

I WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT

# SERVICE ANIMALS!





# WHAT IS A SERVICE ANIMAL?

**A SERVICE ANIMAL IS A SPECIALLY TRAINED DOG THAT HELPS ITS OWNER DO TASKS OR STAY SAFE.**

- In most cases, only dogs can officially be "Service Animals." But, Washington does allow some Miniature Service Horses too.
- Unlike pets, Service Animals must be allowed to enter stores, restaurants, transportation and public areas with their owners. It's the law!
- Service dogs come in all shapes, sizes, colors and breeds.
- Like people, every dog is unique! They are all trained to perform different jobs based on what their handler needs.

# HOW CAN SERVICE ANIMALS HELP?

## SERVICE DOGS SERVE MANY DIFFERENT ROLES TO HELP PEOPLE IN THE COMMUNITY!

- Some dogs help people who are blind or have low vision with daily tasks as they move through their homes and communities. They may help their owner avoid obstacles, cross the road, find items and navigate doors.
- Service dogs help people with severe allergies by using their strong sense of smell to detect ingredients people can't see or smell! These dogs will alert their owner before they eat or touch something with a dangerous ingredient.
- A dog may alert deaf or hard of hearing people to important sounds like doorbells, alarm clocks or safety alarms.
- Mobility assistance dogs may retrieve objects, help open doors, carry bags or provide balance for their handler.
- Some service animals may help someone with autism or a sensory processing disorder feel safe in their environment by providing extra support when things feel unfamiliar or out of control.
- When a person has diabetes, a service dog can smell their handler's sugar levels and will alert the owner or nearby adult if they need to take medicine or seek medical help.
- Dogs can help people with mental illness by providing support when their owner is struggling or remind a person to take medication to help with their symptoms.
- Some service dogs may help a person with epilepsy detect the signs of a seizure so they may get somewhere safe before the seizure begins.

# OTHER TYPES OF HELPING ANIMALS

## THERE ARE THREE MAIN TYPES OF SUPPORT ANIMALS



**SERVICE  
DOGS**

Service dogs are trained to perform certain tasks to help people with disabilities and/ or medical issues lead more independent lives. Only service dogs are protected by the law and must be allowed into public spaces like restaurants, grocery stores and public transportation.



