

QUESTIONS ABOUT EMOTIONAL SUPPORT ANIMALS AND SERVICE DOGS

What's the difference between an Emotional Support Animal (ESA) and a Service Dog?

Emotional Support Animals (ESA) are animals that provide therapeutic benefits to their owner through affection and companionship. A Service Dog is specially trained to perform a task to help someone with a disability. A seeing eye dog is one example of a Service Dog. Unlike a Service Dog, an emotional support animal does not need specialized training to handle a task. Further, Emotional Support Animals come in different breeds and animal types and are not just limited to dogs, while Service Animals are either dogs or mini horses.

How do I take my dog on an airplane?

Only Emotional Support Animals and Service Dogs are allowed to travel in the cabin of an airplane. Many airlines will ask that you notify them in advance when traveling that an Emotional Support Animal. We recommend informing the airline immediately after booking that you have an ESA with you and let them know that your dog will be traveling with a doctor's letter when you arrive at the airport. Some airlines require travelers to submit their Emotional Support Animal Evaluation Letter before travel. It's always important to understand the specific airline's rules before you travel.

[CLICK HERE TO SEE AIRLINE POLICIES](#)

My dog is very large. Do Emotional Support Animals have a size limit?

No. There is no size discrimination allowed when it comes to Service Dogs and ESA's. ESA's come in various shapes and sizes and airlines are required to allow ESA's dog to accompany you to your seat regardless of the size. It's important to note that there is no size limit for Service Dogs.

Are emotional support animals allowed in all public places?

Unlike service dogs, Emotional Support Animals do not have access rights to all public areas. However, ESA's of certain sizes can be brought on airplanes and allowed to live in pet free housing. Service Dogs, however, are allowed to accompany their owners

What type of proof should I have with me when traveling or moving into a new house with my Emotional Support Animal?

The law requires all ESA's to have a letter which written by a mental health professional. The letter states that the Emotional Support Animal provides therapeutic value to its owner and verifies the validity of the ESA.

Is an Emotional Support Animal (ESA) allowed on a plane?

An Emotional Support Animal may fly in the cabin of a commercial or private airline with their handler and the handler is not required to pay a pet fee. Airlines require an ESA prescription letter from a licensed mental health professional as well as advance notice in most cases that the passenger will be flying with an ESA.

Is an Emotional Support Animal (ESA) allowed in no pet housing?

Landlords and property managers must make reasonable accommodations for tenants or prospective tenants with Emotional Support Animals, even if the apartment, house, or college dorm does not allow pets. A reasonable fee may only be asked by the landlord if there is any damage to the property as a result of your animal, otherwise no other fees may be imposed. Property managers/landlords may require the tenant complete a mental health professional Third Party Verification form.

Is an Emotional Support Animal (ESA) required to wear any identifying clothes or a harness?

Federal law does not require Service Dogs or Emotional Support Animals to wear any type of clothing or harnesses. However, we strongly encourage this since harnesses, leashes, patches and identifying items cut down on the hassles and unnecessary explanations when in public. We have found that these products drastically save time and frustration.

What if I want to register my dog as a service dog?

It's important to note the difference between the two types of dogs. Service Dogs are specially trained to perform a task, while Emotional Support Animals provide therapeutic value.

How does one get a therapy dog for anxiety or other psychological disorders?

To have your dog qualify as an Emotional Support Animal (therapy dog) a licensed mental health professional must determine whether the animal provides therapeutic value to its owner.

Who can I talk to for legal advice?

The Department of Justice is the section of the government that deals with Service Dog and ESA Laws. If you have run into any legal issues or disputes concerning your animal please contact the DOJ for assistance.

Airline Carrier Act c/o Department of Justice: 800-514-0301

Fair Housing Act (FHA): 800-669-9777

Can cats and other animals be Emotional Support Animals?

Yes, any animal that provides therapeutic value can be considered an Emotional Support Animal. However, cats and others cannot be considered Service Animals. The Service Animal designation can only belong to dogs and miniature horses.

What animals are considered Service Animals?

Service animals are defined as dogs and miniature horses that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities. Dogs and other animals whose sole function is to provide comfort or emotional support do not qualify as service

How do I find a doctor who will prescribe an ESA letter?

We offer an easy way to schedule an assessment with a mental health professional who is able to prescribe an ESA letter. To schedule an appointment with a mental health professional for an ESA evaluation letter you can

Do emotional support animals need special training similar to a service dog?

Emotional support animals do not require specialized training. However, they do require a therapist letter in order to be considered valid. Service Dogs require specialized training because they perform a specific task for their owner such as acting as a seeing eye dog or calming someone down who has PTSD.

Can the landlord charge me a pet/security deposit for my emotional support animal?

No. Landlords are not allowed to charge emotional support animals additional fees since an ESA isn't considered a pet.

What does ESA mean?

ESA is short for Emotional Support Animal. An Emotional Support Animal is an animal that provides therapeutic support to its owner and is protected by the Air Carriers Access Act (ACAA) and by the Fair Housing Authority (FHA).

How do I get an Emotional Support Animal (ESA)?

A qualified Emotional Support Animal requires a letter from a mental health professional stating that the animal provides therapeutic value to its owner. We offer an easy way to schedule an appointment and select a time for an assessment with a licensed therapist. It is important to note that we do not guarantee a person's qualification. The therapist is the one that makes the determination on a case by case basis.