



Assistance Dogs Guidance

An assistance, or service dog, is defined as “any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability”.

sportscotland is responsible for assuring the health and safety of all employees. Animals may pose a threat of infection and may cause allergic reactions in other employees. Some employees may feel threatened or be distracted by the presence of animals, particularly dogs. In addition, **sportscotland** wishes to prevent pets from fouling the office space or damaging company property.

Employees who require the help of a service animal (defined by 28 CFR 36.104 as "any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability") will be permitted to bring a service animal to the office, provided that the animal's presence does not create a danger to others and does not impose an undue hardship upon the company.

We will undertake an impartial and objective assessment of the suitability of an assistance dog to an employee's role and workplace, seeking advice from appropriate assistance dog associations.

We will make subsequent arrangements to enable the effective use of the dog in the workplace, including allowing the employee to have reasonable time off for training the dog, taking the dog for veterinary checks, and agreeing to accommodate check-ups by the dog's training association. New dog owners will be allowed time to familiarise their dog with the workplace.

We will conduct a risk assessment before the assistance dog accompanies the employee to work for the first time and regularly thereafter. This will be conducted by the line manager, in conjunction with the employee, to cover assistance dog-related aspects, such as:

- Emergency evacuation procedures;
- Dog toileting;
- Any health and safety or hygiene considerations;
- Implications for any employee who will be located near the dog; and
- Medical emergency planning (if the employee falls seriously ill at work and/or is rushed to hospital and the assistance dog is left in the workplace).

Emergency evacuation procedures will be established and practised for the employee and assistance dog, with any new or revised considerations built into personal emergency evacuation plans (PEEPs). Workplace familiarisation for assistance dogs will include emergency evacuation routes. Any appointed fire marshals will be aware of the presence and needs of the assistance dog and employee.

Toilet requirements will be established through joint consultation of all those involved. Safe and appropriate access routes should be wide enough to allow the dog and employee to walk together to the toilet area and meet accessibility standards. Waste disposal facilities for the dog will also be clarified and agreements made regarding who will be responsible for each stage of the disposal.

All dogs must be leashed at all times. All animals must be in the continuous full control of their owners. They should be in the physical presence of the owner, in the owner's office, or in the space around the owner's desk at all times. Owners are expected to clean up, completely and immediately, after their animals.

An employee who brings an animal to the office is completely and solely liable for any injuries or any damage to personal property caused by the animal. Any repair or cleaning/maintenance costs incurred by an animal will be charged in full to the owner.

Cleaning: When an assistance dog has been inside the workplace, it is essential that it is deep cleaned after the guide dog has left. Dogs can cause allergic reactions in susceptible people and so effective cleaning is essential to minimise this risk. We will minimise this risk by:

- Restricting assistance dogs to the agreed and defined areas only (preferably with hard floors and not carpets);
- Cleaning any carpeted areas that the assistance dog has been with a high-filtration (HEPA) vacuum-cleaner;
- Cleaning all hard surfaces once the assistance dog has vacated; and
- Ventilating rooms well.

Allergies: If fellow employees in the workplace have allergies or conditions – for example, asthma – that may be affected by a dog being nearby, local discussions will take place to find the best way to accommodate all needs. Advice can be sought from assistance dog associations in conjunction with the Health and Safety Operational Group.

Religion and belief: If fellow employees raise objections on religious grounds to the presence of an assistance dog, these will be duly considered and managed locally. It is unlikely that an objection on religious grounds will be sufficient justification to not approve an assistance dog request, however, should the need arise, further advice will be sought from organisations such as the Equality and Human Rights Commission, in conjunction with assistance dog associations and the Health and Safety Operational Group.

In addition, the following animals may not be brought to the workplace:

- Animals with fleas or any disease that is communicable to other animals in the office or to humans;
- Animals that have not been properly vaccinated, or that have internal or external parasites;
- Dogs that bark or behave aggressively; or
- Animals that foul the inside of the building.