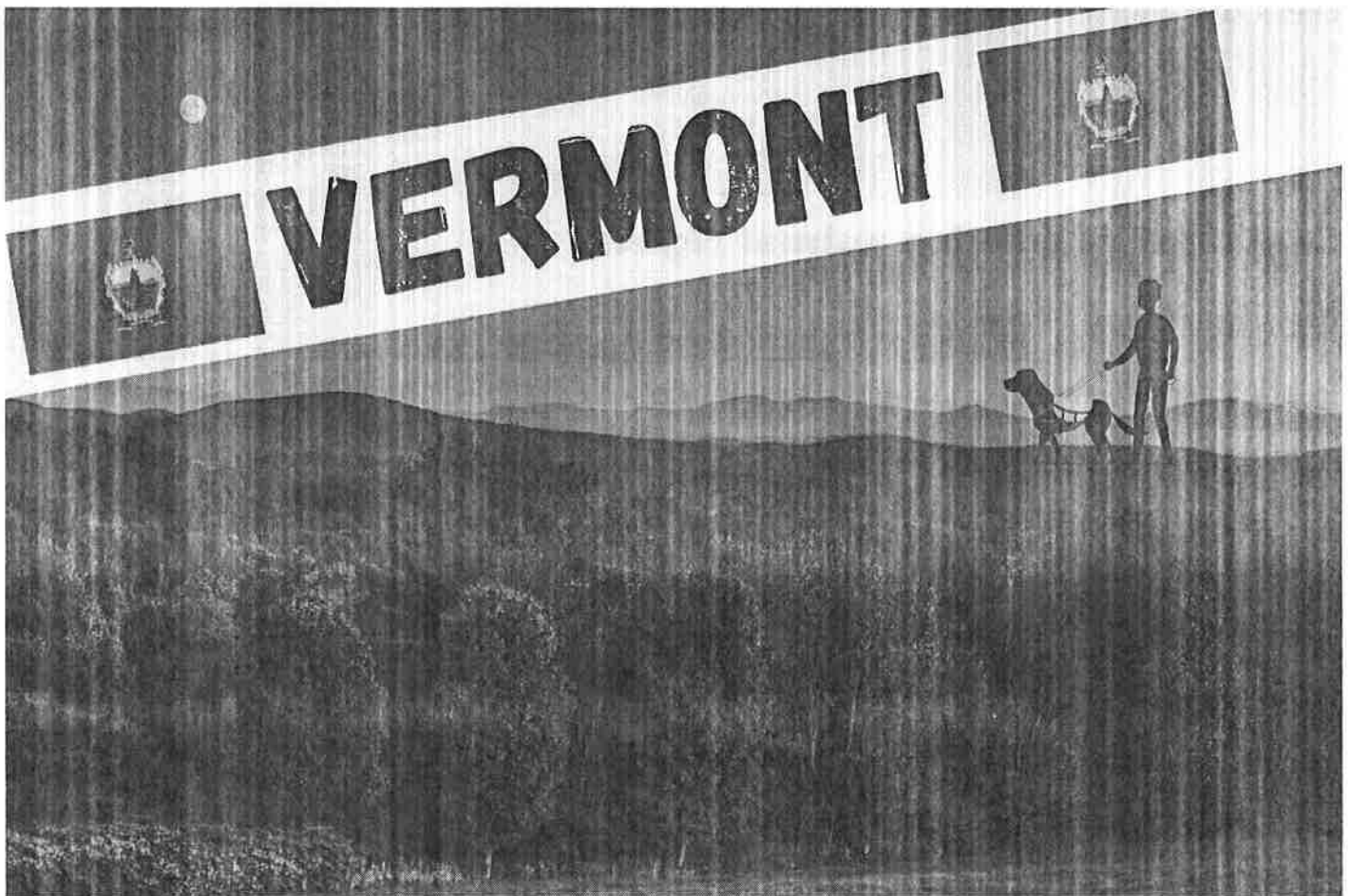


**THE SERVICE
DOGS**



Service Dog Laws Vermont – Huge Guide, FAQ + More [2023]

