



INTERMOUNTAIN THERAPY ANIMALS
PETS HELPING PEOPLE

How Therapy Animals Differ from other Support Animals

Comparative Descriptions	Therapy Animal	Service/Assistance Animal	Emotional Support Animal
Provides therapeutic comfort to many people	YES	NO	NO
Primary job is to emotionally support owner through companionship	NO	NO	YES
Trained to assist an individual for a specific health need	NO	YES	NO
Must behave in and tolerate many environments	YES	YES	NO
Rights of access to public places such as restaurants and stores	NO	YES	NO
Housing rights even if “No Pets” Policy	NO	YES	YES
Travel rights in the cabin of an airplane with owner	NO	YES	NO*
Okay to approach and pet in public with owner permission	YES	NO	NO

*As of January 2021, the U.S. Dept. of Transportation has ruled that Emotional Support Animals will be considered as pets and must observe the same rules as pets for whichever airline they are traveling on.

PLEASE NOTE: Intermountain Therapy Animals works exclusively with therapy animals. We do not accept service/assistance animals or emotional support animals as candidates for volunteering with ITA to participate in animal-assisted interactions.

www.therapyanimals.org

What Can a Business Ask?

You may only ask two questions:

- “Is the dog a service animal, required because of a disability?”
- “What work or task has the dog been trained to perform?”

What Can a Service/Assistance Dog and His/Her Person Expect Under the Law?

The right to be *in any public place* if they meet the essential legal criteria above.

What Can YOU Expect from Someone with a Service/Assistance Dog?

Assistance dogs require years of training to perform specific tasks for people with disabilities:

- Service dogs must be under control.
- Service dogs should be clean and behave in a safe manner.

Often people are hesitant to speak up because they don’t want to say or do anything inappropriate to someone with a service animal. However, you needn’t put up with someone letting their dog misbehave or making others in the space feel uncomfortable. This is often the “tell” when someone is faking their credentials, because trained service/assistance animals are impeccably trained.

Why Does This Matter?

When untrained dogs posing as service animals behave badly, people who actually need assistance dogs pay a steep price—in discrimination and denial of access to public places—both violations of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

This information is also available on the Americans with Disabilities site at: https://www.ada.gov/service_animals_2010.htm