



**Welcome to**  
**“SERVICE DOG 101”**

**A literary review of Legislation and  
Terminology in the world of Service  
Dogs of Ontario**

# Ontario Government

- "service dog" means a dog that is trained as a guide for a person with a disability or that is receiving training to be such a guide, and that has the qualifications prescribed by the regulations made under this Act; ("chien d'assistance")
- Province of Ontario Bill 80 2016  
(<https://www.ola.org/en/legislative-business/bills/parliament-41/session-2/bill-80>)



# Service Dog

- <https://www.ontario.ca/page/accessibility-ontario-what-you-need-to-know>
- According to the AODA's [Customer Service Standards](#), one of two conditions must apply for your animal to be considered a service animal:
- the animal is easily identifiable as relating to your disability (for example, it is a guide dog or other animal wearing a vest or harness)
- you can provide documentation from a regulated health professional confirming the animal is required due to a disability
- Service animals are not pets. Additional fees or requirements that apply to pets do not apply to service animals.

## Documentation and certification

- Under the Ontario Human Rights Code and the AODA, service animals **do not** need to have certificates or identity cards.
- However, you may be asked to provide acceptable documentation. This includes:
- documentation from a regulated health professional
- an identification card from the Ontario Ministry of the Attorney General for people who are blind and use a guide dog

- If your guide dog/service animal **does not wear a vest or harness**, you can show documentation from one of these regulated health professionals:
- audiologist or speech-language pathologist
- chiropractor
- nurse
- occupational therapist
- optometrist
- physician or surgeon
- physiotherapist
- psychologist
- psychotherapist or mental health therapist

# Bill 136, Provincial Animal Welfare Services Act, 2019

- Service animal
- (2) For the purposes of this Act, an animal is a service animal if,
  - (a) the animal is required by a person with a disability for assistance; and
  - (b) the person has documentation from one of the following regulated health professionals confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to their disability:
    - (i) A member of the College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario.
    - (ii) A member of the College of Chiropractors of Ontario.
    - (iii) A member of the College of Nurses of Ontario.
    - (iv) A member of the College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario.
    - (v) A member of the College of Optometrists of Ontario.
    - (vi) A member of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario.
    - (vii) A member of the College of Physiotherapists of Ontario.
    - (viii) A member of the College of Psychologists of Ontario.
    - (ix) A member of the College of Registered Psychotherapists and Registered Mental Health Therapists of Ontario

## **Harming law enforcement or service animal**

- **17** No person shall cause harm, or attempt to cause harm, to an animal that works with peace officers in the execution of their duties, or to a service animal, whether or not the animal is working at the time of the harm.

# Emotional Support Animals

- Service animals have training to perform specific tasks for people with disabilities. Emotional support animals provide comfort and security. However, they do not have training for specific tasks. Therefore, emotional support animals do not qualify as service animals under the AODA. Service providers are not required to allow support animals on their premises. Providers may ask for proof that a customer's animal is a service animal, unless it is visibly obvious that the person has a disability and is relying on the animal. For instance, if a dog is clearly guiding a customer who is blind, providers should know without asking that this animal is a guide dog. (<https://aoda.ca/service-animal-laws-for-ontario-workplaces/>)



# Canadian Therapy Dogs

- **WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A SERVICE DOG (E.G., SEEING-EYE DOG, PTSD...) AND A THERAPY DOG?**
- Service dogs are highly trained for a specific person's needs. They are not allowed to be touched or petted while working, and are permitted in public facilities (malls, grocery stores, airplanes etc.) A Therapy Dog is shared by a group of people, providing love and affection through touch. They are permitted to visit areas that are approved both by the SJA Program Coordinator and the Facility.

Although they would likely make a great contribution to the program, Service Dogs are not permitted to be a St. John Ambulance Therapy Dog. Having two very different jobs can be very confusing for the dog (i.e., a job that encourages petting, versus one in which it is prohibited).

- <https://www.sja.ca/en/resources/therapy-dog-faqs>



# Questions ?



**Thank you Chairperson and Committee members for  
allowing us to give a brief description of Service Dogs  
in Ontario**