Written by [Sam Nelson](#) • in [U.S. Laws](#) • Last Updated February 21, 2023



Welcome To Service Dog Laws Vermont

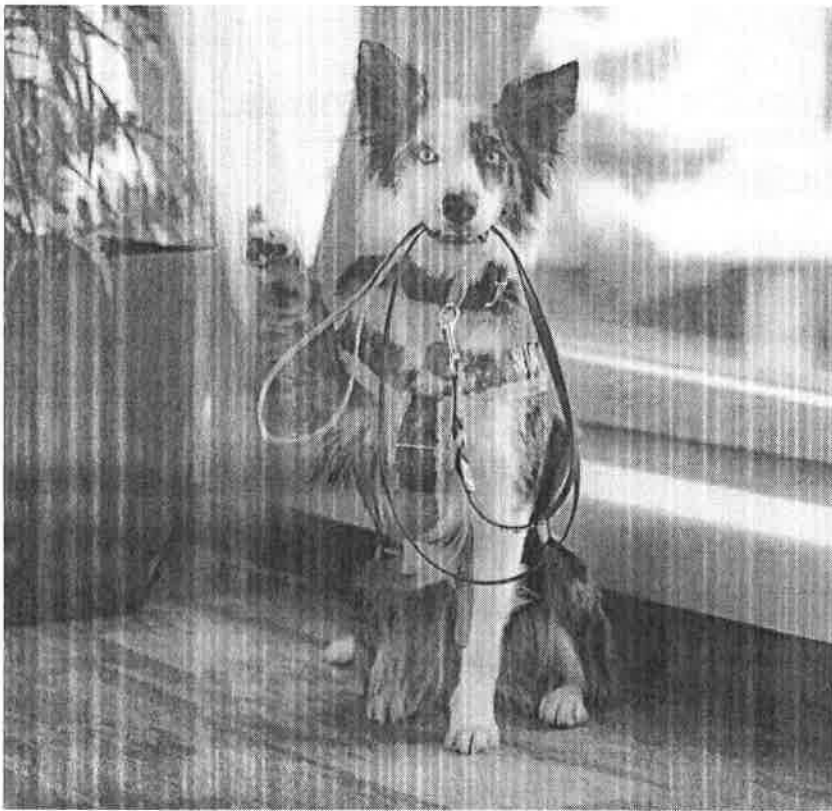
Welcome to our updated service dog laws Vermont article. In this post, we'll get into all of the service dog laws in Vermont details, including the various federal and state-specific service dog laws. This can get confusing but we'll break it all down. Service animals are specially trained animals that help by doing work or tasks for people who are living with a disability.

Under the federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), people with disabilities in Vermont may bring their service dogs anywhere the public may go (with a few exceptions). There are additional federal laws in place for housing and for air travel. Or check out my related article: [Emotional Support Animal Laws in Vermont](#).

Snapshot of service animal rights

In brief, service animals may go with their (legally disabled) handler wherever the public can go. There are a few exceptions, like sterile hospital environments and religious organizations.

Service dogs of any breed may go to malls, restaurants, grocery stores, movie theatres, community centers, schools, buses, taxis, hotels, Airbnb, amusement parks, doctor's offices, hospitals, trains, and National Parks, just as a few examples.



Border Collie [@celestialbordercollies](#) 

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Service animals are able to help people with a wide variety of visible and invisible disabilities.

Service Animal Definitions

There are different definitions of a service animal and a service dog. It all depends on the context.

- The ADA – Americans with Disabilities Act – most famously governs the use of service animals where public access rights are concerned

The ADA is divided into five titles:

- Employment (Title I)
- Public Services (Title II)
- Public Accommodations (Title III)
- Telecommunications (Title IV)
- Miscellaneous (Title V)

Under the ADA, a service animal is defined as a dog that has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability. The task(s) performed by the dog must be directly related to the person's disability.

→ The FHA – Fair Housing Act – is used when service animals – called “assistance animals” under this definition, in housing situations

An assistance animal is an animal that works, provides assistance, or performs tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability, or that provides emotional support that alleviates one or more identified effects of a person's disability. An assistance animal is not a pet.

FHA

→ The ACAA – Air Carrier Access Act – is relevant for when service dogs will be flying in the cabin of an airplane with their human

Under the Air Carrier Access Act (ACAA) a service animal means a dog, regardless of breed or type, that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of a qualified individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability. Animal species other than dogs, emotional support animals, comfort animals, companionship animals, and service animals in training are not service animals.

U.S. Department of Transportation

- Individual state laws – Each individual state may or may not have additional service dog laws above the above-mentioned federal laws. This can get confusing. But you can check with individual state laws to get more details.

