

ASSISTANCE DOGS



Supporting assistance
dog teams

by PAWtected CIC

Introduction

Who are we?

PAWtected CIC is a non-profit organisation in the UK supporting owners to train and work their own assistance dogs. We were founded in 2017 and have worked with many teams during this time. More information about our services can be found on our website at www.pawtected.co.uk

About this booklet

This information booklet refers to British law. Please be aware that information relating to the handler's rights and responsibilities will differ in other countries.

We have designed this booklet to be accessible and easily understood. For further information, please consider our "Assistance Dog Awareness" course which goes into more detail.

Education

Many of the problems faced by assistance dog handlers relate to a lack of education. Please ensure that you and your staff have appropriate education to welcome assistance dog teams.

If you would like to provide additional resources to your other customers regarding assistance dogs, please get in touch with PAWtected CIC where we have a range of resources we can supply.

Policies

Please ensure that your “no animals” policy includes clear guidance on access for people with assistance dogs. This should be available for all employees to read and refer to as needed.

Signage

Correct signage goes a long way to giving assistance dog handlers confidence when accessing your service. We recommend the following:

- No dogs except assistance dogs
- No animals, assistance dogs welcome
- Assistance dogs only.



**No dogs except
assistance dogs**



**Assistance
dogs
welcome**

Signage

Unfortunately, many signs available are inappropriate for use.

No Dogs Except Guide Dogs - This is wrong because not all Assistance Dogs are guide dogs, but all Guide Dogs are Assistance Dogs.

Registered Assistance Dogs Only - This is wrong because there is no legal requirement for an Assistance Dog to be registered.

Hearing Assistance dogs and Guide Dogs Only - This is wrong because there are more types of Assistance Dog.

ADUK only - This is wrong because accreditation and affiliation is optional.

Building layout

There are lots of considerations to be made when laying out your establishment, but consideration must be made to access for disabled people.

Some examples include:

- Accessible door handles/automatic doors
- Wide aisles
- Keeping aisles clear of stock and equipment
- Space at the checkout
- Seating area to rest
- Accessible toilets

Staff training

Some employees may have no experience or prior knowledge of assistance dogs, therefore appropriate training and information is essential.

Lack of education from front of house employees is one of the biggest problems faced by assistance dog handlers.

Other ideas

There are lots of other ways that you can support an assistance dog team depending on the type of establishment. Some examples include:

- Offer a bowl of water
- Ask if they would like a certain table
- Intervene if members of the public are causing problems or harassing the handler
- Give the team space

This publication and more are available for
download at:
www.pawtected.co.uk

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