



Trainers of Assistance Dogs User Guide

Version 1.0

Supporting the
**ACM Animal Care and Management
Training Package**

July 2022

Disclaimer

This work has been produced with the assistance of funding provided by the Commonwealth Government through the Department of Education, Skills and Employment (DESE).

The views expressed in this work do not necessarily represent the views of the DESE. In addition, the

DESE does not give warranty or accept any legal liability in relation to the content of this work. For further information about this Companion Volume or any other work being undertaken by Skills Impact, please visit:

www.skillsimpact.com.au

Skills Impact Ltd

ABN: 58 006 212 693

Level 1, 165 Bouverie Street
CARLTON VIC 3053

p. (03) 9321 3526

e. inquiry@skillsimpact.com.au

w. www.skillsimpact.com.au

Contents

Disclaimer	2
Skills Impact Ltd.....	2
User Guide: Trainers of Assistance Dogs modification history	6
Introduction	7
About this Guide.....	7
Training Package developer's quality assurance process for Companion Volumes.....	8
Sectors the units can be used in	8
Skills covered.....	8
Working with the units of competency and assessment requirements.....	9
Assistance Dogs - Background	14
Human bond with dogs	15
Animal welfare – 5 domains - the types of enrichment	17
Types of Assistance from dogs	20
Assistance dogs	20
Guide dogs	20
Hearing dogs.....	20
Legislation relevant to Assistance dogs	21
Assistance dogs - the Commonwealth Definition and Legislation.....	21
State and Territory Assistance Animal Regulation/Certification.....	21
Relevant State and Territory legislation and weblinks.....	22
Australian Capital Territory	22
New South Wales	22
Northern Territory.....	23
Queensland.....	23
South Australia	24
Tasmania.....	24
Victoria.....	25
Western Australia.....	26
Regulations in relation to airline travel with assistance animals	26
NDIS Assistance Animal funding	27

Dog Training Establishments' Codes of Practice	27
2. Staff.....	28
3. Husbandry	29
Feeding dogs.....	31
Public access test (PAT) checklist.....	32
Human disabilities that may benefit from dog assistive intervention	33
Human disabilities that may benefit from dog assistive intervention, as provided by an assistance dog.....	33
Assistance dogs employed for hearing assistance	33
Assistance dogs employed for mental/developmental/neurological health assistance	33
Assistance dogs employed for mobility assistance	34
Other assistive support	34
Appealing to dogs' olfactory perception/target odours, Volatile Organic Compound (VOC)	34
Owner/handler expectations about the assistive support of a dog and contingency planning	36
Associative and non-associative learning	37
Associative Learning.....	37
Non-Associative Learning in Dogs.....	38
Two Types of Non-Associative Learning	38
The four quadrants of dog training	38
Operant and classical conditioning technique.....	41
Least Intrusive, Minimally Aversive (LIMA) and Least Intrusive Effective Behaviour Intervention (LIEBI)	41
Hierarchy of Procedures for Humane and Effective Practice	42
Assistance dog training	42
Basic training.....	42
Attentiveness.....	42
Off-leash training	42
Specialise/conduct complex tasks	43
Definition of a complex task	43
Choosing an Assistance dog.....	44
When a handler is not suitable to have an assistance dog	44
Welfare of assistance dogs during their working life and retirement.....	45
Welfare of Assistance dogs.....	45

Signs That the Dog Is Distressed.....	46
Retirement.....	46
Dog Training Equipment: The Right Tools for the Job.....	47
Appendix A: Organisations that train Assistance Dogs	48
References	57

User Guide: Trainers of Assistance Dogs modification history

Version number	Release date	Author	Comments
1.0	July 2022	Skills Impact	Initial release to accompany new units of competency developed for trainers of assistance dogs in <i>ACM Animal Care and Management Training Package Release 6.0</i> .

Acknowledgements

Skills Impact wishes to thank the organisations and individuals who contributed advice and feedback.

Particular thanks goes to those contributing resource materials to this User Guide:

- Claire Dickson
- Dennis Wormald
- Di Petersen
- Hans van Heesbeen
- Karen Atkins
- Ken Innes
- Kersti Seksel
- Melinda Bowden
- Shea Heinsen
- Susan Hazel
- Tiffany Howell.

Introduction

About this Guide

This **User Guide: Trainers of Assistance Dogs** supports the delivery and assessment of the Assistance Dog Training (ADT) units of competency in the *ACM Animal Care and Management Training Package Version 6.0*.

This **User Guide** is an additional companion volume developed by Skills Impact to support good practice implementation of the Assistance Dogs Training units. It is not endorsed in the same way as units of competency and qualifications, and as such, it can be updated at any time. In time, it will provide an opportunity to showcase best practice from Registered training organisations (RTOs) and provide a forum for sharing information and resources. If you have any ideas, resources, case studies or feedback to contribute to this guide, please provide your feedback via the [Skills Impact website](#).

This **User Guide** should be read in conjunction with the **Companion Volume Implementation Guide** for the *ACM Animal Care and Management Training Package Version 6.0*. The Implementation Guide is a mandatory requirement for Skills Service Organisations to develop.

It also includes key implementation advice for use by RTOs, including:

- working with units of competency and assessment requirements
- delivery of assistance dog training units, skill sets and qualification specialisation
- key terminology such as Least Intrusive, Minimally Aversive (LIMA) and Least Intrusive Effective Behaviour Intervention (LIEBI), operant and classical conditioning, and the four quadrants of dog training
- animal welfare – 5 domains, types of enrichment
- human/dog bond
- types of assistance dogs
- legislation that is relevant to assistance dogs
- human disability and the possible benefit of dog assistive intervention
- owner/handler expectations about the assistive support of a dog and contingency planning
- assistance dog training
- choosing an assistance dog
- dog training equipment.

Training Package developer's quality assurance process for Companion Volumes

Companion Volumes are developed in consultation with industry representatives, trainers and assessors, and representatives of Industry Reference Committees (IRCs) and Subject matter Experts (SMEs). These key stakeholder representatives provide and review content to ensure that information is relevant and useful.

The Companion Volumes undergo continuous improvement in response to feedback lodged on the Skills Impact website ([http://www.skillsimpact.com.au/contact/.](http://www.skillsimpact.com.au/contact/))

The Animal Care and Management Industry Reference Committee (ACM IRC) acknowledged the growing need for expertise in assistance dog training.

Sectors the units can be used in

In addition to the ACM qualifications, it is anticipated that the units and skill sets will be used or imported into other training packages and used in a range of sectors, such as:

- veterinary clinics
- community services
- aged care
- disability care.

Skills covered

A range of identified skills have been included within the units of competency, covering:

- dog training
- instructing handlers to train assistance dogs
- equipment selection and use
- welfare of dogs.

Two skill sets have been created to address the introductory and handler/assistance dog workplace roles:

- ACMSS00046 Assistance Dog Introduction Skill Set
- ACMSS00047 Assistance Dog Handler Team Training Skill Set.

Working with the units of competency and assessment requirements

The units of competency in the ACM Animal Care and Management Training Package are presented in the template from the *2012 Standards for Training Packages*. The information is organised into two main parts:

- unit of competency
- assessment requirements.

Below is an assistance dog training unit of competency and associated assessment requirements, with the template fields explained.

Units of competency

ACMADT301	Select appropriate equipment for an assistance dog and handler
Application	<p>This unit of competency describes the skills and knowledge required to advise handlers on selecting equipment for use in training and employing an assistance dog in a range of specialised tasks to support a handler with disability.</p> <p>The unit applies to individuals who work under broad direction and take responsibility for their own work. They use discretion and judgement in the selection and use of available resources, and complete activities that require behavioural analysis of dogs and handler to select appropriate equipment.</p> <p>All work must be carried out to comply with Commonwealth and state/territory health and safety and animal welfare regulations.</p> <p>No licensing, legislative or certification requirements apply to this unit at the time of publication.</p>
Prerequisite Unit	Nil
Unit Sector	Assistance Dog Training

A statement in the application field identifies important licensing/regulatory requirements.