Multipurpose Service Dog “Eri” @eri_servicedog

Register & Certify Your Service Dog in Vermont

The truth is that you are not legally required to register or certify a service dog in Vermont or any other state in the US. Service dogs are protected under the ADA, Americans with Disabilities Act, and other federal laws.

Medical Alert Service Dog @cricket n saraphena

Registration from websites online does not convey any legal rights under the ADA or the Department of Justice. Service dogs simply do not need registration or certification in order to be granted public access rights (or for any other reason).

Fake service dogs might have fake service dog paperwork and other stuff. Check out our blog Which Service Dog Registry is Legitimate? to learn more about registrations, certifications, and why they are not required.

What Do Service Animals Do?

The work or tasks done by the animal must be directly related to the person's disability. The training must be specific to the person using the animal. A service animal is not a pet.

The disability could be:

- Physical
- Sensory
- Psychiatric

- Intellectual
- Or another mental disability

The tasks or work done by the animal may include (but are not limited to) the following:

- Helping to guide someone who is visually impaired or blind
- Alerting a person who is deaf or hard of hearing
- Pulling a wheelchair
- Helping someone with mobility or balance
- Alerting others and protecting someone having a seizure
- Retrieving objects
- Bringing attention to the presence of allergens
- Providing physical support and help with balance and stability to someone with a mobility disability
- Helping someone with a psychiatric or neurological disability by preventing or interrupting impulsive or destructive behaviors and/or patterns
- Reminding someone living with a mental illness to take their prescribed medications
- Calming someone with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) during an anxiety attack

- Doing other specific work or performing other special tasks
- **SSigDOG are Sensory Signal Dogs or Social Signal Dogs.** These are a service dog that has been trained to assist someone with autism. The service dog typically alerts their human handler to distracting repetitive movements which are common with people living with autism. This allows the person to stop the movement.
- **Psychiatric Service Dogs** are a type of service dog that has been trained to perform "work" or "tasks" that help people with psychiatric disabilities to detect the onset of certain, specific episodes and lessen their effects.
- **Seizure Response Dogs** are a type of service dogs that are trained to help somebody who has a seizure disorder. How the dog serves the person will depend on individual needs. The seizure response service dog might do a variety of tasks, such as stand guard over their human during a seizure to keep the person safe, or the dog might go and get help.
- **A few dogs have learned to predict a seizure** and warn the person in advance to sit down or move to a safe place, but it seems like this can't reliably be trained in just any dog.

Read more: [The Giant List of Service Dog Tasks](#) (K9 Total Focus)

Siberian Husky Service Dog in Training (SDiT) @the.borealis.pack

Psychiatric Service Dog "Sarge" @sarge.in.service

Where Can Service Animals Go?

Under the federal ADA laws, service animals are permitted to accompany people with disabilities generally wherever the public is allowed (with a few exceptions).

Throughout the ADA, these are otherwise known as places of "Public Accommodation."

This includes:

- Inside State and local government buildings
- Businesses and nonprofit organizations that serve the public
- Malls
- Hotels
- Grocery stores
- Movie theatres
- Hospitals
- Public and private transportation
- Schools
- Parks
- Community Centres
- Read more: [Can Service Dogs Go Anywhere?](#)

Psychiatric Service Dog "Sarge" [@sarge.in.service](#)

General Service Dog Rules & Info for Businesses

- Service animals must be under the control of their handler at all times
- Service animals must be housebroken (know how to "go to the bathroom" appropriately)
- Service animals must be leashed, harnessed, or tethered unless it would interfere with their work or if a person's particular disability prevents their use
- Businesses and agencies cannot ask a person with a disability to leave or deny access due to a fear of dogs, allergies, or any 'no pet' policy (service animals are not pets)

- Furthermore, staff may only ask two questions if they are not certain what service the animal provides: 1) Is the dog a service animal because of a disability? And 2) What work or task has the dog been trained to perform?
- Asking what someone's disability is, asking to have the animal perform or demonstrate its "work" or "task" or asking for medical documentation or any type of documentation for the animal is prohibited
- Read our full [Service Dog ADA Laws Federal Summary & FAQ](#) to read more about the federal ADA laws that apply to public access rights for all states, or read our article on [ADA Workplace Accommodations](#)