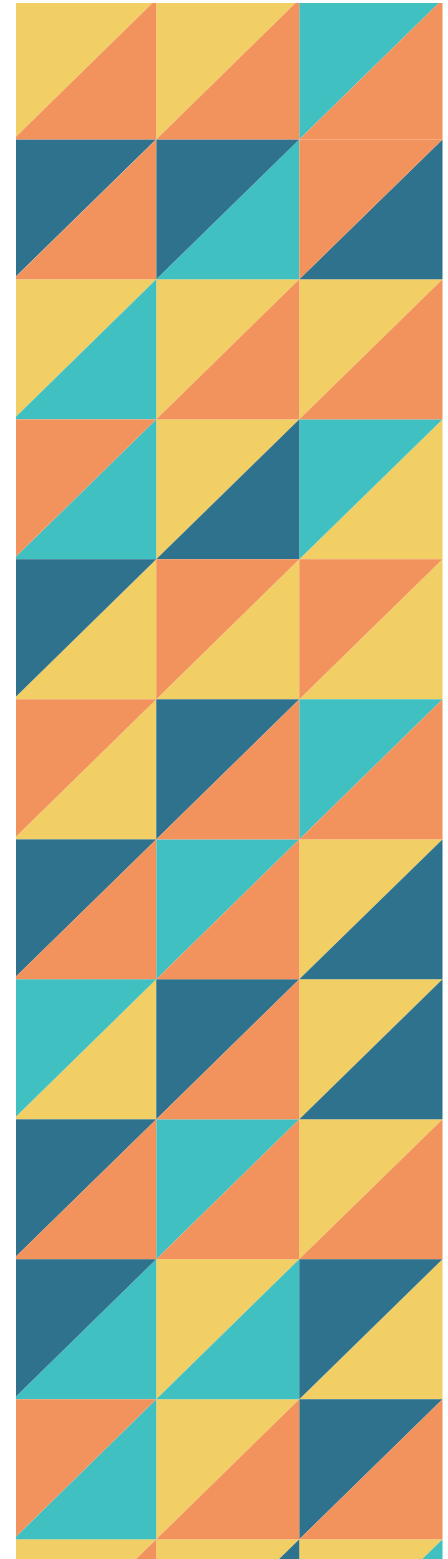
**EMOTIONAL  
SUPPORT DOGS**

Also called Companion Dogs, these animals provide emotional comfort to their owners and may not require extra training. Emotional support animals are protected by a housing law, but may not be allowed in places like stores or restaurants. Some other animals may serve as Emotional Support animals too!



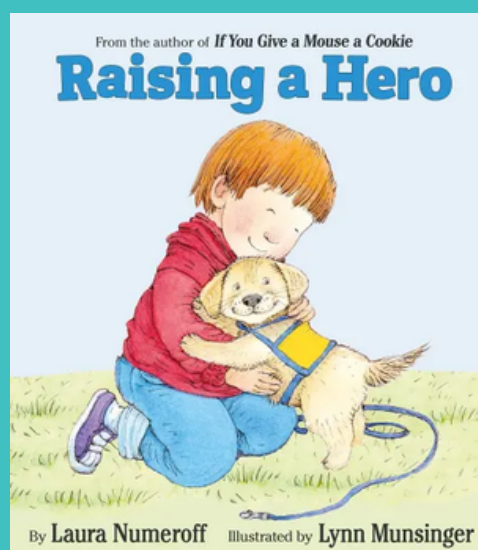
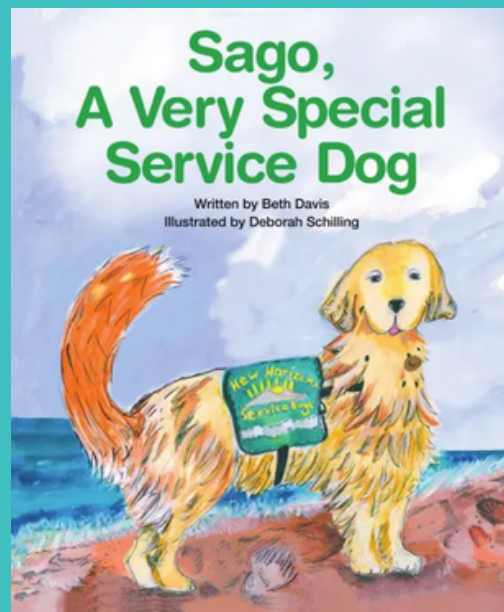
**THERAPY  
DOGS**

Therapy dogs (or other therapy animals) provide comfort to people in many settings like schools, hospitals, nursing homes and more. They are not protected by laws, but many businesses make arrangements to bring therapy dogs to their customers, patients or residents because animals can bring joy to people in hard situations!



I WANT TO LEARN MORE!

