



# Public Access Rights of an Assistance Dog

Thank you for opening your doors to Assistance Dogs!

We at Young Diggers feel it's important for everybody to know about the great work Assistance Dogs do in our communities, and the laws that make this work possible.

This document will help to answer questions about Assistance Dogs, what they do, and their rights in the public. We hope this will help you welcome Assistance Dogs in.

## What is an Assistance Dog?

An Assistance Dog is any dog that is helping a person with a disability and has met the state standards for public access rights.

## How do Assistance Dogs help?

Assistance Dogs can help with a range of conditions. They can help people with physical disabilities and limitations complete day to day tasks around their homes and in the community. They can help people with psychological conditions, like PTSD and Autism Spectrum Disorders, feel safe, calm and confident when out in public spaces. They provide highly specialised skills to address specific needs a person might have. Guide dogs for the blind and deaf are technically Assistance Dogs.

## What are the rights of a person with an Assistance Dog?

The rights of a person with an Assistance Dog are protected under Federal Law through the

### **Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA 1992).**

The DDA recognises that a suitably trained Assistance Animal is a tool facilitating the functioning of a person with a disability, similar to a wheelchair.

The DDA allows qualified Assistance Dogs to accompany their handler into all public spaces.

Handlers of assistance dog's are legally allowed to enter all public places, including shops & supermarkets, cafes & restaurants, pubs & clubs, hotels & motels, hospitals, medical practices & dental surgeries.

The only exceptions to this may be spaces in which a person's disability is being addressed by other means, or areas with stringent sterility requirements, for example:

- Specific Clinical Settings
- Surgically sterilised areas
- Industrial food preparation areas (kitchens)
- Quarantined areas

Assistance Dogs are a necessary aid to allow a person with a disability to engage in their community. You wouldn't ask someone who needs a walking stick to leave it at the door.

## What are your rights and what can you expect as a proprietor?

You are legally allowed to ask for some documentation showing that the Assistance Dog is qualified, accredited, and serving the person they are with.

We encourage you to do this, but ask that you do so with sensitivity and respect.

An Assistance Animal will have a jacket with branding from the organisation that qualified it.

You can expect the dog to be clean, well maintained, very well behaved, and highly obedient to its handler.