

*The **Napa Valley Dog Training Club (NVDTC)** offers training classes that teach and proof skills necessary for dogs working safely in public. We strongly support the thorough training and testing of service / assistance and therapy dogs. In addition we encourage owners with an emotional support animal (ESA) to give their pet solid obedience and socialization. The NVDTC provides the Canine Good Citizen (CGC) training class and test, created by the American Kennel Club. Passing this test can be a step toward your dog working as a service or therapy dog.*

*We understand there is confusion surrounding dogs seen in public, and to that end the NVDTC has collected the following materials. The website links included have good general information, and service and therapy groups shown have consistent, national standards. This is a small list and we recommend doing your own research to learn more.*

## **Public**

### **Chart**

[Comparison of Service Dogs - Therapy Dogs – Emotional Support Animals](#)

### **U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division Disability Rights Section**

Commonly Asked Questions about Service Dogs in Places of Business (checked by US Dept. of Justice 2-2017)  
<http://www.ada.gov/qasrvc.htm>

Frequently Asked Questions about Service Animals and the ADA (July 2015)  
Updated piece expands the previous Business Brief and has additional information and scenarios.  
[http://www.ada.gov/regs2010/service\\_animal\\_qa.html](http://www.ada.gov/regs2010/service_animal_qa.html)

### **Article**

What Business Owners Should Know About Service Dogs and Emotional Support Animals  
by Liz Kemper | Blog Post | July 13, 2017

<http://lindleylawoffice.com/blog/2017/07/13/what-business-owners-should-know-about-service-dogs-and-emotional-support-animals/>

# Service / Assistance Dogs

## Definition

Assistance animals are defined as dogs, and in some cases miniature horses, that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities. Examples include guide dogs for people who are blind, hearing dogs for people who are deaf or dogs who to provide mobility assistance or communicate medical alerts.

Assistance dogs are considered working animals, not pets. The work or task a dog has been trained to provide must be directly related to the person's disability. Guide, hearing and service dogs are permitted, in accordance with the ADA, to accompany a person with a disability almost anywhere the general public is allowed. This includes restaurants, businesses and on airplanes.

*Source: Pet Partners, 2017 (<https://petpartners.org/learn/terminology/>)*

## RESOURCES

### **U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division Disability Rights Section**

Americans with Disabilities Act / 2010 Revised Requirements (July 2011)  
[http://www.ada.gov/service\\_animals\\_2010.htm](http://www.ada.gov/service_animals_2010.htm)

### **Assistance Dogs International (ADI)** <http://www.assistedogsinternational.org>

Assistance Dogs International (ADI) is a coalition of not for profit assistance dog organizations. The purpose of ADI is to improve the areas of training, placement, and utilization of assistance dogs, staff and volunteer education, as well as educating the public about assistance dogs, and advocating for the legal rights of people with disabilities partnered with assistance dogs.

ADI has a comprehensive accreditation system and members have to be regularly assessed to ensure they meet the high standards expected of assistance dog programs. Their website includes a Program Search (under the 'Members' section of the home page) that can help qualified individuals find an assistance dog program in their area.

# Therapy Dogs / Therapy Teams

## Definition

Therapy animals provide affection and comfort to various members of the public, typically in facility settings such as hospitals, retirement homes, and schools. These pets have a special aptitude for interacting with members of the public and enjoy doing so. Therapy animal owners volunteer their time to visit with their animal in the community.

A therapy animal has **no special rights** of public access, except in those facilities where they are welcomed. They may not enter businesses with “no pets” policies or accompany their handler in the cabin of an airplane regardless of their therapy animal designation.

*Source: Pet Partners, 2017 (<https://petpartners.org/learn/terminology/>)*

### Additional Clarifications:

- Therapy Teams should be ‘certified’ or ‘registered’ through an organization that provides volunteers with liability insurance.
- Because it is illegal in California to misrepresent a pet, volunteers should be careful not to address, outfit or reference their animal as a service / assistance dog.

## RESOURCES

### **Pet Partners**

<http://www.petpartners.org>

875 124th Ave NE #101, Bellevue, WA 98005  
Phone: (425) 679-5500 Fax: (425) 679-5539

Pet Partners Therapy Animal Program trains volunteers, and screens volunteers and their pets for visiting animal programs in hospitals, nursing homes, rehabilitation centers, schools and other facilities. This organization is considered the premiere national group involved in therapy animals.

### **Loving Animals Providing Smiles (LAPS)**

<http://www.lovinganimalsprovidingsmiles.org>

P.O. Box 6596, Napa, CA 94581  
Phone & Fax: (707) 265-6642

Loving Animals Providing Smiles (LAPS) welcomes all types of domestic pets and their handlers into volunteer service by joining our ongoing programs with seniors in assisted living, at-risk teens, elementary school-aged children with special needs and those needing help with reading skills.

This organization provides extensive hands-on training of therapy teams and mentors / monitors its teams for safety and quality of client interactions. Based in Napa, California, LAPS maintains programs in Napa, Sonoma and Solano counties.

### **Dog Play**

<http://www.dogplay.com>

The Dog Play website has great information on animal-assisted therapy, animal-assisted activities and visiting pet programs. This site also has a list of national and regional organizations that certify owners and their pets to work in public.

# Emotional Support Animals

## Definition

An emotional support animal (ESA), sometimes also referred to as a comfort animal, is a pet that provides therapeutic support to a person with a mental illness. To be designated as an emotional support animal, the pet must be prescribed by a licensed mental health professional for a person with a mental illness. The prescription must state that the individual has an impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, and that the presence of the animal is necessary for the individual's mental health.

Per the ADA, individuals with emotional support animals **do not** have the same rights to public access as individuals with a service dog. Emotional support animals may only accompany their owners in public areas with the express permission of each individual venue and/or facility management. Emotional support animals may travel with their owner on an airplane and may live with their owner in locations covered by the Fair Housing Amendments Act (FHAA) regardless of a "no pets" policy. Although most frequently dogs, other species may be prescribed as emotional support animals.

*Source: Pet Partners, 2017 (<https://petpartners.org/learn/terminology/>)*

### Additional Clarifications:

- There is no 'registration' or 'certification' requirements for emotional support animals, this includes items found on the internet. Currently such pets only need documentation as noted above.
- Because it is illegal in California to misrepresent a pet, individuals with an Emotional Support Animal (ESA) should be careful not to address, outfit or reference their animal as a service / assistance dog.