

Assistance Animals

Quick Facts



An Assistance Animal is any animal which is trained to assist a disabled individual (handler) to live their life. An Assistance Animal is highly trained to ensure it does not pose a risk to the health and safety of people or other animals. They meet extremely high standards of hygiene and behaviour.

Assistance Animals may also be referred to as an Assistance Dog, Guide Dog, Seeing-Eye Dog, Hearing Dog, Dog Guide or Service Dog. The term 'Assistance Animal' is used to recognise a vast array of species, breeds and human disabilities.

Assistance Animals may be any species (dog, cat, parrot, miniature horse, etc) or breed (labrador retriever, poodle, border collie).

Assistance Animals alleviate a wide variety of disabilities including blindness, deafness, autism spectrum disorder, cerebral palsy, and post-traumatic stress disorder as well as many others. Some disabilities may be invisible.

An Assistance Animal is **NOT** a therapy animal, companion animal, an emotional support animal or a pet. Only Assistance Animals have Public Access Rights.

Assistance Animals have **PUBLIC ACCESS RIGHTS** and may accompany their handler to most places including:

-  Shops (including supermarkets, butchers)
-  Restaurants and cafes (not food preparation kitchens)
- Rental accommodation (including private rented homes, hotels, motels, caravan parks)
-  Public transport (including Bus, Train, Ferry, Taxi, Lyft, Uber)
-  Medical facilities (including hospitals, dentists, doctors, pharmacies)
-  Education facilities (including schools, universities, RTOs)

Assistance Animals are a form of Assistive Technology, like a Wheelchair. They can go everywhere that a wheelchair, walking frame or prosthesis may go.



These rights are protected by the Australian *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)*.



An Assistance Animal must NOT go into a food preparation, quarantine or sterile area (example: surgical suite, working farm, restaurant kitchen).

It is unlawful and/or illegal to deny entry to an Assistance Animal UNLESS the animal does not meet the legal definition of an Assistance Animal, or the handler is unable to produce evidence that the animal is an Assistance Animal. Please contact the Australian Human Rights Centre on 1300 656 0419 for advice or further information.

You cannot deny entry because you are scared or have an allergy. Instead, you must make reasonable adjustments to accommodate both parties.

Handlers must produce proof of Assistance Animal status upon request. Many types of evidence are acceptable, including an identification card, a letter from a doctor or animal training logs. You can learn more about the types of acceptable evidence by enrolling in the free, online WAFA Assistance Ambassador Program.

Remember to:

-  Speak to the person and not the animal.
-  Do not interact with or distract an Assistance Animal unless invited to do so.
-  Avoid asking about the person's disability.
-  Be yourself and treat the person how you would like to be treated.

Disclaimer:

This fact sheet has been professionally translated; however, errors or inaccuracies may occur during the translation process. Please consult the original document and seek professional advice if you have any concerns.

Hardcopy and downloaded copies of this document are considered uncontrolled. The latest version is exclusively accessible through workinganimals.com.au. WAFA retains full intellectual property rights necessitating formal permission for any utilisation. Exceptions are granted for fair use, provided ownership is appropriately attributed and no alterations are made.