



Top 10 Myths About Service & Assistance Animals



1. **Any Animal Can be a Service Animal** – **FALSE** – *A service animal can ONLY be a dog or a miniature horse. In Colorado, a person cannot claim that a duck, pig or cat is a service animal. However, such animals **may** qualify as an assistance animal for housing purposes.*
2. **Service Animals Must be Certified & Wear Identification** – **FALSE** – *Service animals must be individually trained, but there is no specific certification or identification (such as a vest or tags) required.*
3. **Service Animals Can Never Be Kicked Out of a Business** – **FALSE** – *If any animal, even a service animal, is out of control of the owner or not housebroken, that animal can be asked to leave a business. However, the business owner must make its services or goods available to the person with a disability.*
4. **Only Large Dogs Can be Service Animals** – **FALSE** – *Some small dogs are individually trained to perform tasks, such as detecting seizures or alerting to noises. So, for service dogs, size does not matter..*
5. **Landlords Can Require Notarization of a Doctor’s Note** – **FALSE** – *A note from a person’s doctor stating that they have a disability that substantially limits one or more major life activities and that the animal helps mitigate the effects of the person’s disability is sufficient in and of itself – no notary required.*
6. **Landlords Can Require Use of a Specific Form** – **FALSE** – *A person needs only to submit a note complying with #5. Landlords **can** have model forms, but cannot require tenants to use them.*
7. **Landlords Can Charge Pet Fees for Assistance Animals** – **FALSE** – *An assistance animal is not considered a “pet” under the law, so a landlord may not charge a pet fee for these animals.*
8. **Only Doctors May Attest to a Person’s Need for an Assistance Animal** – **FALSE** – *Anyone with knowledge of the individual and how the animal helps can attest to the need for the animal. However, a doctor or other medical provider must certify that the person has a disability.*
9. **“Therapy Animal” is a Term that Encompasses Service, Assistance, Emotional Support, and Companion Animals** – **FALSE** – *Therapy animals are taken to hospitals, schools and other facilities to provide therapy to the people there – they are not animals used to help an owner with a disability. As such, businesses and housing providers do not have to allow access to therapy animals.*
10. **Assistance Animals Are Allowed to Go Anywhere**– **FALSE** – *Assistance animals are allowed in housing, but not in places open to the public like restaurants and grocery stores.*

*** DISCLAIMER: This is not intended as legal advice, but rather for informational purposes only.

Always consult a lawyer if you have questions about your legal rights. ***