



Fact Sheet Series

Service Animal Related Job Accommodations

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A service of the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy

JAN'S ACCOMMODATION FACT SHEET SERIES

SERVICE ANIMAL RELATED JOB ACCOMMODATIONS

Service animals enhance the lives of many people with disabilities. Requesting the use of a service animal as a job accommodation may help a person with a disability enjoy the benefits and privileges of employment, perform job tasks, and access facilities.

According to the U.S. Department of Justice, a service animal means any guide dog, signal dog, or other animal individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including, but not limited to, guiding individuals with impaired vision, alerting individuals with impaired hearing to intruders or sounds, providing minimal protection or rescue work, pulling a wheelchair, or fetching dropped items.

The following is a quick overview of some job accommodation ideas that might be helpful for using service animals in the workplace. For a more in depth discussion, access our publication titled "Service Animals as Workplace Accommodations" at <http://askjan.org/media/serviceanim.html>. To discuss an accommodation situation with a consultant, contact JAN directly.

Using a Service Animal at Work:

- Allow the employee with a disability to bring his or her service animal to work.
- Allow the employee to take leave in order to participate in individualized service animal training.
- Provide the employee with a private/enclosed workspace.
- Provide the employee with an office space near a door and/or out of high traffic areas.
- Establish an accessible path of travel that is barrier-free.
- Allow equal access to employee break rooms, lunchrooms, rest rooms, meeting rooms, and services provided/sponsored by the employer.

Caring for a Service Animal at Work:

- Provide a designated area where the employee can tend to the service animal's basic daily needs, e.g., eating or bodily functions.
- Allow periodic breaks so the employee can care for the service animal's basic daily needs.
- If the employee only requires the service animal to travel to and from work, provide a designated area the service animal can occupy until the employee's shift ends.
- Provide general disability awareness training on the use of service animals in the workplace.

Dealing with Coworkers Who Are Allergic to the Service Animal:

- Allow the employees to work in different areas of the building.
- Establish different paths of travel for each employee.
- Provide one or each of the employees with private/enclosed workspace.
- Use a portable air purifier at each workstation.
- Allow flexible scheduling so the employees do not work at the same time.
- Allow one of the employees to work at home or to move to another location.
- Develop a plan between the employees so they are not using common areas—such as the break room and restroom—at the same time.
- Allow the employees to take periodic rest breaks if needed, e.g., to take medication.
- For meetings attended by both employees, ask the employee who uses the service animal if (s)he is able to temporarily use other accommodations to replace the functions performed by the service animal.
- Arrange for alternatives to in-person communication, such as e-mail, telephone, teleconferencing, and videoconferencing.
- Ask the employee who uses a service animal if (s)he is willing to use dander care products on the animal regularly. Most veterinarians and local pet supply stores carry these types of products.
- Ask the employee who is allergic to the service animal if (s)he wants to, and would benefit from, wearing an allergen/nuisance mask. Many local home improvement or hardware stores carry these types of masks.
- Add HEPA filters to the existing ventilation system.
- Have the work area—including carpets, cubicle walls, and window treatments—cleaned, dusted, and vacuumed regularly.

Etiquette:

- When approaching a person with a disability who is accompanied by a service animal, address the person. Also, remember that service animals are working and are not pets. It is not appropriate to touch, pet, or feed treats to a service animal without the owner's permission.

Resources

Delta Society

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(800) 809-2714 TDD
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JAN: Service Animal Resources

<http://askjan.org/cgi-win/TypeQuery.exe?760>

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