



EXPECTATIONS OF SERVICE DOGS

These should serve as behavior goals for your puppy.

Service Dogs in Public Should:

- Focus on their handler at all times unless doing trained task work.
- Possess a stable, even temperament without anxiety, reactivity or aggression of any kind.
- Walk nicely on a leash without pulling, straining, lunging, lagging, circling or forging, unless the dog's task work requires tension on the leash, and the pulling is a trained behavior with a purpose.
- Remain quietly by their handler's side when their handler stops without wandering or losing focus.
- *Lay quietly under the table or beside their handler's chair without getting up or moving around excessively. Changing positions is fine; outright breaking stays to respond or engage with distractions or to wander off is not.*
- Ignore distractions.
- Be quiet at all times unless performing specific, trained task work.
- Outside of trained and necessary task work, there should be NO other vocalization, including, but not limited to, whining, grumbling, wooing, barking, growling, whimpering, or other noise. Unless working, Service Dogs should be seen by the public and not heard.
- Appear professional, well-groomed, and well-taken care of. Your Service Dog is a representative of both you and the Service Dog community. The Service Dog must leave everyone with positive impressions of what an actual working service dog is.
- Keep its nose to itself at all times, even if there are food products or other interesting things readily accessible. Sniffing people, objects or food is not only rude, but it's also a possible health hazard. Exceptions to this rule include **Allergen Alert Dogs** or other **Service Dogs** who rely on their noses to perform their work.
- Respond quickly and readily to the handler's commands or directions. Service Dogs should give off the appearance to anyone watching that they are highly trained and that they completely understand what's being asked of them.
- Service Dogs should possess outstanding obedience skills and above-average manners, and both should be readily apparent.
- A Service Dog's demeanor, training, and behavior should, without question, differentiate them from all but the best-trained pet dogs.
- Be able to do pertinent task work to mitigate their handler's disability. To be considered a "Service Dog" under U.S. federal law, a dog **must** be partnered with an individual with a disability **AND** perform specific, trained task work to mitigate that disability. Task work is not optional.



SERVICE DOGS MUST NEVER EVER DO IN PUBLIC:

- Urinate or defecate inappropriately. If a dog isn't house-trained, she doesn't belong in public, Service Dog or not. For younger Service Dogs in Training, outings should be short enough to provide plenty of opportunities to make trips outside. "Accidents" are one of the few reasons a business can exclude a Service Dog team and there are no excuses for having a Service Dog who isn't house-trained. On very, very, very, very rare occasions, a Service Dog may truly be sick or have an upset belly and an accident is unavoidable, but those occurrences are definitely an exception and are not to be expected from Service Dogs. It is important to feed your dogs healthy, freshwater, and pay attention.
- Whine, bark, grumble, growl or make other noises. An exception may be if the whining is an alert, such as to notify a handler who is experiencing a panic attack or a drop in blood sugar and 'Getting Help' for their handler.
- Pick food or objects up off the floor or steal (or even show much interest in) food or items that are sitting out. Exceptions to the "picking objects up off the floor" rule include dogs who retrieve dropped items for their handlers or who are otherwise doing trained task work. In general, though, Service Dogs should not interact with distractions of any kind unless commanded to or otherwise working.
- Sniff staff members, patrons, floors, tables, counters, surfaces, products, shelving or anything else unless the Service Dog is performing specific, trained task work, such as detecting allergens or other substances dangerous to their handler.
- Drag or pull their handler for any reason, unless the dog is performing specific mobility-related task work for their handler as evidenced by the presence of a brace mobility support harness, other task-related gear, or wheelchair assist harness.
- A Service Dog's behavior should never appear "out of control." There's a huge difference between a Service Dog providing counterbalance for their handler by leaning into a harness and a dog who is simply dashing here and there and yanking their handler towards distractions.
- Wander or move widely out of heel position unless commanded to by their handler.
- While Service Dogs aren't robots and can't be expected to maintain exact heel position at all times, they should not range widely enough to infringe on the space, movement or rights of other patrons or teams.
- Service Dogs should be responsive to their handler's movements and focused enough to readily move with the handler without significant lags or delay.
- Service Dogs should not be so engaged or engrossed in the surrounding environment or distractions that they give the appearance of wandering, daydreaming, ignoring, or just being generally untrained.
- Break "stays," "waits" or other fixed-position behaviors to investigate distractions, explore or otherwise move around. Exceptions include Service Dogs who must perform task work that requires them to take the initiative to respond to their handler's disability regardless of location or position or to retrieve assistance/medication/help. The Service Dog's decision to break position or disobey a "stay" should be a DIRECT result of specific, trained task work.
- Be anxious, antsy, agitated, or aggressive in any way. A Service Dog should never make anyone interacting with it nervous or afraid because of its direct behavior. Some people are afraid of dogs or intimidated by large, dark, or certain breeds of dogs, but a Service Dog's actions should NEVER contribute to that fear. Dogs who are anxious, on edge, reactive, fearful or aggressive in ANY way do not belong in public and especially not as a Service Dog representative.
- Stink, smell or appear unkempt or ungroomed in any way.
- Service Dogs MAY NOT Engage with other dogs, people, children or distractions unless allowed to do so by their human partner. The key here is "allowed to do so by their human." There's nothing wrong with allowing a Service Dog to greet a friendly child or



dog if the handler is comfortable with it, but it should be the handler's decision and choice, not the Service Dog's.

- A Service Dog should not appear overly excited, unfocused, distracted, overstimulated, or otherwise out of control. There's no defined line in the sand on this one, but it's easy to know once you see it.
- Jump, scratch, mouth, or exhibit other "out of control" behavior. A Service Dog should NEVER exhibit rude, ill-mannered, untrained, or other behaviors that are considered inappropriate or nuisances.
- They should NEVER infringe on another patron's personal space in a way that appears untrained or impolite. This includes laying their head on a stranger's knees, licking hands while passing by, or leaning against the person's legs standing next in line. It's not "cute," regardless of whether or not the other person provides assurances they're "okay with it."
- A Service Dog should NEVER engage in any behavior or activity that could be hurtful, harmful, leave a bad taste in someone's mouth, or cause the handler to apologize to the recipient.

**MobilityDog advances FUNctional independence
for people with disabilities with service dogs,
education, and empowerment.**

MobilityDog

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