Goldendoodle Autism Service Dog "Piper" [@bri.and.piper](#)

Examples of Discrimination in Vermont

- Staff at a restaurant refusing service to someone with a disability because of their service animal/service dog

- Being refused accommodation at a hotel, motel, bed or breakfast, or similar accommodations because of a service animal
- Asking someone to disclose their disability
- Asking a person with a disability to present medical documentation of their disability
- Asking for certification/registration papers for a service animal
- A court or judiciary refusing a service animal to accompany its owner for any court appearance
- A school refusing a student with a service dog access to education because another student has allergies to dogs or dog dander

Kylie's "Where I Go, You Go" (Hugo) and "Lucy On Duty" @lucytheservicesibe

Service Animals in Housing

For service animal laws applying to housing, we can move away from the federal ADA laws and move towards these other laws. However, it's good to note that the ADA still protects people with service animals in housing in certain scenarios.

- The Fair Housing Act (FHA)
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act
- Service Dog Laws Vermont

These laws apply to housing only and state that "individuals with a disability may be entitled to keep an assistance animal as a reasonable accommodation in housing facilities that otherwise impose restrictions or prohibitions on animals."

The Fair Housing Act uses the term "Assistance animal"

Under this slightly different definition (compared to the ADA definition), assistance animals are not limited to dogs or miniature horses.

Assistance animals may be any type of animal (pig, dog, cat, lizard, monkey etc.) and do not need to be individually trained to perform tasks.

An assistance animal is an animal that works, provides assistance, or performs tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability, or that provides emotional support that alleviates one or more identified effects of a person's disability. An assistance animal is not a pet.

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Blue Heeler "Snow Leopard" @snow leopard 81

The purpose of an accommodation of an assistance animal in the housing arena is to "afford the individual an equal opportunity to use and enjoy a dwelling or to participate in the housing service or program."

A person only needs to show:

- That they are a person with a disability
- That the assistance animal helps with the limitations caused by the disability

A landlord or housing provider can require that the individual provide:

- Documentation from a health care professional indicating the person has a disability
- Indicating the animal would provide assistance specific to the disability
- This document does not need to name the individual's disability or provide any other personal details

Reasonable Accommodation Requests

Generally speaking, once a request for reasonable accommodation has been made, the landlord must take a look at the request and the requirements.

If the requirements are met, then a landlord or housing provider must permit the assistance animal unless:

- It can demonstrate that the assistance animal would impose an "undue financial or administrative burden"
- Or if it would fundamentally alter the nature of the housing or program or services
- Read the full memo from [U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development](#)

Therapy Dog “Eddie” with “Boomer” @eddieandboomer

Landlords or Property Owners Must Not...

- Deny a reasonable accommodation request for an assistance animal unless it is an undue financial or administrative burden, the animal presents a direct threat that cannot be otherwise accommodated, or there is no connection between the need for the animal and the disability
- Require a security deposit or deny based on a “no pets” clause in a lease. Service animals are not pets.
- Deny based on an insurance company’s restrictions on allowable breeds of dogs
- Ask for specific information about the nature or extent of the disability

Border Collie [@celestialbordercollies](#)

Landlords or Property Owners May...

- Impose reasonable rules such as removing animal waste, having the animal licensed, vaccinated, and/or leashed
- Request further documentation showing the connection between the need for the animal and the disability
- Read more: [Assistance Animals in Rental Units Vermont](#)

Service Dog "Balu" from Portugal

Emergency Shelter

People with disabilities in emergency housing may also be permitted to have assistance animals with them in shelters. This needs to be determined by a case-by-case, factual determination. If you need help with this determination, the VHRC is available to assist.

American Cocker Spaniel Service Dog "Bartek" @bartek spaniel wspanialy.

Documentation

- There is no formal service animal certification process or paperwork that is recognized by Vermont State or the federal government
- Having said that, air carriers (airlines), employers, and housing providers such as landlords may require certain and specific documentation
- Documentation may not be required for public access as a condition of entry (prohibited by the Americans with Disabilities Act).

Medical Alert Service Dog @cricket n saraphena

The following items are not required for an animal to qualify as a service dog no matter which service dog laws in Vermont we are talking about:

- Service dog vest
- Service dog markings of any kind
- Documentation

Vests, service dog markings, and service dog documentation can not be used as a reliable indication of whether an animal is legally a service dog.