Prerequisite units must be assessed before the main unit is assessed.

Elements	Performance Criteria
<i>Elements describe the essential outcomes.</i>	<i>Performance criteria describe the performance needed to demonstrate achievement of the element.</i>
1. Identify handler's assistance requirements	1.1 Discuss referral from health care professional with dog handler to confirm and/or clarify needs, while incorporating privacy considerations 1.2 Determine the specialised tasks required from an assistance dog based on individual prospective handler 1.3 Determine handler's ability to fit and use equipment for their assistance dog, and ensure dog's equipment needs complement those of the handler

Elements	Performance Criteria
<i>Elements describe the essential outcomes.</i>	<i>Performance criteria describe the performance needed to demonstrate achievement of the element.</i>
2. Identify assistance dog's equipment requirements	2.1 Identify leads, collars and other basic equipment requirements 2.2 Determine need for additional equipment and how equipment will be used according to task requirements 2.3 Confirm equipment requirements based on the handler and dog partnership
3. Trial use of equipment with handler and assistance dog	3.1 Introduce and test the use of equipment chosen to ascertain if it is suitable for both handler and assistance dog 3.2 Adjust or change equipment as required 3.3 Instruct handler to use the equipment safely, according to animal welfare principles, dog training regulatory and public access requirements 3.4 Evaluate handler's use of the equipment to ensure safety and wellbeing of both handler and assistance dog
4. Confirm requirements and complete documentation	4.1 Confirm that handler is satisfied with the chosen equipment 4.2 Document assistance dog equipment requirements according to workplace requirements

Foundation Skills

This section describes those language skills that are essential for performance in this unit of competency and are not explicit in the performance criteria.

Foundation skills highlight the skills that are **not** explicit in the performance criteria, but essential to the job task described in the unit

Skill	Description
Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gather and interpret medical personal care requirements from approved sources to identify relevant information while respecting privacy legislation
Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete records and documents relevant to assistance dog equipment needs using vocabulary, grammatical structure and conventions appropriate to text and audience
Oral communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use listening and questioning techniques to ascertain needs Use clear language and appropriate tone during interactions with dog handlers

Assessment requirements

The assessment requirements included in the updated templates, place an increased focus on assessment and include:

- performance evidence, including information about the frequency and volume of the tasks to be performed for assessment
- knowledge evidence – what candidates need to know to be able to perform the task effectively

- assessment conditions, that specify physical conditions, resources, specifications, and relationships that must be in place for the assessment to take place.

TITLE	Assessment requirements for ACMADT301 Select appropriate equipment for an assistance dog and handler
Performance Evidence	
<p>An individual demonstrating competency must satisfy all performance criteria in this unit.</p> <p>There must be evidence that the individual has assessed, trialled four handlers' dog assistance equipment requirements with two different pieces of equipment.</p>	

Performance evidence describes the practical tasks that must be demonstrated for assessment.

Knowledge Evidence	
<p>An individual must be able to demonstrate the knowledge required to perform the tasks outlined in the elements and performance criteria of this unit.</p> <p>This includes knowledge of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • relevant legislation/regulations as they relate to an assistance dog's public access • animal welfare practices that are conducive to the animal's lifestyle as well as their mental, emotional and physical health and wellbeing • human disability or disorder that may require the employment of an assistance dog, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • physical • sensory • mental health • neurological, including neurodegenerative • developmental • relevant dog physiology and how to use/fit equipment humanely and safely according to the dog's physical attributes • a dog's work/recreation mode to assist with appropriate use of equipment • appropriate adaptations of equipment based on handler and dog's physical attributes and needs • capabilities and limitations of assistance dogs • equipment that may be used in assistance dog training, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • collars, head halters and martingales • leads and leashes • balance harnesses • working jackets, coats and identification vests • modified grooming equipment • toys • treat pouches • markers and clickers • wheelchairs • walking sticks • personal protective equipment (PPE) for handler if required 	

Knowledge Evidence

- methods of desensitising and socialising equipment used for assistance dogs
- workplace documentation requirements.

Assessment Conditions

Assessment of the skills in this unit of competency must take place under the following conditions:

- physical conditions:
 - skills must be demonstrated in an environment that accurately represents assistance dog training workplace conditions
- resources, equipment and materials:
 - handler's medical/allied health professional referral
 - workplace recording and documentation system
 - equipment used in dog training as required for Performance Requirements
- specifications:
 - workplace policies and procedures
- relationships:
 - dog handler
 - dog.

Assessment conditions specify the mandatory conditions under which the evidence must be gathered, and the mandatory assessor

Assessors of this unit must satisfy the requirements for assessors in applicable vocational education and training legislation, frameworks and/or standards.

Assessment methods

Units of competency and assessment requirements do not specify the method of assessment to be used to collect evidence – assessment methods are determined by the registered training organisation (RTO) and assessor when designing the assessment strategy. Knowledge evidence can be assessed in several ways, including through oral questioning (with an appropriate sheet to record the evidence provided), or through written assessment, which could be online or paper-based.

Assessment conditions

Assessment of most ADT coded units of competency requires assessment to be carried out in a workplace setting or an environment that accurately represents assistance dog training workplace conditions. Assistance dog training may occur in a range of environments such as formal training facilities, outdoor locations or handler homes.

Assistance dog and handler teams are required for assessment, along with any resources and equipment required to meet the Performance Requirements of the units.

ADT units of competency

ACM Animal Care and Management Training Package Version 6.0 Units of competency - ADT Assistance Dog Training sector	
Code	Title
ACMADT301	Select appropriate equipment for an assistance dog and handler
ACMADT401	Assess prospective handler's suitability for an assistance dog
ACMADT402	Instruct handlers with disability to train assistance dogs
ACMADT403	Train dogs using operant and classical conditioning techniques
ACMADT501	Plan and conduct assistance dog training in specific and complex tasks

Delivery of Assistance Dog Training units of competency

All RTOs must have a documented training and assessment strategy (TAS) for delivery of the units. When preparing the TAS for the ADT units it is recommended that RTOs note the following:

Prerequisite units

Prerequisite units must be assessed before the unit in which they appear is assessed. Training may be conducted concurrently, but assessment of the prerequisite unit must be completed before the assessment of the main unit occurs.

RTOs are advised to review any prerequisite units and include these in the delivery sequence and schedule. The only unit with prerequisite requirements in the ADT units is ACMADT501. Its prerequisite is ACMADT403.

Planning delivery of training

The ADT units cover a range of topics which may vary in the level of detail depending on the focus, context and purpose of the unit. There are some topics which are important to all units but may need to be customised to meet the requirements of the workplace context.

Clustered delivery and assessment can be an efficient use of time and resources, and be a better match to what really occurs in the workplace. It is important to introduce information in a well-structured, sequenced plan and clearly explain key terms and concepts as they are introduced.

Sequencing is ordering the timing of when material will be presented to the learner. The way material is sequenced will impact the learners' comprehension. Complex or detailed information that is not sequenced appropriately is likely to decrease learner retention of information. Likewise, unfamiliar language and terminology needs to be introduced at an appropriate time, level of detail and within the learners' context to help them understand the concepts and topics. Careful consideration needs to be given to the Training and Assessment Strategy to address this.

Note that reference to a 'workplace' in assistance dog units of competency may be a home, a public location or a vehicle.

ADT Skill Sets

ACM Animal Care and Management Training Package Version 6.0	
Skill sets	
Code	Title
ACMSS00046	Assistance Dog Introduction Skill Set Units in this Skill Set: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACMADT301 Select appropriate equipment for an assistance dog and handler • ACMADT401 Assess prospective handler's suitability for an assistance dog • ACMADT402 Instruct handlers with disability to train assistance dogs
ACMSS00047	Assistance Dog/Handler Team Training Skill Set Units in this Skill Set: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACMADT301 Select appropriate equipment for an assistance dog and handler • ACMADT403 Train dogs using operant and classical conditioning techniques • ACMADT501 Plan and conduct assistance dog training in specific and complex tasks • CHCDIS010 Provide person-centred services to people with disability with complex needs

ADT specific specialisation in a qualification

The assistance dog units of competency are a specific stream (Group E) in *ACM40322 Certificate IV in Animal Behaviour and Training*. The packaging rules for this qualification provide information for the award of the assistance dog specialisation.

