# CertaPet

YOUR GUIDE TO
## ❀ PSYCHIATRIC SERVICE ❀ DOGS

# What is a psychiatric service dog?

A psychiatric service dog is a sub-category of service dog that is utilized specifically for individuals with qualifying psychological impairments. A psychiatric service dog must be able to meet a public access standard and be able to perform a task to help mitigate a symptom directly correlated to the psychological symptoms that need intervention.

# What is the Public Access Standard?

A service dog is expected to behave in a manner that they are focused on their handler, they are not vocalizing unless it is part of their intervention task, they are not pulling on the leash, and they are not engaging with any other people or animals.

A full description of the public access standard can be viewed here:
⊕ https://www.certapet.com/how-to-train-a-psychiatric-service-dog/

# Who qualifies for a PSD?

Individuals with mental health disabilities.

# Can other animals qualify for psychiatric service?

Unfortunately no. The Department of Transportation final ruling stated that only dogs can be utilized as a service animal.

# What is the difference between a PSD and an ESA?

Whereas an emotional support animal provides general support and comfort, a psychiatric service dog is trained to perform an actionable task directly correlated with an individual's mental health symptoms. Further, emotional support animals are expected to generally behave without any special training, while a psychological service dog has extensive training to be able to meet the public access standard and perform their delegated task.

## Why does the DOT not accept ESAs anymore?

In January 2021, the Department of Transportation enacted a final ruling regarding emotional support animals. They decided to allow airlines to determine their own policies, but ultimately stated that they no longer had to accept them on flights. All major airlines decided to ban emotional support animals and only accept service dogs. As of right now, these laws are current, but actions are being taken.

## Do I have to hire a trainer for my PSD?

No. According to the ADA, you are able to train your own service dog. However, we do encourage you to reach out to a professional for help with training as needed.

For training, do I have to go through a specialized testing or certification process?

There is not testing or no certification process you have to complete with your dog. Your dog must be able to meet the public access standard.

## What qualified tasks can a PSD be trained to perform?

There are multiple actionable tasks a dog can perform, but it needs to be directly correlated to the psychological symptoms that need intervention. Some examples include: initiating tactile stimulation or deep pressure therapy to reduce negative symptoms or behaviors, alerting handler of incipient episodes, grounding handler during anxiety attack, etc.

## How do I let the airlines know I am traveling with a PSD?

You must let the airlines know you are traveling with a PSD when you book your flight. You cannot walk into the airport the day of the flight without notifying the airline that you have a special accommodation.

## What documents do the airlines need from me?

There are no longer individual airline form as the Department of Transportation adapted universal airline forms to be used for all service dogs and psychiatric service dogs at all airlines. These forms ask about qualification, vaccinations, relief attestation, and training. For training, you are able to put yourself, a professional, or a combination of the two. Although you no longer need to submit proof of vaccinations or a letter from your mental health provider, we encourage you to keep all documents on your person when traveling with your PSD.

You can **download the form here:**

# When I am at the airport, what questions can the agents ask me?

Only two questions can be asked by airline agents and TSA.

1) Is that a service dog?

2) What task do they perform?

They cannot ask for your dog to demonstrate their task. The only reason you and your dog could be removed from an airplane or airline is if the dog is ever acting out aggressively or causing a disruption.

# Do I need an ID number, ID card or any type of accessories for my PSD?

By law, you do not need an ID number as there is no universal registration for PSDs. You do not need an ID card or vest, however, you can purchase those through our service. The ID cards provide a quick recap of the DOT final rules that can be helpful when navigating the airport.

Airlines may ask two questions:

1) Is the Psychiatric Service Dog required because of a disability?

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

Airlines may not:

1) Require Special Identification or training documentation for the dog.

2) Ask about the person's disability or require medical documentation for the dog.

3 Ask the dog to perform work or tasks.

4) Refuse admittance, isolate, segregate, or treat this person less favorable than other patrons.

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A person with a disability cannot be asked to remove the service dog from the premises unless:

1) The dog is out of control and the dog's owner does not take effective action.

2) The dog is not housebroken.

As dictated by Federal Law under the Federal ADA Act of the U.S. FAA & DOT

## Is my PSD protected in public places?

You want to be careful in taking your dog to establishments other than the airport. We recommend that you go over the public access standard for training and understand if your dog acts outside of those boundaries then their PSD status can be voided.

Restaurants and grocery stores introduce a whole new environment for the dog as well as new distractions and temptations. Make sure your dog is properly trained as stated in your treatment plan sent by your therapist.

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