



SERVICE, EMOTIONAL SUPPORT, & THERAPY DOGS... WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

For all three groups, dogs can be any breed of dog, purebred or mixed.

SERVICE



- Service dogs have been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability. The task(s) performed by the dog must be directly related to the person's disability.
- Use of service dogs by individuals with disabilities is legally protected under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). This includes public access for the dog without charge, including air & public transportation, housing, travel, and accommodation for other day-to-day activities.
- Do not attempt to pet or otherwise distract a service dog without permission of the handler. These dogs are working!
- May or may not wear a vest/other item designating them as service dogs.
- Must have good manners, behave appropriately in public, & be task-trained to mitigate an individual's disability(ies), which can be psychiatric, physical, or both.
- Most extensively trained group. May be trained by an organization, private trainer, or user-trained.

EMOTIONAL SUPPORT



- Emotional Support Animals (ESAs) provide emotional support, well-being, or companionship to individuals. Under the ADA, ESAs are not considered service dogs: Owners of ESAs do not receive the same rights of access for these dogs.
- Individuals who use an emotional support dog have certain protections under the Fair Housing Act (FHA). ESAs should not be taken into stores or restaurants without permission. Generally, they are allowed wherever pets are allowed in public.
- Some airlines allow ESAs in cabin on flights for a fee.

THERAPY



- Therapy dogs provide comfort to people in a variety of environments – disaster-scenes, medical facilities, libraries, schools, etc. They are often handled by owners who volunteer their services.
- Owners/Handlers of therapy dogs often receive special permission to bring their dogs to locations that are not otherwise pet-friendly in order to provide services.
- Require a lengthy training process that involves behavior and obedience work. Some programs or institutions require therapy dogs to be certified through a third-party organization such as Therapy Dogs International (TDI).
- Meant to be petted, but always ask first!