTRATION” OR “CERTIFICATION”!!!!!!!!!!

For example, here in Utah...

Service dogs require a prescription written by the handler's health professional.

- The prescription must be updated annually.
- If their health professional cannot legally write prescriptions, they must refer their client to someone who can.

ESAs only require a letter of recommendation.

- Only necessary once.
- Any health professional can write one.

Components of ESA Training

Basic
Manners



Travel
Etiquette

Components of Service Dog Training

Basic Manners

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graph TD; A[Basic Manners] --> B[Public Access]; B --> C[Task Work];
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Public Access

Task Work

Give your clients realistic expectations

They will need to do a large portion – if not all – of the training themselves.

As tempting as they sound, warn your clients to not be fooled by the charlatans who claim to “train service dogs” in 90 days.

It is a scam!

ESAs take, on average, 6 months to train.

Service dogs take, on average, 2 years to train.

Finding a good service dog trainer

Look for credentials from science-based organizations:

- IAABC
- PPG
- CCPDT
- CAAB

Ask them questions:

- Do you work directly with your client, or do you train the dog(s) yourself?
- About how long does it take to train a service dog on average?
- What happens when the dog gets it right?
- What happens when the dog gets it wrong?

Good candidates for service dogs and ESAs

Must be able and willing to care for a living, sentient being with physical, mental, and emotional needs.



Must be able and willing to bond with the animal.



Must have no history of violence towards animals.



Must be able and willing to train the animal themselves for several months or more.

What if my
client
doesn't
meet those
criteria?





Selecting a dog



- Prepare your client ahead of time.
- Have a plan in place:
 - Logistics
 - Emotional impact



Any
questions?