Assistance Dogs - Background

Assistance dogs, such as guide dogs have traditionally been employed to assist individuals with physical disabilities, such as vision or hearing impairments, and those with limited mobility. These dogs have played an important role in permitting many individuals to live as independently as possible. More recently, assistance dogs also support people with chronic mental illnesses or developmental disorders, such as autism, post-traumatic stress disorder, and generalized anxiety disorder. Some assistance dogs may even help inform their diabetic handler of a potentially fatal change in their handler's blood sugar levels or warn epileptic handlers that a seizure is forthcoming.

Growing evidence and awareness for how assistance dogs can improve the quality of life for people with disabilities is driving demand for more assistance dog trainers. It is a job role with one of the highest projected growth rates to 2024 which, at 10.5%, means there will be over 2,000 new entrants to the industry. Assistance dog trainers need to be skilled at working with both dogs and handlers with disabilities. It takes considerable investment to train an assistance dog, and not for profit organisations such as Assistance Dogs Australia

and Guide Dogs Australia have waiting lists of over two years. For this reason, many people are turning to independent dog trainers. It is important that people undertaking this work are adequately skilled, to support higher success rates, a better return on investment and wellbeing outcomes for the dog and the handler.

The expansion of assistance dogs into fields covered by the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and other health streams has brought an increasing demand for greater regulation and skilled delivery of assistance dog training. There are also widespread calls by industry for nationally recognised training to ensure workers possess the core skills to prepare dogs and handlers for a variety of lifestyle and assistive purposes.

Trainers need to be skilled at training the dog/handler team to be ready for different tasks and environments (particularly but not exclusively in public access environments) and providing advice to handlers on how to form a long-term reciprocal relationship with a dog beyond the assistive support it can provide. This includes:

- Advising handlers on lifelong bonding activities and suitable training or enrichment activities for their dog.
- Identifying suitable dog behaviour training techniques that are positive rewards-based, force- and fear-free, while incorporating negative punishment and the underpinning theoretical principles of dog training and tasks, as well as advising handlers how to care for their dog.
- Relaying the importance of the monitoring and maintenance of dogs' work/life balance, condition, and physical, emotional, mental health needs to handlers.

Trainers need knowledge in canine behaviour, breed and breed type characteristics, dog and handler health and welfare, as well as the impacts of various human disabilities. They must also understand applicable legislation, risk management strategies, and public and workplace health and safety guidelines.

Human bond with dogs

It is not known when the relationship between humans and dogs began but the estimates range from 10,000 to 30,000 years ago. The earliest remains of humans and dogs interred together date to 14,000 years ago.¹

It was only by the tiniest bit of genetic chance that our cross-species union was forged at all. Dogs and wolves share 99.9% of their mitochondrial DNA—the DNA that's passed down by the mother alone—which makes the two species nearly indistinguishable. But elsewhere in the genome, there are a few genetic scraps that make a powerful difference. On chromosome six in particular, investigators have found three genes that code for hyper-sociality—and they are in the same spot as similar genes linked to similar personality traits in humans.²

Our ancestors didn't know what genes were many millennia ago, but they did know that every now and then, one or two of the midsize scavengers with the long muzzles that came nosing around their campfires would gaze at them with a certain attentiveness, a certain loving neediness, and that it was awfully hard to resist them. So they welcomed those few in from the cold and eventually came to call them dogs, while the animals' close kin that didn't pull the good genes—the ones we would come to call wolves or jackals or coyotes—would be left to make their way in the state of nature in which they were born.³ While it was once believed that all dogs descended from the gray wolf, newer research indicates that

¹ Scientific Reasons Dogs Are Humans' Best Friends (insider.com)

² Ibid

³ Why Dogs and Humans Love Each Other So Much | Time

canines can trace their ancestry to prehistoric wolves that roamed Eurasia between 9,000 and 34,000 years ago.⁴

Dr. James Serpell, director of the Center for the Interaction of Animals and Society at the University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine, stated:

"We don't actually know why humans and wolves got together in the first place, but once that relationship was established, humans were selecting, very rapidly, for the most sociable wolves— the ones who responded to humans in this characteristically dog-like way," This was obviously something that humans valued from the get-go."⁵

Today, at least in areas populated by humans, dogs are the planet's most abundant terrestrial carnivore. The single species that is the domestic dog—*Canis lupus familiaris*—has been subdivided into hundreds of breeds, selected for size or temperament or colour or cuteness. What began as a mutual-services contract between two very different species became something much more like love. None of that makes a lick of sense, but it doesn't have to. Love rarely touches the reasoning parts of the brain. It touches the dreamy parts, the devoted parts—it touches the parts we sometimes call the heart. For many thousands of years, it's there that our dogs have lived.⁶

Other studies include that of Dr. Aubrey H. Fine and Dr Gregory Berns. Dr. Fine has written the 'bible' on animal assisted therapy, a book now in its fourth edition and Dr. Berns has taken us on the journey of evidence in terms of what happens in the dog's brain and how it matches the human brain response. Through his incredible work we know that our dogs love us. The Human Animal Bond Research Institute provides extraordinary information about the amazing difference animals make in the lives of their humans. Dr. Berns has a number of research articles available where he has conducted awake fMRI on dogs to bring us scientific evidence explaining canine brain's responses to stimuli being remarkably similar to the human.⁷

The foundation of work conducted by assistance dog handling teams such as *Both Ends of the Leash* centred around the human-animal bond (HAB).⁸

For more information about **Organisations that train Assistance Dogs** (including Both Ends of the Leash) see Appendix A.

⁴ Scientific Reasons Dogs Are Humans' Best Friends (insider.com)

⁵ Ibid

⁶ Why Dogs and Humans Love Each Other So Much | Time

⁷ <http://www.aubreyhfine.com>, <http://gregoryberns.com> and <https://habri.org>

⁸ BOTH ENDS OF THE LEASH | Your Inner Dog

Animal welfare – 5 domains - the types of enrichment

Animal Welfare includes both the physical and psychological health of an animal. The definition in 'Understanding Animal Welfare' by David Fraser animal welfare incorporates three concepts:

- 1) physical health and wellbeing
- 2) affective state, which includes emotions and other feelings such as thirst and hunger; and
- 3) natural living, or if an animal is living according to what its natural state in the wild would be.⁹

Animal welfare can also be defined using a Five Domains model developed by Mellor and Reid in 1994, and recently expanded to specifically include human-animal interactions.¹⁰

According to the Five Domains model there are four physical or functional domains and one mental domain (see Figure X).

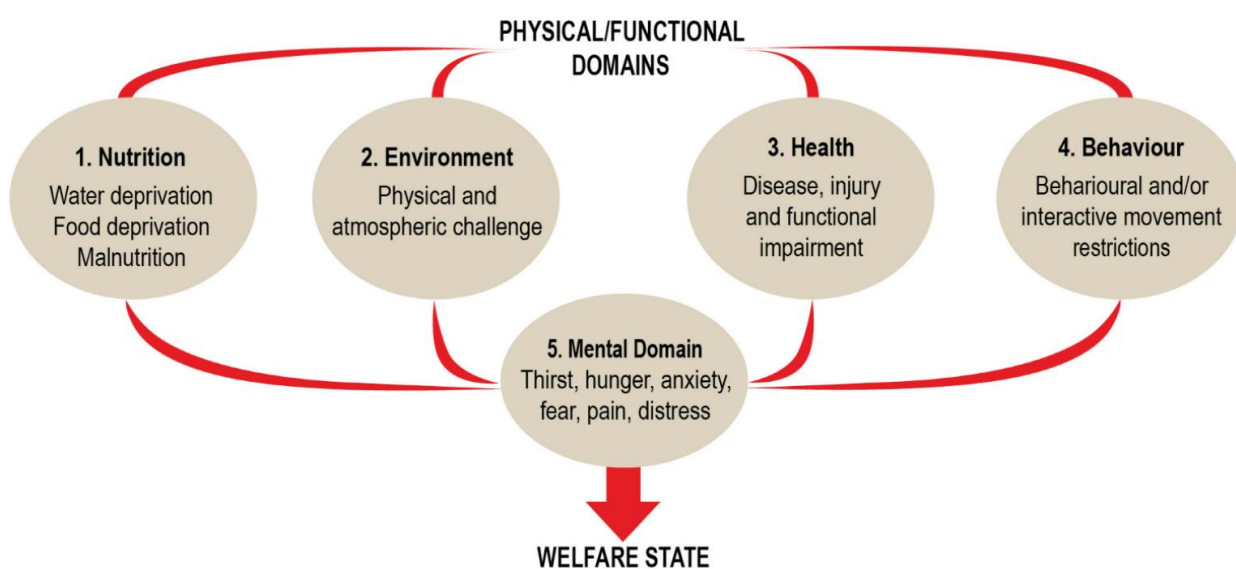
The domains are:

