



# The Quick Facts

## Service and Emotional-Support Animals\*

### SERVICE ANIMALS:

- **Allowed public access rights** (in stores, restaurants, hotels, etc.) as an accommodation for a person with a physical or psychological disability.
- **Only dogs** (and in some cases Miniature Horses) can qualify.
- **Service Animals must be trained to perform specific tasks to mitigate the person's disability.** They must have an appropriate temperament, be controlled, well-mannered, sanitary, and not pose a threat to others. The mere presence of the animal to help a person does NOT qualify it as a Service Animal with public access rights.
- On average it takes **1 - 1 1/2 years to train one's own dog to be a Service Animal.** Not all dogs are appropriate to become Service Animals.



*This sign means ESAs are NOT allowed. ESAs are considered PETS everywhere except for the: Fair Housing Act & Air Carrier Access Act.*

### EMOTIONAL-SUPPORT ANIMALS (ESAs):

*(often referred to as Therapy Animals by healthcare professionals)*

- ESAs are domesticated animals (usually dogs or cats) that by their mere presence provide health benefits to their person who has a disability.
- **ESAs do NOT have public access rights.**
- **Legally, ESAs have only 2 rights** - everywhere else they are considered pets.
  1. Allowed in **no-pet housing**.
  2. Allowed to **fly in-cabin** on U.S. flights.
- To qualify as an ESA, **a letter from a mental health professional is required.** The letter must be on the letterhead of the person's mental health professional and have full contact and license information (date, type, issuing state). **It must state:**
  1. **the person has a diagnosis** with a disability recognized in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 5th Edition*, and
  2. **the animal is required as an accommodation**, and
  3. **the person is under the ongoing care** of the professional who wrote the letter and that the professional is licensed to diagnose the disability.
- Letters are valid for one year.
- ESAs must be controlled, well-mannered, sanitary, and not pose a threat to others.



**Service and Emotional-Support Animal owners are responsible for the costs associated with taking care of their animal.** This includes quality food, vaccinations, veterinarian care, grooming, shelter, transportation to training and veterinarians, medicines if needed, etc. Very little to NO financial assistance is locally available.

\* This information is provided by Handi-Dogs, Inc. and is based on our understanding of the ADA, Department of Justice, and federal and state laws. It is only relevant while in the U.S.A. **To learn more visit: [www.Handi-Dogs.org](http://www.Handi-Dogs.org) or call 520-326-3412.**