

Service Animals, Therapy Animals, and Great Pets

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Definitions

- Service Animal – is a specially trained animal that performs a task or work that aids a person with a physical or emotional disability allowing them more freedom to live an active life without having to depend on others to assist them with daily living tasks or needs.
- Therapy Animal- an animal that performs a therapeutic service that aids in or has therapeutic benefits for the person that is being served.
- Pet- is an animal that should provide enhancement to the lives of its owners.

Important Differences

- Service Animals are allowed to accompany the disabled person in any public place that the disabled person can go to aid and assist them. There shall be no additional cost for allowing a service animal to accompany the disabled handler even if a pet fee is customarily charged. In general a disabled person can only have one service animal at any given time.
 - They can be trained by an agency, a private individual, or the disabled handler themselves.
 - They are not required to have or wear identification, but most service animals do simply to eliminate the need to constantly have to explain themselves.
 - there are only two questions that can be legal asked about a service animal
 - 1) Is this a service animal that you require for your disability?
 - 2) What task or work does the service animal provides?

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- Therapy Animals must be invited to a facility and meet their requirement in order to provide their services.
 - They do not have the same access rights in ADA “public accommodations” as a service animal.
 - Pets do not have any special rights under the law, but owner have the obligation to be responsible for their pets and to not inflict their pets on other people
 - Safety in public
 - To be in control of their behavior
 - Curbing your dog

Can anyone train a

- Service Animal, Therapy Animal, or a Great Pet?

yes

What are the requirements to consider ?

- Cost and Time
- Size of the Animal
- Grooming Needs
- What was the animal historically bred for?
- Is this a good match/ fit for me or my family?

Things to assess

- Temperament
- Physical Soundness
 - Hips
 - Eyes
 - Genetic Health Risks
- What tasks does the animal need to do ?
- Is it suited for these tasks ?

Other consideration with service animals

- Often there are long waiting list for service animals
- Often the disabled person is asked to make a donation or to raise money to help offset the cost of raising and training the animal

Relationship of a service animal and disabled handler

- their interdependence is critical
- They become extensions of each other
- They care for and are responsible for each other
- The animal should be unobtrusive and as invisible as possible

Service animal etiquette

- Please don't distract a working animal
- especially when they are still in training
- Please ask if it is okay to pat the animal

The most important requirements for training any animal are :

- Desire
- Consistency
- Commitment
- It can be helpful to work with a knowledgeable trainer to assist you in with the process

As far as Training :

- Start early But its Never too late
- Make it fun
- Praise and reward
- Be aware of your state of mind
- Remember it is easier to train the desired behavior the first time then it is to break a bad habit