Can I Stop a Service Dog From Coming Into My Place of Business?

Under Ontario's accessibility laws, a person with a disability who requires the services of service animal has the right of every other person to enter public space. Specifically, in Ontario, employers are legally obligated to train their employees, volunteers, and any other person associated with their business, respecting the right of access by a person with a disability who uses a service dog.

The handler of a service animal has responsibilities to ensure that their service animal is clean, non-aggressive and behaves in a respectable manner. The AODA (Accessibility for Ontarians Disability Act) outlines the obligation for employers to train their volunteers and all staff so that accessibility requirements are known and unlawful denial of access to goods or service does not occur. Part of this training includes teaching employees about the Customer Service Standard and the rights of persons with disabilities to access the organization's services and facilities. Under this standard, a person with a disability must be allowed to bring their service animal with them into areas open to the public or third parties, unless they are prohibited by another law.

Are All Service Animals Allowed in Places Where Food is Served, Sold or Offered for Sale?

There have been recent changes to the Ontario regulation 493/17: Food Premises Section 14.1, under the Health Protection and Promotion Act. It has been amended to align with the AODA with regards to service animals and their access within a food premise. While the Integrated Accessibility Standards has always included all service animals, the food premises regulations previously only included guide dogs and service dogs. Guide dogs and service dogs were allowed into premises where food was served, sold or offered for sale. **This regulation now includes all types of service animals.**

For more information on use of service animals, please refer to the Customer Service Standard Section 80.47 at ontario.ca/accessibility**.**