- Nutrition- access to water and food of adequate nutritive value.
- Environment- physical environment (e.g., space, comfortable resting area) and thermal and environmental factors, such as noise.
- Health- physical health and treatment for any illness or injury that occurs.
- Behaviour- ability for choice, freedom to play, explore, and engage in positive training activities.
- Mental domain- the four physical domains then determine the mental domain. For example, if adequate food and water is not provided the dog will be hungry and thirsty. If there is injury the dog will experience pain and distress.

Each domain can be thought of as having a negative to a positive sum. The goal in promoting a positive welfare state (and not just a neutral one) is to optimise the positive value of each domain.

⁹ David Fraser Understanding Animal Welfare <https://actavetscand.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/1751-0147-50-S1-S1>

¹⁰ <https://www.mdpi.com/2076-2615/10/10/1870>



Source: <https://www.mdpi.com/2076-2615/10/10/1870>

A means to promote positive welfare is to provide environmental enrichment to an animal. Environmental enrichment can be defined as a positive or enriching interaction between a response and an event, such as between a dog and a toy. Environmental enrichments for dogs can be classified into sensory, food-based, structural, manipulative/cognitive/tactile and social enrichment.¹¹

Sensory enrichment focuses on the stimulation of the animals' senses. You can divide it into four subcategories: visual enrichment, olfactory (smell & taste) enrichment, auditory (sound) enrichment, and tactile (touch) enrichment. These senses are all important means of communication and are routes of gathering information about its surrounding environment. As an essential form of enrichment, care needs to be taken when providing sensory enrichment. You are not always aware of what information you are communicating towards your animals. Most types of sensory enrichment are a passive form of enrichment.

Food-based enrichment can be defined as "the manipulation of food or method of providing food". This type of enrichment focuses on the food presentation to make feeding more challenging for the animal. A variety of feeding methods and food presentation encourages animals to work for their food. It can also be enriching providing a novel food item. The ultimate goal is to stimulate and extend the appetitive and consummatory behaviours of an animal. Often zookeepers provide puzzle feeders, which is discussed in cognitive enrichment.

Structural enrichment, also called 'physical habitat enrichment', is defined as "alteration of the physical elements of the enclosure". Its main goal is to stimulate exploratory behaviours to collect information. This enrichment is mainly provided to prevent boredom and keeps the animal physically healthy by encouraging it to become more active. This kind of enrichment, which is different from tactile enrichment, is important because it stimulates

¹¹ Fernandez EJ, Myers M, Hawkes NC (2021) The Effects of Live Feeding on Swimming Activity and Exhibit Use in Zoo Humboldt Penguins (*Spheniscus humboldti*). *Journal of Zoological and Botanical Gardens*, 2(1), 88-100.

curiosity, interest, and development. Unfortunately, it is not often provided. The physical environment should be frequently altered and switched so animals do not become too familiar with their environment, which causes boredom and can eventually cause stereotyped behaviours.

Manipulative/Cognitive/Tactile enrichment is described as “cognitive and mental stimulation that requires problem-solving of different levels of complexity”. Zookeepers spend a lot of time developing the most creative enrichment ideas, to keep animals mentally engaged. It focuses mainly on the mental health of animals. Most used devices are puzzle feeders, where animals are cognitively challenged to be rewarded with food. With different objects, animals are stimulated for investigation and exploratory behaviours. Animals with a higher form of intelligence need to be more mentally stimulated to excite their cognitive abilities.

Social enrichment is focussed on organized interactions between conspecifics, interspecific or human-animal. Sometimes it is also possible to use a substitute as social enrichment (i.e., plush toy). A well-known and most common form of social enrichment is **animal training**. Training can be very beneficial for animal welfare by providing cognitive stimulation, increasing social play, decreasing inactivity, and mitigating social food reactivity during feeding.¹²

¹² What Are The Different Types Of Enrichment | ZOOSnippets

Types of Assistance from dogs

Assistance dogs

Assistance dogs are trained to perform a range of tasks and behaviours for people with a disability. Guide and Hearing dogs (see below) are common types of assistance dogs, but they're not the only kinds. There are also autism assistance dogs, medical (e.g., diabetes, epilepsy) alert dogs, and mobility assistance dogs. Assistance dogs can even be trained to help people with post-traumatic stress disorder and other mental health conditions. The main function of an assistance dog is to enable their handler with a disability to access and participate in the community. Some assistance dogs know more than 50 assistive tasks.

Guide dogs

Guide dogs can be trained to take directional instructions and find a suitable travel path. They also alert their handler to changes in ground levels. Guide dogs help their handler to avoid obstacles at head height, avoid oncoming traffic, and go around obstacles and they can help find objects.

Hearing dogs

Hearing dogs are trained to alert to specific sounds in the home, such as a phone ringing, an alarm sounding, or a baby crying. Some hearing dogs also work outside the home, alerting handlers to specific sounds in public settings and vehicles. Instead of barking, hearing dogs get the handler's attention by touch (such as a nose-nudge or pawing) and then they lead the handler to the source of the sound.

Assistance dogs and legislation

Assistance dogs are not to be confused with therapy/emotional support/companion dogs. Such dogs are not considered an assistance dog, as the owner may not have a disability and/or the dog has not been trained to undertake specific, identifiable tasks and behaviours to reduce the person's need for support. The dog is therefore not recognised under legislation.¹³ *PTO for more information about legislation relating to assistance dogs.*

¹³ Choosing a guide, hearing or assistance dog | People with disability | Queensland Government (www.qld.gov.au)

Legislation relevant to Assistance dogs

Assistance dogs - the Commonwealth Definition and Legislation

Assistance dogs in Australia and people who utilise them are protected under the Federal (Commonwealth) Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA, 1992). An Assistance animal is defined under this act as:

9 (2) For the purposes of this Act, an assistance animal is a dog or other animal:

- accredited under a law of a State or Territory that provides for the accreditation of animals trained to assist a persons with a disability to alleviate the effect of the disability; or*
- accredited by an animal training organisation prescribed by the regulations for the purposes of this paragraph; or*

trained: to assist a person with a disability to alleviate the effect of the disability; and to meet standards of hygiene and behaviour that are appropriate for an animal in a public place.

According to the Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992, there is no distinction made between a Guide Dog, Hearing Dog or other type of assistance Dog – they are all considered to be Assistance dogs. As such, from this point forward, the terminology “Assistance dog” will be used instead of distinguishing between the different types of Assistance dogs. The Human Rights Commission oversees discriminatory matters which includes discrimination assistance dogs, and their handlers may encounter while out in public.¹⁴

State and Territory Assistance Animal Regulation/Certification

Overview

Variation among states and territories regarding accreditation and regulation of assistance animals continues to present a range of issues for people with disability who employ assistance animals to access the community. Examples of the situation in each jurisdiction is set out below.