A therapy dog/animal, emotional support animal, or another animal wearing a vest or having a special marking, does not magically "make" these types of dogs a service

animals.

Kylie's "Lucy On Duty" [@lucytheservicesibe](#)

Miniature Horses

Technically speaking, only dogs are service animals under the federal ADA definition for public access rights. Other species of animal, whether that be wild animals or domestic, trained or untrained, are not service animals for the purposes of the ADA.

Service animals may or may not be other types of animals in terms of housing and employment situations. But for now, let's talk about public access rights.

Even though dogs are the only service animal defined by the ADA, there is a separate provision in the ADA that does cover miniature horses.

“Flirty” The Mini Service Horse [@flirty.the.mini.service.horse](https://flirty.the.mini.service.horse)

What this means is that a miniature horse that has been trained to do work or tasks for a specific disability shall have the same rights as service dogs wherever possible.

Businesses and other covered entities need to provide access to miniature horses whenever possible. Reasonable modifications need to be made in policies, practices, or procedures to permit the use of a miniature horse by a person with a disability.

“Flirty” The Mini Service Horse [@flirty.the.mini.service.horse](https://flirty.the.mini.service.horse)

There are additional assessment factors for miniature horses

To determine whether to allow a miniature horse into a specific facility, the business will need to consider the following:

- The type, size, and weight of the miniature horse and whether the facility can accommodate these features safely
- Whether the handler has sufficient control of the miniature horse
- Whether the miniature horse is housebroken
- Whether the miniature horse's presence in a specific facility compromises legitimate safety requirements that are necessary for safe operation

"Flirty" The Mini Service Horse [@flirty.the.mini.service.horse](https://flirty.the.mini.service.horse)

Therapy Dogs

Let's just briefly discuss what therapy dogs are and aren't, since many people aren't sure and it can be confusing as there are so many amazing types of dogs in the world! Lucky humans we are indeed.

A therapy dog is not a service dog, and that's because therapy dogs aren't trained to do "work or tasks" for an individual's disability.

Therapy dogs are not considered service dogs.

A therapy dog is usually someone's pet that enjoys meeting a large number of different people in different settings.

The people who are fortunate enough to spend time with a therapy dog receive great benefits, such as reduced anxiety and added joy.

They often visit places such as schools, hospitals, nursing homes, and other settings where the stress in people may likely be high.

Therapy Dog "Eddie" with "Boomer" @eddieandboomer

Fees

Fees, extra charges, or pet deposits may not be charged for service animals. This is true whether we are talking about the ADA, ACAA, FHA, or Vermont State service dog laws.

A service animal is not considered a pet. Someone using a service animal must not be turned away or denied access because of a "no pets" rule or policy.

In the case where a public entity usually charges people for damage caused by an animal or pet, a person with a disability may also be charged for damage caused by their service animal.

Service Dog “Kodiak” @[dog.human.duo](#)

Control of Service Animals

- Service animals must be under control at all times & should not pose a direct threat to the health and safety of others
- Service animals must comply with state and local animal control laws

Service animals should be kept at a person’s side quietly unless they are performing a specific task.

Service animals must be leashed, harnessed, or tethered unless this may interfere with the service animals’ work. Or, if a disability prevents using them. In those

cases, service animals still need to be controlled through voice, hand signals, or another effective way.

Canadian Multipurpose Service Dog "Everest" [@katelynburelle](#)

Contact the Vermont Human Rights Commission

Vermont Human Rights Commission

14-16 Baldwin Street

Montpelier, VT 05633-6301

Phone: [802.828.1625](tel:802.828.1625)

[800.416.2010](tel:800.416.2010)

Fax: 802.828.2481

Email: human.rights@vermont.gov

hrc.vermont.gov

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Sam Nelson

Sam is an experienced writer, advocate for people with disabilities and mental health, dog lover, artist, philosopher, and generally complicated human being.

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ABOUT US

The Service Dogs is a new dynamic resource for everything to do with Service Dogs (SDs), Emotional Support Animals (ESAs), and much more, created by an everyday human.

LEGAL INFORMATION

Please refer to the local laws for your area to find the most accurate and up-to-date information on Service Dogs and other types of working animals. Federal and state law can change at any time. Contact your local

area or consult with an attorney in your community if you need additional help. The Service Dogs is reader-supported. Thank you for visiting!

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