

It's **not a choice.**
It's a right.
It's a necessity.

It's a **SUPPORT ANIMAL.**



Support animals enable
independent
working,
learning
and living.

The **PA Human Relations Act** requires businesses to allow support or guide animals to accompany people with disabilities in all areas of a facility that are open to the public.

In Pennsylvania you have the right to live, work, and learn free from illegal discrimination. Under the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act, **it is illegal to discriminate against individuals who use support or guide animals for a disability, or against trainers or handlers of support or guide animals.**

Many people with disabilities need support animals to perform their jobs or basic life tasks.

Tasks such as:

- Opening doors
- Turning light switches on or off
- Picking up and retrieving objects
- Pulling a wheelchair
- Carrying medication
- Guiding the visually impaired
- Alerting the hearing impaired
- Calming a person with PTSD, or Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

Equal opportunity is the
rule of law in
Pennsylvania.

Exclusions

A support animal must remain under control at all times. If the animal's behavior poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others, the animal may be excluded. Should the animal be removed, staff must offer to meet the needs of the individual without the animal's presence.

Examples:

- A support animal displaying vicious behavior towards guests, workers or students
- A support animal compromising a sterile environment in an operating room
- A support animal barking and disrupting a movie

Allergies
& fear of dogs
are **not valid**
reasons
for denying
access
to people using
support animals.

Licensing or Certification

Some support animals are licensed or certified, and carry identification papers, but this is **NOT** a requirement in Pennsylvania.

A business owner or staff member cannot request:

- Medical documentation for the user
- Special identification card or documentation for the animal
- A demonstration of ability by the animal

But if uncertain about a support animal, you may ask:

- (1) Is the animal required because of a disability?
- (2) What task does the animal perform?

Support Animals in Employment

Users, handlers and trainers of support or guide animals are protected from discrimination in schools, housing facilities and businesses. However, in employment, only individuals who use a service animal for a disability are protected. **Employers do not need to accommodate support animal handlers or trainers.**

Partnership with a support animal is a **necessity**, not a
lifestyle choice.



Find more information on illegal discrimination, how to file a complaint, or obtain equal opportunity training or group presentations at:

www.phrc.state.pa.us

phrc@pa.gov

717-787-4410 or 717-787-7279 (TTY)