- **Victoria** – an Assistance Animal Pass issued by Public Transport Victoria is required to permit assistance animals to travel on public transport. The pass is valid for 3 years.
- **Western Australia** – The Public Transport Authority doesn't require permits for assistance animals to travel on public transport. Some local government areas require animals to have an ID card and a dog coat/harness.
- **Queensland** – has the state-based certification that basically certifies the dog as an assistance dog, giving them public access rights. So, they're not really recognised as assistance dogs at all unless they have the Queensland certification.
- **South Australia** – The Dog and Cat Management Board accredits assistance dogs under the Dog and Cat Management Act (the Act), on application and after passing a Public Access Test with a Board approved assessor. Alternatively, there are a number of organisations approved by the Board to accredit assistance dogs under the Act. Dogs accredited under the Act are issued with handler ID cards. The accreditation expiry is listed on the card and a renewal of the Public Access Test is required to continue accreditation.
- **New South Wales** – An Assistance Animal Permit is required for access to public transport.
- **Tasmania** - Dog users and trainers' rights are under the Tasmanian Guide Dogs and Hearing Dogs Act 1967.

¹⁴ Laws in Australia - Canine Essentials

- **The ACT** Government has developed a legislative framework within Part 5 of the Domestic Animals Act 2000 that allows for assistance animals to be accredited as meeting the ACT's public access
- **The NT** Government information about assistance animals is currently under development.

See next section - *Relevant State and Territory legislation and weblinks* for more information.

Note that where training documents refer to a 'workplace' with regard to assistance dogs, this can be a home, a public location or in a vehicle.

The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) can provide support via assistance animals. For more information see the [NDIS Assistance Animal Funding](#) section in this Guide.

Relevant State and Territory legislation and weblinks

Australian Capital Territory

Weblink: [Assistance animals - City Services \(act.gov.au\)](#)

To support and clarify this overarching legislation, the ACT Government has developed a legislative framework within Part 5 of the Domestic Animals Act 2000 that allows for assistance animals to be accredited as meeting the ACT's public access standards. Once accredited, the Registrar of Domestic Animals may register the assistance animal and issue the handler with an ID card for up to two years. The standards of behaviour and hygiene for assistance animals in public places is listed within the regulations for the Domestic Animals Act 2000.

The ACT assistance animals' framework does not create new access rights. Under existing Commonwealth law people who rely on an assistance animal have the same rights of access as anyone else. The ACT framework clarifies the rights of access so that you have less risk of being turned away by businesses as they have assurance your animal meets standards of behaviour and hygiene for public places.

The rights of access for assistance animals which are accredited and registered under the ACT framework are further protected and promoted by a suite of penalties for businesses or individuals who refuse access. A business or individual who refuses a non-accredited assistance animal access to a public place may still be subject to repercussions under ACT and Commonwealth law.

New South Wales

Weblink: [Assistance Animals - Office of Local Government NSW](#)

Some animals are trained to provide assistance to people with a disability to help alleviate the effect of that disability. These assistance animals are not pets. They provide an important service that helps people to more fully participate in personal and public life activities with more confidence and independence. This website provides information on laws for assistance animals under the [Companion Animals Act 1998](#) in NSW only. See transport for NSW Assistance Animal Policy: [customisable-report-template-portraight \(transportnsw.info\)](#).

Other Government agencies can provide you with advice about how assistance animals are treated under other NSW laws.

Northern Territory

Weblink: [Northern Territory - Assistance animals | Disability Gateway](#)

Northern Territory government information about assistance animals can be found here. The Northern Territory Government information about assistance animals is currently under development.

Queensland

In Queensland, the *Guide, Hearing and Assistance dogs Act 2009* protects the public access rights of dogs and their handlers that have been through a certification process.

To gain certification, you must work with one of the following approved trainers or training institutions to train your dog and complete the [public access test and certification process](#). You may then request the trainer to obtain a handler identity card for you, and a blue and white cloth badge for your guide, hearing or assistance dog to display on its coat or harness.¹⁵

Weblink: [Completing the public access test and certifying your dog | People with disability | Queensland Government \(www.qld.gov.au\)](#)

In Queensland the Public Access Test (PAT) establishes a minimum standard for guide, hearing and Assistance dogs to be certified under the *Guide, Hearing and Assistance dogs Act 2009* (the Act).

“You must use an [approved trainer or training institution](#) to work with you to train your guide, hearing or assistance dog, take you and the dog through the PAT, and certify your dog.

A trained dog must be certified within 7 days after successfully completing the PAT. This will confirm your dog is safe and effective in a public place, public passenger vehicle, or place of accommodation, and is able to be physically controlled by you, as primary handler of the dog, or as a primary handler with the support of an alternative handler.

Trained dogs become certified when they:

- perform identifiable physical tasks or behaviours to assist a person with a disability to reduce their need for support
- have passed a PAT conducted by an approved trainer or training institution within 7 days of certification and prior to requesting a handler identity card
- are not a restricted breed under the [Animal Management \(Cats and Dogs\) Act 2008 \(PDF\)](#)
- are de-sexed and vaccinated
- have not been declared a dangerous dog under a local law.

Dogs must also undergo regular skill updating and testing to make sure they stay safe and effective in public places and public passenger vehicles.

To be eligible you need to:

- have a disability as defined by the [Guide, Hearing and Assistance dogs Act 2009 \(PDF\)](#)
- rely on a guide, hearing or assistance dog to reduce your need for support
- be able to physically control your dog, or identify an alternative handler to support you to control the dog

¹⁵ Choosing a guide, hearing or assistance dog | People with disability | Queensland Government (www.qld.gov.au)

- have your dog pass the PAT and be certified by an approved trainer or training institution.”¹⁶

South Australia

Weblink: [Assistance dogs | Dog and Cat Management Board \(dogandcatboard.com.au\)](http://dogandcatboard.com.au)

The Dog and Cat Management Board accredits assistance dogs under the Dog and Cat Management Act (the Act), on application and after passing a Public Access Test with a Board approved assessor. Alternatively, there are a number of organisations approved by the Board to accredit assistance dogs under the Act. Dogs accredited under the Act are issued with handler ID cards. The accreditation expiry is listed on the card and a renewal of the Public Access Test is required to continue accreditation.

Assistance animals are specifically trained to provide support to people with a wide range of disabilities including those who have vision or hearing impairment, need physical support for functional tasks, experience medical episodes or psychiatric disorders.

Assistance dogs, when accompanied by a disabled person, are entitled to access areas that a dog would not normally be allowed e.g., public transport, supermarkets, restaurants, national parks etc. Assistance dogs may be refused entry to hospital intensive care units and food preparation areas.

There is no definition or recognition of ‘companion dog’, ‘therapy dog’ and ‘emotional support dog’ in either Commonwealth or South Australian legislation.

In South Australia Assistance dogs can **only** be accredited under the *Dog and Cat Management Act 1995* by either the Dog and Cat Management Board or the following prescribed accreditation bodies:

Royal Society for the Blind, Guide Dogs Australia, Lions Hearing Dogs, Assistance dogs Australia, Righteous Pups Australia, Vision Australia, Australian Veterinary Behaviour Services and Integra Service Dogs Australia.

Tasmania

Weblink: [View - Tasmanian Legislation Online](#)

Dog users and trainers’ rights under the Tasmanian Guide Dogs and Hearing Dogs Act 1967 include:

- 1) A person who is blind or vision impaired, deaf or hearing impaired or a trainer –
 - (a) is entitled to be accompanied by a guide dog into any public place or onto any public passenger vehicle; and
 - (b) does not commit an offence by taking a guide dog into or onto, or permitting a guide dog to remain in or on, a public place or public passenger vehicle.
- (2) A person who is in charge of a public place or public passenger vehicle, or the servant or agent of a person in charge of a public place or public passenger vehicle, must not –
 - (a) refuse to allow a person accompanied by a guide dog into that place or onto that vehicle; or
 - (b) direct a person accompanied by a guide dog to leave that place or vehicle; or

¹⁶ Completing the public access test and certifying your dog | People with disability | Queensland Government (www.qld.gov.au)

(c) deny accommodation or service to a person accompanied by a guide dog.

