

Did you know there is a difference between service, therapy and emotional support dogs

Our group members are frequently asked about the different types of roles dogs have in society. While most people understand the role of working dogs such as military working dogs, police working dogs, or search and rescue working dogs; there is more confusion surrounding the roles, characteristics and rights of access under the law of service dogs, therapy dogs, and emotional support animals. We hope the following chart and links help you understand the distinctive and important roles each type of (primarily dogs) has in society.

There are no national *laws* regarding the training of service and therapy dogs; however, there are national organizations providing standardized *training*. Individual states may have various laws regarding access.

Tender Paws helps owners train their dog for therapy dog volunteering using Pet Partners standards. Links for further help in training service and therapy dogs is provided.

Characteristics	Service Dog	Therapy Dog	Emotional Support Animal
Handlers' rights to be accompanied by these dogs in establishments open to the public are protected by the Americans with Disabilities Act. This includes housing, airlines, motel, hotels and camps.	X		
Dogs must be temperamentally sound to tolerate a wide variety of experiences, environments and people.	X	X	
These dogs may live with their disabled owners in housing with a "no-pets" policy in place.	X		X
Provides therapeutic support to people other than its handler. Dogs visit hospitals, schools, hospices and other institutions to aid in psychological or physical therapy.		X	
Handlers encourage these dogs to accept petting and socialize with other people while they're on-duty.		X	
Dogs are individually trained to perform tasks or do work to mitigate their handlers' disabilities, including a physical sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability.	X		

Petting, talking to or otherwise distracting these dogs can interfere with their job and pose a serious danger to the dog and handler.	X		
Dogs' primary functions are to provide therapeutic support, through companionship, to a person with a mental health disability.			X
Subject to state laws regarding dog licensing and vaccination.	X	X	X
These dogs enjoy plenty of off-duty time, during which they rest, take part in fun activities and get to act like a regular, pet dog.	X	X	X

Information gathered from the American with Disabilities Act and the Fair Housing Act

U.S. Department of Justice Frequently Asked Questions about Service Animals and the ADA. Areas covered are: DEFINITION OF SERVICE ANIMAL, GENERAL RULES, CERTIFICATION AND REGISTRATION, BREEDS, EXCLUSION OF SERVICE ANIMALS, MISCELLANEOUS
https://www.ada.gov/regs2010/service_animal_qa.html

Information about obtaining or training a service dog
<http://www.assistancedogsinternational.org/>

Pet Partners therapy animals training
<https://petpartners.org/>

State's laws regarding service animals
<http://servicedogcentral.org/content/node/51>