

# Service Dog 101

## Do's and Don't of Service Dogs

Elizabeth Sandy and Neo

# About Us

## Elizabeth

- Undergraduate student at WSU Tri-cities
- Trained over 15 Dogs with local Service Dog Organization
- Diagnosed with PTSD in 2018 – Neo helps alert of/calm down during episodes.



## Neo

- 1 year old German Shephard
- Training since 14 weeks old
- When off duty, likes chasing squirrels and long walks on the beach

# What is a Service Dog?

**“Any dog individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability.”**



Must be trained in a specific task to mitigate a disability:

- Diabetes: alert of low blood sugar
- Depression: reminder to take medication
- Epilepsy: Alert of seizure, keep handler safe during seizure

# Americans with Disabilities Act

1990: American with Disabilities Act (ADA) passed to protect the rights of those with a disability, including those with Service dog.

The ADA permits service animals to accompany handlers wherever the general public is allowed



# Training a Service Dog

- Start with obedience training – Behavior Standard
- Some dogs are not suited to be service animals due to personality (overly submissive, aggressive etc.)
- Trained to perform specific task.
- Service Dogs in Training are NOT protected by the ADA in WA state.





# **Do's and Don'ts of Service Animals: Two Volunteers!**



# How to Approach Someone with a Service Dog

## DO

- Approach the handler, not the dog
- Keep pets/dogs away
- Give the handler/dog space
- Notify someone of an unattended service dog
- Advocate for handlers being mistreated



# How to NOT Approach Someone with a Service Dog

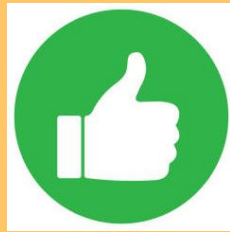
## DON'T

- Distract the dog in any way: petting, offering food, talking to dog: they have a job to do!
- Judge the handler!

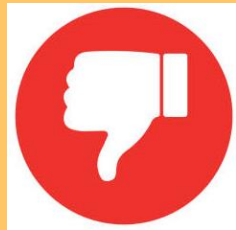




# Service Dog Myths vs. Facts



= **True**



= **False**

**01**



**Emotional Support Animals,  
Therapy Animals and Service  
Animals are the same thing.**

01

**FALSE**



**Emotional Support Animal:** Provide comfort to a handler with emotional and mental health conditions. Require documentation, no public access, no behavior standards.

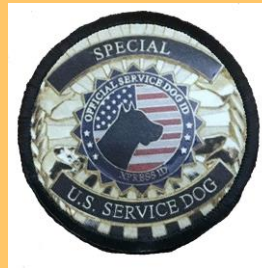
**Service Animal:** Trained to perform a specific task to mitigate the handlers disability, have full public access by law.

**Therapy Animal:** Go to schools, hospitals, treatment center etc. to comfort those OTHER than the handler. No public access.

02



**Service Dogs must be certified/registered with the ADA.**



**02**

**FALSE**



There is no national registry for service animals. Those online are not legitimate. As long as a dog performs a specific task to mitigate a disability and is behaved in public, it is legally protected as a service dog.

**03**



**Service Dogs are not required  
to wear a vest.**

**03**

**TRUE**



The ADA does not require service dogs to wear identification. However, many handlers choose to do so.



**04**



**Service Dogs are allowed in  
food establishments, even  
where food is prepared**



**04**

**TRUE**



Service Dogs are allowed anywhere the general public can go. This excludes environments where the presence of an animal would fundamentally alter the nature of the service/goods (Such as a sterile environment in a surgical unit).

Religious institutions are also excluded.

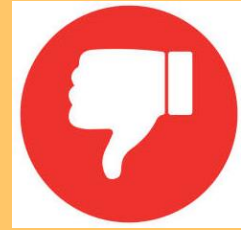
**05**



**Employees can legally ask about a person's disability to determine if their dog is a service animal.**

**05**

**FALSE**



An entity's employees can only ask 2 questions regarding a person's service animal:

- 1) Is the dog a service animal required because of a disability?
- 2) What work or task has the dog been trained to perform?

They can NEVER ask about the nature of a person's disability.

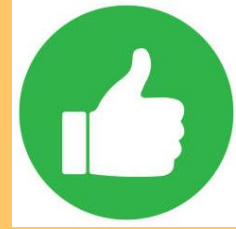
**06**



**Any Breed or Size of Dog can be a  
Service Animal.**

**06**

**TRUE**



The ADA does not discriminate based on a dog's size/breed.



# How to Spot a Fake Service Dog

A service dog may be fake if:

- They're being pushed/carried in a cart
  - They're not on a leash
  - They seek attention
  - They have "accidents"
  - They're aggressive



It is illegal to misrepresent a pet as a service animal in WA state. You can report fraudulent service animals to the local non-emergency police line, or to the ADA

# Questions?