Penalty: Fine not exceeding 20 penalty units.

(3) For the purposes of [subsection \(2\)](#) , a person may be taken to have refused or denied another person entry, access, accommodation or service by means of an omission as well as by an act.

(4) It is a defence in any proceedings under [subsection \(2\)](#) for the defendant to show –
(a) that he or she had reasonable cause, unrelated to the presence of the guide dog, for the act or omission constituting the alleged offence; or

(b) that –

(i) the person who was refused admission, directed to leave or denied accommodation or service was unable, on request made by or on behalf of the defendant before the time of refusal, direction or denial, to produce an identity card for inspection; and

(ii) it was reasonable in the circumstances for that request to be made.

(5) An identity card is a card that –

(a) an approved guide dogs or hearing dogs institution issues to –

(i) a person who is a trainer for or on behalf of the institution; or

(ii) a person who has been assigned a guide dog trained, or being trained, by the institution; and

(b) is in a form determined by the institution; and

(c) bears the name of the institution, and the name and address of the cardholder.

(6) A person must, as soon as practicable after ceasing to be a trainer or a person to whom a guide dog is assigned, return his or her identity card to the institution that issued it.

Penalty: Fine not exceeding 0.5 penalty units.

(7) In the event of any inconsistency arising between this section and another law of the State, other than the [Anti-Discrimination Act 1998](#) , this section prevails over the other law.

Victoria

Weblink: [Guide dogs, seeing eye dogs and Assistance dogs | Dogs | Animal Welfare Victoria | Livestock and animals | Agriculture Victoria](#)

The [Equal Opportunity Act 2010](#) (the Act) protects people with disabilities from discrimination. This includes protection from discrimination because a person has an assistance dog.

Employers, goods and service providers and others, must not discriminate against someone because they have an assistance dog. This means that a person with an assistance dog must generally be allowed:

- onto transport
- into cafes
- into restaurants.

The Act specifically says that it is unlawful to refuse to provide accommodation to a person with a disability because they have an assistance dog. You also can't charge the person extra or ask them to keep the assistance dog somewhere else.

The Act doesn't apply this protection to other types of companion animals.

Guide dogs (and seeing eye dogs) are legally able to go to any event, business or premises in Victoria (except operating theatres).

This includes travelling on:

- planes
- any form of public transport (taxis, buses, trams and trains).

It includes entering:

- theatres
- restaurants
- supermarkets
- hotels
- retail stores.

These access rights apply to:

- guide dogs
- guide dogs in training
- guide dog puppies.

The rights of guide dog users are covered under the [Domestic Animals Act 1994](#) and the [Disability Discrimination Act 1992](#) — both of which override the Health Act, which prohibits dogs from entering food premises.

Western Australia

Weblink: [Assistance dog Approvals Policy \(dlgsc.wa.gov.au\)](http://dlgsc.wa.gov.au)

The Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries provides an accreditation system for assistance animals in Western Australia under the provisions of the Dog Act 1976, with the authorisation card that is issued providing evidence that the dog is “accredited under a law of a State or Territory that provides for the accreditation of animals trained to assist a persons with a disability to alleviate the effect of the disability”.

Regulations in relation to airline travel with assistance animals

- The carriage of animals on aircraft is covered under regulation 256A of the *Civil Aviation Regulations 1988* (CAR).
- Only assistance dogs that are accompanying a visually impaired or hearing impaired person as a guide or an assistant are covered under CAR 256A.
- Carriage of assistance dogs other than guide dogs and hearing dogs are not specifically mentioned in CAR 256A. The carriage is regulated through permissions issued to some airlines enabling them to accept assistance dogs in the cabin of an aircraft. For information CASA provides to the operators (airlines) view: <https://www.casa.gov.au/operations-safety-and-travel/travel-and-passengers/passengers-disability-and-reduced-mobility/travel-assistance-dogs>

NDIS Assistance Animal funding

Weblink: [Including Specific Types of Supports in Plans Operational Guideline - Assistance Animals | NDIS](#)

When funding supports in a participant's plan, such as assistance animals, the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) has to consider whether the support meets all of the general criteria for supports and reasonable and necessary criteria (see Section 34 of the NDIS Act and Section 10 of the [Planning Operational Guideline](#)).

What supports will the NDIS fund?

When funding an assistance animal, funded supports include the following:

- a suitable and qualified animal, inclusive of associated participant assessment and provider incurred animal training costs; and
- costs associated with maintenance of the animal for the working life of the animal.

The NDIA needs evidence in writing with input from all of the following:

- an NDIS Participant assistance animal provider:
 - allied health professionals; and
 - the participant.

Information from other professionals, such as a doctor, may also be provided where relevant to the assistance animal request. Trainers of assistance animals should ensure they have the most up-to-date information regarding Assistance Dogs and NDIS before discussing this matter with clients. Always visit the NDIS website at <https://ourguidelines.ndis.gov.au> for the latest information.

Dog Training Establishments' Codes of Practice

State and Territory codes of practice incorporate requirements for housing, dog training establishment staffing, husbandry etc. In Victoria, for example the dog training establishment Codes of Practice is made under the provisions of Section 59 of Division 4 of the [Domestic Animals Act 1994 \(legislation.vic.gov.au\)](#).

Victorian Code of Practice

The Victorian Code of Practice is a good example of the minimum standards of accommodation, management and care which are appropriate to the physical and behavioural needs of dogs being trained in dog training establishments.

Protection training is defined as training a dog to attack people or animals and includes the training of a dog to attack a human wearing padded protective clothing for any purpose including sport.

All dogs entering dog training establishments must be identified and dogs that are undergoing protection training must be permanently identified by means of a microchip issued by the municipality in which the dog normally resides. The Act requires an owner to notify the appropriate municipality immediately attack training has commenced.

If, in the trainer's opinion, a dog is suffering from any ailment, the trainer may refuse to train that dog.

Reasonable care must be exercised by the trainer or training establishment, to ensure the safety and well-being of the client and dog at all times e.g.:

- In circumstances where a dog is aggressive (reactive) and displays a clear danger to other dogs or people it must be muzzled.
- Slip collars (choker chains), must not be used on puppies under 12 weeks of age.

- Undue force must not be used when training any dog.
- All proprietors of dog training establishments must carry a minimum of \$5,000,000 Public Liability insurance cover.¹⁷

2. Staff

2.1 Manager

The proprietor of a dog training establishment is responsible for the overall management and conduct of the facility and for the welfare of the animals held therein. In particular, the proprietor responsible for:

- the well-being of all animals in the establishment
- the supervision of staff
- the maintenance and collation of records and statistics
- supervision of daily feeding, watering, inspection and training of all animals
- supervision and examination of animals upon entry
- the overall level of hygiene in the establishment, including the disposal of waste materials
- provision of prompt veterinary attention for animals when required
- ensuring adequate shade is available at each training venue
- provision of cleaning utensils for the disposal of dog's faeces and ensuring that they are available at all times whilst training is being conducted
- notifying owners (or their contacts) as soon as possible when an animal is observed to be ailing or injured or promptly after a veterinarian has examined the animal
- developing a plan for an emergency situation
- provision of suitable padded training attire for use in protection training.¹⁸

2.2 Veterinarian

The proprietor of an establishment must have a written agreement sufficient veterinarians to be on call for the treatment of animals other than first aid.¹⁹

2.3 Animal attendants

Animal attendants employed by the proprietor of the training establishment must be trained and experienced to properly manage the dogs being trained. They are responsible to the proprietor for:

- daily feeding, watering and inspection of all animals
- daily cleaning of facilities, i.e., hose out, replace bedding, feeding and watering utensils
- reporting of sick or injured animals
- exercising dogs as required by the manager.

The proprietor of the training establishment must ensure that staff health is protected by the provision of appropriate work clothing, adequate hand washing facilities and tetanus immunisation.

