

# Service, Emotional Support, and Therapy Dogs

## What's the difference? (A brief overview)

**Note: People often use terms interchangeably. If someone uses a term it is always good to first ask what they mean be 'therapy dog' for instance.**

	Service Dogs	Emotional Support Dogs	Therapy Dogs
<b>Who Does the Dog Primarily Help</b>	One person	One person	Many people – these are dogs that volunteers take to bring joy and comfort to others.
<b>Brief Definition</b>	A dog that is individually <b>trained to do work or perform tasks</b> for the benefit of an individual with a disability – including a physical, sensory psychiatric, intellectual or other mental disability.	A pet dog that provides comfort to a person that may have depression or other psychiatric concerns. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No specific training required for the dog to comfort the person with the disability.</li> </ul>	A pet dog that after screening from a recognized therapy animal organization is deemed appropriate to visit others in healthcare, schools and other places where pets are traditionally not allowed.
<b>Public Access Rights</b>	<b>YES</b> – per the American with Disabilities Act <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>The dog must be trained per above. Just having a doctor's note, or that the dog provides comfort, is NOT enough to qualify as a service dog.</b></li> </ul>	<b>NO</b> Emotional Support Dogs have not received the appropriate assessment or training to be taken into public places, and it is illegal to do so.	<b>NO</b>
<b>Fair Housing Act Rights</b>	<b>YES</b> – must be allowed to live with the handler even in 'no pets' housing. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The dog must be well-mannered, properly restrained, be sanitary, be inoculated, and NOT pose a direct threat to the health and safety of other individuals.</li> </ul>	<b>YES</b> – must be allowed to live with the handler even in 'no pets' housing. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There must be an identifiable relationship between the requested accommodation and the person's disability – documentation from a physician or other professional is required.</li> <li>The dog must be well-mannered, properly restrained, be sanitary, be inoculated, and NOT pose a direct threat to the health and safety of other individuals.</li> </ul>	<b>NO</b>
<b>A Few Examples of How Dogs Can Help</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alert a hearing-impaired person to significant sounds or the presence of a new person.</li> <li>Retrieve objects, open/close doors, or provide stability to help a person with mobility challenges.</li> <li>Become a social barrier, stop negative behavior, or guide a person outside for a person with PTSD.</li> <li>Alert to significant glucose level changes for a person with diabetes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The mere presence of the dog helps relieve depression or anxiety symptoms, or help reduce stress-induced pain in persons with certain medical conditions affected by stress.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bring joy and happiness</li> <li>Promote conversation with someone feeling lonely/isolated</li> <li>Provide distraction from pain or the situation</li> <li>'Read-to-a-dog' programs</li> <li>Work next to a professional healthcare provider to make therapy more enjoyable –and get better results</li> </ul>

Provided by Handi-Dogs, Inc. [www.Handi-Dogs.org](http://www.Handi-Dogs.org) 520-326-3412

*(Definitions subject to change as laws may be changed.)*