



The Protection and Advocacy System for South Carolina

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SERVICE DOGS – LEGAL RIGHTS

The following information card is available upon request from P&A. It can be handed out by individuals with disabilities who use a service dog if anyone questions their legal rights under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

FOR COPIES OF THIS CARD, CONTACT P&A: info@pandasc.org or call P&A at the telephone number above.

SERVICE DOGS – LEGAL RIGHTS

Front of Card

LAWS: Interfering with a service dog violates the law. Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), violators can be sued by the US Department of Justice or by the person using the service dog. Under South Carolina law, interfering with a service dog is also a criminal offense.

WHAT: A service dog has been specially trained to help the person with a disability. A service dog is not a pet. Service dogs can be trained to guide a person who is blind, pull a wheelchair, pick up dropped items, help a person walk, or remind a person with a mental illness to take medications.

WHERE: A person with a disability has the right to take a service dog into any place open to the public. These include stores, offices, restaurants, hotels, taxis, medical facilities and places of recreation. State and local government buildings also must allow service dogs.

Back of Card

QUESTIONS: The only questions someone can legally ask are, "Is this a service dog for a disability?" and "What does the dog do for you?" Questions about the person's disability are not allowed. A service dog owner may be asked to remove a dog only if it is a direct threat to the health or safety of others or is out of control.

NO LICENSE REQUIRED: Service dogs are NOT required to have any special papers or equipment though some dogs may wear a vest or harness.

MORE INFORMATION: Call the ADA Information Line: 800-514-0301 (voice) or 800-514-0383 (TTY). Check the ADA website: <http://www.ada.gov>

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