¹⁷ Code of Practice for the Operation of Dog Training Establishments | Codes of Practice | Domestic Animals Act | Animal Welfare Victoria | Livestock and animals | Agriculture Victoria

¹⁸ Ibid

¹⁹ Ibid

Information must be supplied on disease-causing organisms which can be transmitted to humans (zoonoses) and personal hygiene procedures must be such that transmission could not occur.

A First Aid Kit must be available at all times at all training venues and at least one staff member, whether a trainer or not, must be qualified in First Aid, and available at all times at each training venue whilst training is being conducted.

The proprietor of a training establishment must ensure that at each training venue, telephone access is provided for, in case of emergencies.²⁰

3. Husbandry

3.1 Nutrition

All dogs housed in the training establishment must be fed at least once a day. The food provided must contain acceptable nutritive values in sufficient quantity to meet appropriate daily requirements for the condition and size of the animal.

All animals must have a permanent supply of fresh, clean water.

Food and water containers must be non spillable and of a design that can be easily cleaned and does not cause injury to the animals.

3.2 Vaccination and health care

For dogs, pre-vaccination against distemper, hepatitis and parvovirus is required. A current vaccination certificate (certifying that vaccination was done within the preceding 12 months and that the 'due date' for the next vaccination has not passed) must be produced for each dog before admission. Vaccination against canine cough and checking for heartworm infection should be recommended prior to admission.

Animals known or suspected to be suffering from an infectious disease must not be admitted for training.²¹

3.3 Hygiene

The training establishment is to be clean and hygienic at all times. All pens must be cleaned out at least once per day (twice daily if inspection shows it is required) by hosing or other appropriate means, after removing all uneaten food by hand before hosing, to ensure the pen is fresh and clean. Used litter and uneaten food must be placed in sealed plastic bags for disposal.

Animal training establishment sites must have an adequate water supply and must be seweried or on a septic system or have some other adequate method of disposing of faeces.

Waste disposal must be in accordance with the requirements of the local government authority. Use of a trade waste service for collection and disposal of wastes is preferable. Wastes must not be incinerated.

After cleaning, sleeping areas must not be allowed to remain wet.

Disinfection of pens must be done whenever the pen is vacated or every seventh day with hospital grade disinfectants. Utensils must be rinsed after disinfecting to avoid poisoning. Manufacturers' instructions for the use of these agents must be followed.

All watering and feeding utensils must be cleaned daily.

²⁰ Ibid

²¹ Ibid

Pests including fleas, ticks, flies, mosquitoes and rodents must be effectively controlled. Chemicals used for pest control must be either prescribed by a registered veterinarian or registered by the National Registration Authority (NRA) under the Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals Code (Commonwealth) and should be used only in accordance with label instructions.²²

3.4 Security

Kennel buildings must be able to be securely locked. Design and materials used must ensure the security of the facility.

Each individual kennel must be fitted with a secure closing device that cannot be opened by the animals.

Any security methods used must allow for ready access to animals and ready exit for staff and animals from the premises in the event of an emergency.

All training establishments where dogs are boarded, or protection training occurs must have an external perimeter fence at least 1.8 metres high surrounding the establishment to prevent the escape of animals.

The external walls of the facility may serve as the perimeter fence if an animal escaping from its pen or cage is restrained by these walls.

Dogs in training establishments must be safe from attack, stress or injury and their behavioural needs should be met.²³

3.5 Housing

Each dog training establishment must provide an area for reception, records storage, and display of information for clients. Premises must include washing and toilet facilities for staff.

Kennels must be designed, constructed, serviced and maintained in a way that ensures the good health and well-being of the animals, whilst preventing escape or injury to humans.

Housing must provide protection from the weather (wind, rain sun and extremes of climate), vermin and harassment from other animals.

Materials should be selected for ease of maintenance and cleaning, durability and non-toxicity. Floors of animal housing areas of kennels must be made of an impervious material to assist cleaning and drainage. Wood, brick, dirt or grass floors are not acceptable.

The internal surfaces of the external walls of kennels must be constructed of impervious, solid, washable materials optimally curved at the wall/floor junctions to facilitate cleaning and disinfection.

Kennel floors must be sloped to enable wastes and water to run off. A collection drain must be provided to take away water after cleaning.

Pens may be separated by either solid partitions, galvanised chain wire or weld mesh wire dividers. Pens must be completely enclosed having either a solid or wire roof.

All kennels must be provided with a weatherproof sleeping area containing raised beds.

²² Ibid

²³ Ibid

Where dog kennels are constructed indoors, temperature, humidity and ventilation must be considered. Ventilation must be adequate to keep animal housing areas free of dampness, noxious odours and draughts. Cage or pen areas must have an ample supply of fresh air.²⁴

The requirements in each state and territory are similar to those of Victoria.

In NSW, for example the NSW Animal Welfare Code of Practice No 5 - Dogs and cats in animal boarding establishments code is designed for everyone involved in the holding and care of dogs and cats for boarding. By adhering to the code, people involved in the animal boarding industry demonstrate to the general community their concern for the welfare of the animals in their care.

The code has been prepared in consultation with the Boarding and Grooming group of the Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council (PIJAC) representing a number of those involved in dog and cat boarding and is endorsed by the NSW Animal Welfare Advisory Council.²⁵

Other codes of practice include:

- Guide Dogs Code for Staff and Volunteers <https://gld.guidedogs.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Volunteer-Guidelines-and-Code-of-Conduct.pdf>
- Animal Therapies Ltd Microsoft Word - ATL Code of Ethics (animaltherapies.org.au).

Feeding dogs

Good Basic Feeding Tips from the Dog Breed Info Centre:

- *'Dogs should be fed at the same time every day. Feeding at the same time will keep a dog on a bathroom schedule. Ask your vet how many times a day you should feed your dog.*
- *Feed your dog the same type and brand of food every day. Unlike humans, a dog's digestive system cannot handle changes in food. It can cause upset stomach and diarrhea.*
- *When switching to a new food gradually transition him/her to the new food by mixing portions of both foods until you slowly phase out the old food. Your dog may experience diarrhea if his/her food is suddenly changed.*
- *If you are mixing water into dry food, you should mix 4 parts dry food to 1 part water.*
- *Keep fresh drinking water available at all times. Change the water at least once a day, more for dogs who drool.*
- *Keep food and water bowls clean.*
- *Don't overfeed dogs.*
- *Monitor dogs' weight and activity level and make feeding adjustments as necessary.*
- *If a dog has loose stool, feeding sweet potatoes is a natural stool hardener. Unlike some medicines, giving too many will not make them constipated. They sell sweet potato chips for dogs in a lot of pet supply stores.*²⁶

The following website: Basic Feeding Guide for Dogs (dogbreedinfo.com) provides helpful information on dogs' nutritional needs.

²⁴ Ibid

²⁵ NSW Animal Welfare Code of Practice No 5 - Dogs and cats in animal boarding establishments

²⁶ Basic Feeding Guide for Dogs (dogbreedinfo.com)

Public access test (PAT) checklist

The DDA allows qualified assistance dogs to accompany their handler into all public spaces. The only exceptions to this may be spaces in which a person's disability is being addressed by other means, or areas with stringent sterility requirements for example:

- Specific clinical settings
- Surgically sterilised areas
- Industrial food preparation areas (kitchens)
- Quarantined areas.²⁷

The following website for the Queensland PAT provides a comprehensive guide for PAT requirements: https://www.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0032/88655/pat-certification-handler-card-form.pdf

Note: If a dog does not pass a public access test, while they may not be classified as an 'assistance dog', they may still provide support. The owner/handler may not require their dog's assistance for public access purposes.

²⁷ Public Access Rights - Assistance dogs Australia

Human disabilities that may benefit from dog assistive intervention

Human disabilities that may benefit from dog assistive intervention, as provided by an assistance dog

- **Physical:** paralysis, loss of any bodily function, spinal cord injuries, chronic pain, medical alert for diabetes and epilepsy etc.
- **Sensory:** hearing impairment, low vision etc.
- **Mental health:** anxiety disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), panic attacks, depression, suicidal ideation, hallucinations etc.
- **Neurological, and neurodegenerative:** Alzheimer's disease and Parkinson's disease as well as spinal cord injury, multiple sclerosis (MS), hypoxic ischemia injury, epilepsy, depression, stroke affected etc.
- **Developmental:** autism, cerebral palsy, intellectual disability, down syndrome, traumatic brain injuries (TBI), behaviour disorders etc.