# BOOKS ABOUT SERVICE ANIMALS

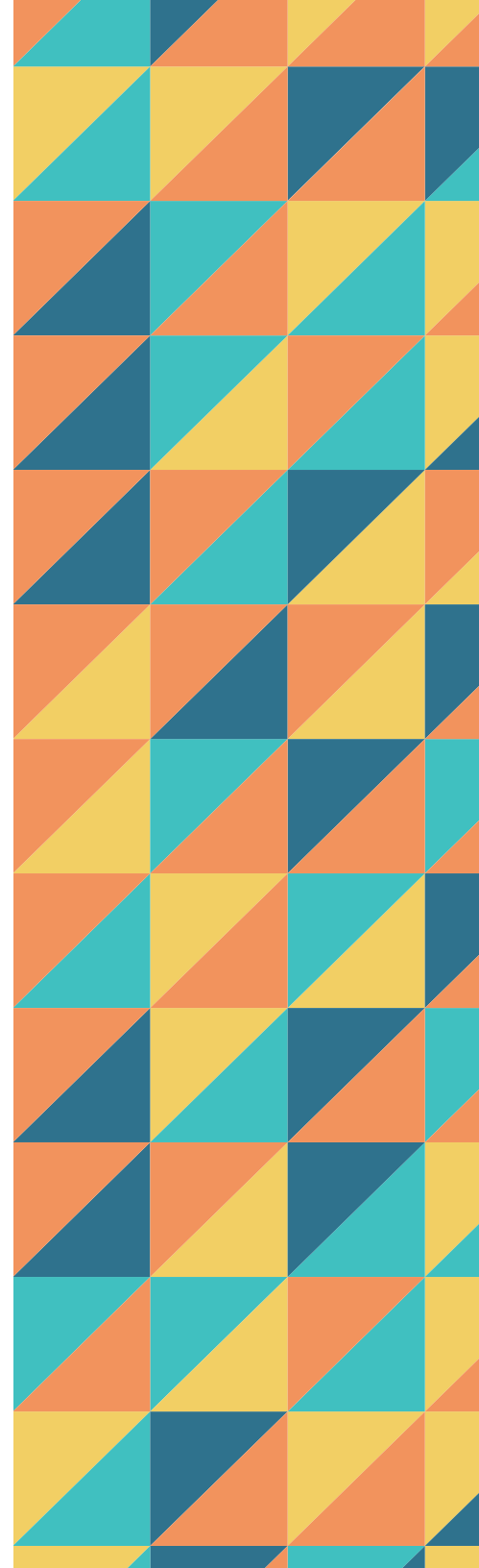




# WHAT DO I DO WHEN I SEE A SERVICE ANIMAL?

**REMEMBER: SERVICE ANIMALS CAN BE SUPER CUTE, BUT THEY ARE ON THE JOB! THEY NEED TO STAY FOCUSED ON THEIR PERSON AND THEIR SAFETY.**

- Do not distract the dog on purpose by waving, making noises or offering food.
- NEVER EVER touch a service dog unless the owner/ handler told you it was okay.
- Keep your pet away from service animals so they don't get distracted by a fun new friend!
- A sleeping dog is still on the job, so it's important to leave them alone even when they are resting.
- If you see a service dog wandering without a handler or if a service dog comes up to you to bark or nudge you with its nose, get help! Many service animals are trained to seek out another person for help if their owner is in trouble. Find a safe grown up who can follow the dog back to its handler to see if that person needs more help.





# WHAT TYPES OF DOGS MAKE GOOD SERVICE ANIMALS?

**IT TAKES A VERY SPECIAL DOG TO BECOME A SERVICE ANIMAL! DOGS MUST BE:**

- A hard worker
- Able to stay calm
- Very intelligent
- Friendly
- Able to form a strong connection with its handler
- Able to ignore distractions and concentrate on its job

**A SERVICE DOG'S SIZE AND CHARACTERISTICS MAY BE DIFFERENT DEPENDING ON THE NEEDS OF THE HANDLER, BUT SOME POPULAR BREEDS INCLUDE:**

- Bernese Mountain
- Collie
- Great Dane
- Pomeranian
- Labrador retriever
- Golden retriever
- German Shephard
- Poodle



# HOW DOES A DOG BECOME A SERVICE ANIMAL?

- There is no legal rule about the training for Service Animals. Training looks different for every dog!
- Service Dog training is more than learning to sit, shake or roll over. They must be able to prove they can perform at least one task to help their handler be more independent or stay safe.
- Service Animals must also get their vaccinations if it is required by their community.
- Many Service Animals will go through about 18-24 months of training.
- Training usually starts when the animal is between 12 weeks and 3 years.