

Service Animals in Public Places and Facilities

A service animal is an animal that performs a specific task or set of tasks to assist a person with a disability. Federal, state, and local laws require that facilities open to the public allow service animals to accompany people with disabilities in all areas of the facility where the public is normally allowed to go.



FACTS

Service animals are:

- allowed in restaurants and other locations that serve food per the Board of Health.
- allowed to go anywhere their owner/handler goes – a store owner’s or customer’s claim that he is allergic to dogs is not an acceptable reason to exclude that person and their animal from the store.

Service animals are not:

- pets. Do not play with or pet a service animal unless its owner has previously given you permission.
- required to wear jackets or vests identifying them as such.
- required to have an identification card or other documentation.

You may only ask:

- Is the service animal required because of a disability?
- What work or task does the service animal perform?

You may ask the handler to remove the service animal only when:

- The service animal is out of control and the handler does not or cannot take effective action to control it.
- The service animal is not housebroken.
- In all circumstances, staff must offer the person with the disability the opportunity to obtain goods or services without the animal present.

DENIED ACCESS? You have the right to file a complaint by calling 311 and asking to be connected to the NYC Commission on Human Rights.



Mayor’s Office for
People with Disabilities

NYC.gov/MOPD

Commission on
Human Rights

NYC.gov/HumanRights



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