

Minimum Standards for Assistance Dogs in Public

1 Public appropriateness

- Dog is clean, well-groomed and does not have an offensive odour.
- Dog does not urinate or defecate in inappropriate locations.

2 Behaviour

- Dog does not solicit attention, visit or annoy any member of the general public.
- Dog does not disrupt the normal course of business.
- Dog does not vocalize unnecessarily, i.e. barking, growling or whining.
- Dog shows no aggression towards people or other animals.
- Dog does not solicit or steal food or other items from the general public.

3 Training

- Dog is specifically trained to perform 3 or more tasks to mitigate aspects of the client's disability.
- Dog works calmly and quietly on harness, leash or other tether.
- Dog is able to perform its tasks in public.
- Dog must be able to lie quietly beside the handler without blocking aisles, doorways, etc.
- Dog is trained to urinate and defecate on command.
- Dog stays within 24" of its handler at all times unless the nature of a trained task requires it to be working at a greater distance.

Minimum Standards for Assistance Dog Partners

1. Treat the dog with appreciation and respect.
2. Practice obedience regularly.
3. Practice the dog's skills regularly.
4. Maintain the dog's proper behaviour in public and at home.
5. Carry proper identification and be aware of all applicable laws pertaining to assistance dogs.
6. Keep the dog well groomed and well cared for.
7. Practice preventative health care for the dog.
8. Obtain annual health checks and vaccinations for the dog.
9. Abide by all leash and license laws.
10. Follow the training program's requirements for progress reports and medical evaluations.
11. Arrange for the prompt clean up of dog's waste.

Standards and Ethics Regarding Dogs

- 1 An Assistance Dog must be temperamentally screened for emotional soundness and working ability.
- 2 An Assistance Dog must be physically screened for the highest degree of good health and physical soundness.
- 3 An Assistance Dog must be technically and analytically trained for maximum control and for the specialized tasks he/she is asked to perform.
- 4 An Assistance Dog must be trained using humane training methods providing for the physical and emotional safety of the dog.
- 5 An Assistance Dog must be permitted to learn at his/her own individual pace and not be placed in service before reaching adequate physical and emotional maturity.
- 6 An Assistance Dog must be matched to best suit the client's needs, abilities and lifestyle.
- 7 An Assistance Dog must be placed with a client able to interact with him/her.
- 8 An Assistance Dog must be placed with a client able to provide for the dog's emotional, physical and financial needs.
- 9 An Assistance Dog must be placed with a client able to provide a stable and secure living environment.
- 10 An Assistance Dog must be placed with a client who expresses a desire for increased independence and/or an improvement in the quality of his/her life through the use of an Assistance Dog.
- 11 An ADI member organisation will accept responsibility for its dogs in the event of a graduate's death or incapacity to provide proper care.
- 12 An ADI member organization will not train, place, or certify dogs with any aggressive behaviour. An assistance dog may not be trained in any way for guard or protection duty. Non-aggressive barking as a trained behaviour will be acceptable in appropriate situations.



Minimum Standards for Programs

1. Any individual staff member or program volunteer working with dogs and/or clients that requires specialized people/canine skills must have:
 - An affinity for people and excellent communication skills.
 - Canine knowledge and training experience that ensures established training and client standards can be met by the member organization.
2. Policies and procedures are followed to ensure that the member organization will be able to maintain established standards of service to people with disabilities through their application/student/graduate selection, training and team matching methods.
3. All Board members of ADI member organizations must receive orientation and be provided with appropriate educational materials about their respective programs. The materials should include but not be limited to the following:
 - History of Assistance Dogs and the history of their respective programs.
 - ADI's established Standards and Ethics.
 - Board of Director responsibilities such as financial management, resource identification, solicitation and fund-raising.
 - Ongoing Programs and Services and long range planning.
4. Member organisations recognise the community has a right to receive information concerning ADI program Standards and Ethics.
5. Member organisations recognise the community has a right to receive education on the benefits received by a person with a disability through the use of an Assistance Dog.

