

## **Welcome**

Hope everyone had a great Christmas and New Year!

The holidays are over and we're starting a whole new year, did this year just fly by for everyone or was it just me! For this month's newsletter we are going to talk about "service animals". What is recognized as a "service animal", and what the law says about them. If you have any questions or have a topic you would like to hear about please contact our staff at 630-365-9599 or you can contact us via email at 3lburn@sbcglobal.net

## **What is a service animal?**

A service dog or animal is one that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for a person with a disability. Some examples of this are guiding people who are blind, alerting people who are deaf, pulling a wheelchair, alerting a person who is about to have a seizure, reminding a person when to take medications, calming a person with anxiety disorder or PTSD. Service animals are working animals, not pets. The work a dog has been trained to provide must be directly related to the person's disability. Dogs or other animals whose sole function is to provide comfort or emotional support do not qualify as service dogs under the Americans with Disabilities Act.



## **Where are service animal's allowed**

Under the ADA, State and local governments, businesses, and non profit organizations that serve the public generally must allow service animals to accompany people with disabilities in all areas of the facility where the public is normally allowed to go.

For example, in a hospital it would be inappropriate to exclude a service animal from areas such as patient rooms, clinics, cafeterias, or exam rooms. However it may be appropriate to exclude a service animal from operating rooms or burn units where the animal's presence may compromise a sterile environment.

## **Service animals must be in control**

Service animals must be harnessed, leashed, or tethered, unless these devices interfere with the service animal's work or the individual's disability prevents using these devices. In that case, the individual must maintain control of the animal through voice, signal, or other effective control.

## **Questions, exclusions, charges and other specific rules related to service animals**

\*When it is not obvious what service an animal provides, only limited inquiries are allowed. Staff may ask just two questions, which are:

1) Is the dog a service animal required because of a disability?

2) What work or task has the dog been trained to perform

Staff cannot ask the person about their disability, ask for medical documentation, ask for a special I.D. card for the animal or documentation, or ask the animal to demonstrate its ability to perform the work.

\*Allergies or fear of dogs are not valid reasons for denying access or refusing service to people using service animals.

When a person who is allergic to dog dander and a person who uses a service animal must spend time in the same room or facility, they both should be accommodated by assigning them, if possible, to different locations within the room or facility.

\*A person with a disability cannot be asked to remove his service animal from the premises unless (1) the dog is out of control and the handler does not take effective action to control it or (2) the dog is not housebroken. When there is a legitimate reason to ask that a service animal be removed, staff must offer the person with the disability the opportunity to obtain goods or services without the animal's presence.

\*Establishments that sell or prepare food must allow service animals in public areas even if state or local health codes prohibit animal on the premises.

\*People with disabilities who use service animals cannot be isolated from other patrons, treated less favorably than other patrons, or charged fees that are not charged to other patrons without animals. In addition, if a business requires a deposit or fee to be paid by patrons with pets, it must waive the charge for service animals.

\*If a business such as a hotel normally charges guests for damage that they cause, a customer with a disability may also be charged for damage caused by himself or his service animal.

\*Staff are not required to provide care or food for service animal



**If you have any questions or comments, please email us at [3lburn@sbcglobal.net](mailto:3lburn@sbcglobal.net) or call 630-365-9599! If you have a subject you would like covered in our newsletter please let us know!**