



National Association of Theatre Owners

GUIDE TO SERVICE ANIMALS IN MOTION PICTURE THEATERS

Excerpted from the Department of Justice's [Frequently Asked Questions about Service Animals and the ADA](#) published July 13, 2015.

SERVICE ANIMALS: WHAT IS **ALLOWED**? * *Note - Managers should always try to handle this situation themselves.*

- Staff **ARE ALLOWED** to ask only two specific questions: (1) is the dog a service animal required because of a disability? and (2) what work or task has the dog been trained to perform?
* *Note - Employees should always speak to a manager before they approach someone with an animal.*
- Service animals **ARE ALLOWED** to accompany their handlers to and through self-service food lines. Covered entities are not required to allow an animal to sit or be fed at the table.
- Patrons **ARE ALLOWED** to bring in more than one service animal. If a patron arrives with two service dogs, staff may ask the two permissible questions (see the first bullet point) about each of the dogs. If both dogs can be accommodated, both should be allowed in. In some circumstances, however, it may not be possible to accommodate more than one service animal. For example, in a crowded small restaurant, only one dog may be able to fit under the table. The only other place for the second dog would be in the aisle, which would block the space between tables. In this case, staff may request that one of the dogs be left outside.
- Service animals **ARE ALLOWED** to be excluded if the service animal behaves in a way that poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others, has a history of such behavior, or is not under the control of the handler. If an animal is excluded for such reasons, staff must still offer their goods or services to the person without the animal present.
- Staff **ARE ALLOWED** to request that the animal be removed from the premises if a service animal is out of control and the handler does not take effective action to control it.
 - Under control of the handler - either the individual with a disability or a third party who accompanies the individual - means that the service animal must be harnessed, leashed, or tethered while in public places unless these devices interfere with the service animal's work or the person's disability prevents use of these devices. In that case, the person must use voice, signal, or other effective means to maintain control of the animal. Under control also means that a service animal should not be allowed to bark repeatedly in a lecture hall, theater, library, or other quiet place. However, if a dog barks just once, or barks because someone has provoked it, this would not mean that the dog is out of control.

SERVICE ANIMALS: WHAT IS **NOT ALLOWED**?

- Staff **ARE NOT ALLOWED** to request any documentation for the dog, require that the dog demonstrate its task, or inquire about the nature of the person's disability.
- Covered entities **ARE NOT ALLOWED** to require documentation, such as proof that the animal has been certified, trained, or licensed as a service animal, as a condition for entry.
- Staff **ARE NOT ALLOWED** to exclude a service animal based on assumptions or stereotypes about the animal's breed or how the animal might behave.

Dogs and in rare cases miniature horses are the only service animals recognized under the ADA. Emotional support dogs do not qualify as service animals under the ADA. Check the laws of the states in which you operate to see if they impose additional service animal requirements.