Minimum Standards for Training Service Dogs

- 1 The service dog must respond to commands (basic obedience and skilled tasks) from the client 90% of the time on the first ask in all public and home environments.
- 2 The service dog should demonstrate basic obedience skills by responding to voice and/or hand signals for sitting, staying in place, lying down, walking in a controlled

- 3 The service dog must meet all of the standards as laid out in the minimum standards for Assistance Dogs in Public and should be equally well behaved in the home.
- 4 The service dog must be trained to perform at least 3 tasks to mitigate the client's disability
- 5 The client must be provided with enough instruction to be able to meet the ADI Minimum Standards for Assistance Dogs in Public. The client must be able to demonstrate:
 - That their dog can perform at least 3 tasks.
 - Knowledge of acceptable training techniques.
 - An understanding of canine care and health.
 - The ability to maintain training, problem solve, and continue to train/add new skills (as required) with their service dog.
 - Knowledge of local access laws and appropriate public behaviour.
- 6 The assistance dog program must document monthly follow ups with clients for the first 6 months following placement. Personal contact will be done by qualified staff or program volunteer within 12 months of graduation and annually thereafter.
- 7 Identification of the service dog will be accomplished with the laminated ID card with a photo(s) and names of the dog and partner. In public the dog must wear a cape, harness, backpack, or other similar piece of equipment or clothing with a logo that is clear and easy to read and identifiable as assistance dogs.
- 8 The program staff must demonstrate knowledge of the client's disabilities in relation to the services they provide. The program shall make available to staff and volunteers educational material on different disabilities.
- 9 The client must abide by the ADI Minimum Standards of Assistance Dog Partners.
- 10 Prior to placement every service dog must meet the ADI Standards and Ethics Regarding Dogs, be spayed/neutered and have current vaccination certificates as determined by their veterinarian and applicable laws. It is the program's responsibility to inform the client of any special health or maintenance care requirements for each dog.

Minimum Standards for Trainers

1. Trainers must understand and adhere to all ADI Minimum Standards and Ethics.
2. Trainers must be able to produce effective working teams that meet ADI Standards (i.e. Public Access Test, demonstration of tasks) as reviewed at the 1 year anniversary of the team.
3. Trainers must have up to date knowledge of best practices in many areas including:
 - learning theory
 - canine behaviour
 - canine care and safety
 - a variety of training techniques, equipment and methods
4. Trainers must demonstrate effective:
 - communication skills
 - instruction of groups and individuals
 - assessment and problem solving skills
 - self assessment and improvement of performance
5. Trainers must demonstrate:
 - an understanding of the matching process of client with dog
 - Knowledge of the environment a team will encounter, specifically concerning family, community, school and workplace and the impact these may have on each working team.
 - Knowledge of and ability to determine when a training process, placement, or certification needs to be discontinued.
6. Trainers have a responsibility to the public, therefore they must:
 - have knowledge of pertinent canine laws (i.e. leash laws and public access laws)
 - build rapport and establish effective working relationships with co-workers, clients, volunteers, and the community
 - use appropriate behaviour in public when working with each dog and or client, (i.e. train one dog at a time, be polite, show respect and consideration to people and property, and maintain good personal and canine hygiene)
 - Be willing to educate the public about assistance dogs and access rights.

Standards and Ethics Regarding Clients

1. Clients have a right to be considered to receive an Assistance Dog regardless of race, sex, religion or creed.
2. Clients have the right to be treated with respect and dignity at all times in their dealings with the member organization's personnel and representatives.
3. The client has a right to receive a sound educational program to learn how to use his or her Assistance Dog most effectively at home and/or in public.
4. The client has a right to receive appropriate education on his or her role as a user of an Assistance Dog in the community.
5. The client has the right to receive regularly scheduled team evaluation and follow-up support.
6. The client has a right to receive information on or ask for assistance in the following matters:
 - Additional training for the dog that is needed due to a change in the client's functional level.
 - A behavioural management problem with the dog.
 - A major veterinary problem.
 - Legal problems pertaining to the use and access of the Assistance Dog as allowed by law.
7. The client has the right to expect that personal files will remain confidential and will not be disclosed unless he or she has given express prior permission.
8. The community has a right to expect an Assistance Dog to be under control at all times and to exhibit no intrusive behaviour in public, therefore the client has the right be partnered with an appropriate dog and taught appropriate handling techniques.
9. The community has a right to receive information concerning ADI Program Standards and Ethics.
10. The community has a right to receive education on the benefits received by a person with a disability through the use of an Assistance Dog.
11. No client shall be required to participate in fund raising or public relations activities without their expressed and voluntary permission.



Standards & Ethics

Australian Support Dogs Inc. (ASDOG) is a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to the selection, raising, training and placement of assistance dogs for people with physical disability. ASDOG is an accredited member of Assistance Dogs International, Inc. (ADI), a coalition of not for profit organisations that train and place Assistance Dogs. ASDOG adheres to ADI standards for the worldwide assistance dog movement.

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