



NEWSLETTER #5

ABSENCE OF FORMAL PROOF FOR SERVICE DOGS

THIS IS QUITE A CONTROVERSIAL TOPIC BUT, THAT'S WHY IT NEEDS TO BE ACKNOWLEDGED AND DISCUSSED?

One of the most common problems and/or questions we face as service dog handlers is related to the absence of formal proof or identification for service dogs.

While the law prohibits facilities from asking for such documentation, the issue of fake service dogs in public spaces remains a concern and recently seems to be increasing in frequency. Many wonder if there could be a way to prevent or reduce the misuse of service dog privileges through a standardized system of identification put in place by an organization that is dedicated to managing this identification system. Such a system and the establishment governing that system would raise several critical questions that would need consideration for the future of service dog regulations.

Changing laws and creating a governing body to address the issue of real or fake service dogs requires a thoughtful and comprehensive approach. The idea of implementing a standardized test for service dogs is intriguing but comes with its own set of challenges. Who would determine what this test should entail, and who would have the expertise to develop and administer it? Ensuring that any certification process is fair, accurate, and reflective of the diverse needs of individuals with disabilities is paramount.

Identifying qualified individuals to assess service dog teams and administer these tests is another crucial aspect to consider. The qualifications and training of those responsible for evaluating service dogs can greatly impact the integrity and reliability of any certification process. Establishing clear guidelines and standards for these evaluators would be essential to maintaining consistency and credibility.

The financial implications of instituting changes to combat fake service dogs cannot be overlooked. Who will bear the costs associated with developing and implementing a standardized testing system? Would the disabled community who can range from low to no income service dog handlers themselves be burdened with additional expenses, or would funding need to come from federal, public, or private sources?

If a system for verifying the legitimacy of service dogs were to be implemented, stores and other public facilities would need to establish protocols for confirming a dog's status as a trained service animal. This could involve designated personnel receiving training on how to interact with service dog teams respectfully and in compliance with the law. Again, who pays for all of this? And where does the liability lie?

As we navigate these complex issues, it is essential to engage in constructive dialogue and collaboration to develop solutions that uphold the rights of service dog handlers while addressing concerns about fraudulent representations. Together, we can work towards a future where the presence of authentic service dogs is respected and protected.

So, we ask you... What are your thoughts on this matter? Should there be standardized testing? A letter of authentication? An identification system like a scannable card with a code that accesses a registry system?

Imagine being able to walk into any establishment and all that is needed is a scan of a real identification card with a code that lets that employee and establishment know that your dog is in fact a legitimate service dog. A system built to protect legitimacy would even eliminate the need for anyone to ask you those two notorious questions that can be asked.

We would love to hear from you so please share your thoughts on this complicated subject!

Wishing you a wonderful reading experience!

Warm regards,

The Pup-Cessories Crafts Team