



What You Need to Know About Owner Trained Service Dogs

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Unless you obtained a dog from an organization that trains and places dogs, the correct terminology is an "*owner trained service dog*" (OTSD). If you work with a trainer to train your dog and your dog is not being boarded by that trainer for the *duration* of training, your dog is an owner trained service dog, and you are ultimately responsible for your dog's training.

When you select a dog to be your service dog, **first and foremost you must select for temperament.** Is your dog relaxed and steady or up and ready? A good service dog (or therapy dog for that matter) should be relaxed and steady. This does not mean they aren't ready to work, it means they approach their job very methodically without hyperintense behaviors. (I always compare the dog who's "up and ready" i.e., they're always on the move, like Tigger from Winnie the Pooh.) Up and ready is not the best temperament for a service dog. If you're adopting a puppy, you should meet the parents to assess the temperament of the adults in the family. If you're adopting a rescue dog, what kind of personality does the dog currently have? Most dogs won't reach social maturity until the age of 2 - 5 years old. This means that an adorable little puppy may grow up and not have the emotional acuity to be an able service dog (or therapy dog for that matter). The majority of a Service Dog's job is to watch and wait patiently until needed. Dogs must be able to patiently lie quietly next to you and watch and wait, and watch and wait, and watch and wait.

Let's look at some additional requirements for an OTSD:

- ★ A service dog is not a family pet. A service dog should be attentive to their person even when not "working". That is to say the OTSD is with their person 24/7.
- ★ A working dog must be resilient to stress, maintain a calm demeanor and be vigilant to its person. A service dog is calm and enjoys being with and working with their person – they are a team.
- ★ A service dog is not "trained" in 6 weeks. It often takes one to two years to properly train any Service Dog, but your service dog in training needs time to be a puppy and time to develop their own emotional security.
- ★ In addition to basic training and manners, Service Dogs should have at least 30 hours of training devoted to preparation for service dog activities and must successfully pass a Public Access Test. A dog who is able to pass all levels of CGC training (CGC, CGCA, CGCU) may have an increased likelihood of passing the public access test.
- ★ Avoid taking your OTSD to a dog park! If you have an anxiety attack and your service dog is off playing, they can't help you! Additionally, never put your dog in a situation that can injure or

traumatize your dog! Your dog could become sick or injured at a park because you know nothing about the other dogs.

- ★ A Service Dog does not ride in shopping carts, sit at tables on chairs at a restaurant, nor sit on public benches – even if outdoors. Do not allow your dog to do this when they're young or they will expect it as they get older. Service Dogs must walk next to you (or small dogs may be carried in a bag/backpack), and sit under the table or your chair at a restaurant - small dogs may be in a carrier next to you.
- ★ Dogs must be of sound temperament and physically fit. Dogs must not be fearful or hesitant of objects, people or animals. Dogs must not be reactive toward other dogs or people. Dogs must never snap, snarl or growl at their handler, another person or another animal.
- ★ Dogs must be friendly, but not overtly social, i.e., they may not seek out attention from others.
- ★ Dogs must be 100% potty trained. Service Dogs must be taught to potty on cue, while on leash - anytime, anywhere so that they don't have to go when you enter a building. Never allow your service dog to urinate on personal property and always scoop their poop immediately!
- ★ A service dog may not refuse a request from his/her person. Dogs must know all basic commands as well as cues for specific tasks. Dogs must be able to perform a minimum of 3 specific tasks related to the handler's disability. Dogs must reliably perform all commands/cues **on the first request**. Dogs must always walk at heel, by your side, unless otherwise instructed. Dogs must be able to comfortably work on a 4-foot or shorter leash and wear a vest/harness and boots (when necessary, to protect their feet against the elements).
- ★ Dogs must have polite manners, i.e., keep their paws off counters, be quiet unless required to alert bark for help, and always lie on the floor next to your chair or under it.
- ★ Dogs should not leave a footprint: i.e., they should be well groomed (so they don't leave hair behind), and any outdoor elimination must be picked up immediately.

UNDERSTANDING THE DIFFERENCE

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Definition/ Activity	Emotional Support Animal (ESA)	Canine Good Citizen (CGC)	Therapy Dog (TD)	Service Dog - Owner Trained Service Dog (OTSD)
<p>ONLY Service Dogs are protected under the Americans with Disabilities Act.</p> <p>ALL of these designations require a dog that is resilient to stress, and who understands how to be calm and attentive when working.</p>	<p>An Emotional support animal is a family pet who provides comfort to a specific individual.</p> <p>They are not necessarily friendly to members outside their immediate family.</p> <p>They may not be allowed to enter places that service dogs can enter.</p>	<p>A Canine Good Citizen is a family pet who is trained to have good manners and behave appropriately in public.</p> <p>Canine Good Citizens do not have to like every dog or person, but they should behave politely and not react.</p>	<p>A Therapy Dog is a family pet who is trained to interact with and provide joy and comfort to many people.</p> <p>Therapy Dogs must be friendly around everyone, and be taught not to interact with other dogs.</p>	<p>A Service Dog is NOT a family pet. A Served Dog is trained to perform specific tasks for a specific individual. Service Dogs are friendly because they work in public, but they <u>must not</u> be distracted from working with their person.</p> <p>A Service Dog should not be separated from their person. In the event of an emergency, they can't be out playing with other family members.</p>
<p>Have the dogs undergone specific training and/or testing?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">NO</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">YES Training and testing required</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">SUGGESTED not required</p> <p style="text-align: center;">YES Testing required</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">YES Training and testing required</p>
<p>Are the dogs registered with a local or national organization?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">NO</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">YES</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">YES</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">SUGGESTED Not required</p>

May the dogs fly on a plane <i>without</i> special permissions? (Documentation may be required.)	NO	NO	NO	YES Under the DOT Air Carrier Access Act
May the dogs enter restaurants with their handlers?	NO	NO	NO	YES
May the dogs live in housing that doesn't allow pets? (Documentation may be required.)	YES Under the Fair Housing Act, <u>NOT</u> the ADA	NO	NO	YES
May the dogs enter public health facilities?	NO	NO	YES Only by invitation of the facility for a specific period of time	YES
May the dogs enter schools and libraries?	NO	NO	YES Only by invitation of the facility for a specific period of time	YES
Are the dogs required to wear specific tags or ID when working?	NO	NO Tags are available	YES Required for dog and handler while working	SUGGESTED Not required