

Service Animals

Does Connecticut law or the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) require proof that a dog is being used to help a person with disabilities to be afforded the protections allowed to service dogs and their owners?

Connecticut law requires public accommodations to permit people who are blind, deaf, or mobility impaired to use service dogs to help them. The ADA has similar provisions but covers a wider range of disabilities, including mental and psychiatric disabilities. Connecticut law does not require a person using a service dog to prove that the dog is being used to help with disabilities in order to be afforded the protections allowed to people using service dogs. The ADA likewise does not require such proof, and limits the types of questions that people working in the private and public facilities it covers, can ask about the dog or its owner. Under the ADA regulations, staff at facilities subject to the ADA can ask only two questions: (1) is the dog a service animal required because of a disability and (2) what work or task has the dog been trained to perform? Staff cannot ask about the person's disability, require medical documentation, or ask that the dog demonstrate its ability to perform the work or task. Nor can they require documentation, such as proof that the dog has been certified, trained, or licensed as a service dog. For more information, please see this link <http://www.jud.ct.gov/lawlib/Law/serviceanimals.htm> .

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