Assistance dogs employed for hearing assistance

Assistance dogs employed for hearing assistance will need to be taught to respond to ringing phones, doorbells, or fire alarms. This can be accomplished by training a dog to sit in front of its owner/ handler and perform a specific action when the sound trigger happens.²⁸ Examples of support provided by assistance dogs includes alerting the owner/handler of the following:

- For specific sounds, such as alarms, ringtones, sirens, or vehicles backing up
- That people are approaching or trying to get your attention.

Assistance dogs employed for mental/developmental/neurological health assistance

Assistance dogs employed for a disorder such as post-traumatic stress (PTSD) alert their owners/handlers when they recognize signs of a panic attack, disorientation, hypervigilance, hyperventilation, or other distress. Dogs can be trained by simulating a panic or anxiety attack; dogs, by nature, will often come over and try to help. The owner/handler gives them treats when they try to help. This encourages them to develop their natural instinct and respond to the individual owner/handler triggers. Note that some types of alerting behaviour or tactile stimulation looks like the dog is misbehaving because it may entail licking the owners face or nudging the owner.

Assistance with emotional overload or seizures includes:

- Vigorously licking the handler's face on cue to bring them to full awareness. Unpleasant tactile stimulation can divert the handler's attention from something that triggers tears or other inappropriate emotional reactions.
- Those who suffer from panic attacks have reported that the pressure of the weight of a medium size dog or a large dog against their abdomen and chest has a significant calming effect. An assistance dog can be trained to provide deep pressure therapy (depending on the dog's size and handler's preference) during a panic attack.
- In Parkinson's disease, where the person freezes and is unable move, an assistance dog can be trained to make physical contact, such as lightly tapping the handler's shoe with his/her paw. This apparently may be sufficient to allow the handler to resume movement.

²⁸ How To Train Your Own Service Dog? A Complete Guide (servicedogregistration.org)

- Reportedly, similar behaviour - physical stimulation through pawing or nose nudging - can rouse someone from a disassociation state, at least sufficiently to make the person aware of his/her plight, thus providing a chance to focus and fight the symptoms. This may also be effective in fear paralysis, another symptom of PTSD. Transforming it from an accidental spontaneous behaviour into a reliable skill will require months of diligent schooling and practice.

Assistance dogs employed for mobility assistance

Assistance dogs employed for mobility assistance help persons with a physical disability. These dogs can simply be taught by rewarding them when they fetch an item by word, for instance, by stating the name of the object then pointing at it so they retrieve it. They will learn the cues through practice.²⁹ Examples of support provided by assistance dogs include the following:

- Seeking help from someone else when the owner/handler is having a medical emergency
- Pressing a medical alert button for designated emergency contact
- Retrieving personal items, such as keys or cell phones
- Carrying items
- Opening, holding, and closing doors by tugging on a strap attached to a lever handle
- Bringing medication to the owner/handler at a designated time
- Turning on and off lights
- Providing a foundation to steady the owner/handler or helping them stand up
- Tugging or holding clothing, socks and shoes to assist with dressing and undressing
- Pulling to assist manual wheelchair propulsion.

Other assistive support

Other examples of assistive support provided by assistance dogs includes the following:

- Cuddling on cue
- Interrupting repetitive movements or compulsive behaviours
- Leading the owner/handler to an uncrowded area or place to sit down
- Responding to an anxiety or panic attack
- Interrupting nightmares or night terrors
- Bark at a certain time of day to remind the handler to take medication
- If the handler is not verbal, an assistance dog can be trained to deliver a written account of requirements on cue.

Assistance dogs can provide assistive support during medical emergencies as well as with day-to-day tasks. In emergency situations an assistance dog can be trained to bring the handler a portable phone when needed on cue; open the front door to let in emergency personnel or members of support system; and call an emergency number on a customised mobile phone by pressing the right button.

Appealing to dogs' olfactory perception/target odours, Volatile Organic Compound (VOC)

Dogs have approximately 300 million scent receptors that send messages to the olfactory bulb in their brain. This is significantly more than the human nose with its 6 million scent receptors.

²⁹ How To Train Your Own Service Dog? A Complete Guide (servicedogregistration.org)

Science has evidenced what a scent detection dog is recognising is the 5 volatilome of the organism. A volatilome is the entire set of volatile organic compounds (VOC) detectable inside and outside of the body that reflect the unique metabolic state of an organism. This science has led to dogs being trained to detect things such as explosives, cancer and the impending onset of seizures.

Dogs have a long and successful history working as scent detection animals in airports, for border security, the police and in the military services.

Jenkins et al report *“the canine’s capacity for odour detection has been reported to be as much as 10,000–100,000 times that of the average human, and the canine lower limit of detectability for volatile organic compounds is one part per trillion (ppt)”*.³⁰

In episode 30 of their publication e-360 Epilepsy Action Australia 6 report *“Seizure alert dogs are born with the amazing ability to detect impending seizures and give a warning to that person.”* They go on to say *“If a dog is alerting to seizures it can be trained in a way to alert its owner of an oncoming seizure and respond to the owners needs before, during, and after a seizure.”*³¹

It is the volatile organic compound of the impending seizure that the dog detects. Researchers note that dogs can identify targeted chemical vapor profiles. Scientific and anecdotal evidence support the hypothesis that dogs can and do **‘alert and respond’** to human VOC changes. This may include:

- low blood sugar levels
- changes in cortisol levels.
- anxiety
- panic attacks
- seizures
- blood glucose levels
- dissociation and depression among many other chemical profiles of illness and disorder.

Dogs can also be trained to detect allergens, such as specific foods or triggering odours; specific smells, such as smoke and gas; and the presence or absence of people in a designated area or location.

In Canine Olfaction Science and Law, Jezeirski et al state that:

*“requiring a dog to perform human tasks is asking much, but allowing it to do so as closely as possible to its natural genetic and behavioural ability will make the process easier and more reliable.”*³²

Many assistance dog training organisations, such as Both Ends of the Leash³³ work closely with the handler teams to identify these natural alerts to VOC so they can be shaped into identifiable physical tasks that provide the individual living with a disability the greatest possible live, interactive support from their assistance dog.³⁴

³⁰ <http://www.frontier.org/articles/10.3389/fvets.2018.00056/full>

³¹ episode 30 of their publication e-360 Epilepsy Action Australia 6

³² Canine Olfaction Science and Law: Advances in Forensic Science, Medicine, Conservation, and Environmental Remediation, Jezeirski et al

³³ BOTH ENDS OF THE LEASH | Your Inner Dog

³⁴ <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fvets.2018.00056/fu>

Suitable methodologies and practices related to odour detection, include the following:

- items/human conditions and their associated odours that a dog could be required to detect in its working role as a mental health assistant
- methods of assessing when dogs are ready to extend the range of odours, they are able to detect
- positive and negative indicators shown by dogs when detecting (or not detecting) specific odours
- odour imprint - training dogs to memorise odours and respond appropriately.

Owner/handler expectations about the assistive support of a dog and contingency planning

Assistance dogs are expected to perform certain assistive tasks for their owners/handlers and there are a few traits expected from all assistance dogs, regardless of the specific conditions of their owner. These include:

- Heeling – this means that the dog will stop and stay in a specific location when directed to do so by its owner, unless it is unsafe for dog and handler. In that case, 'intelligent disobedience' is required to get the handler to safety.
- Proofing –refers to a dog's ability to ignore all irrelevant distractions.
- Tasking –how to carry out specific tasks to mitigate a disability. See the section on '*Human disabilities that may benefit from dog assistive intervention*' on what can be expected from an assistance dog.

It is important to note, that **each human/dog team is different** and because the attachment becomes emotional, support needs cannot always be assessed by listing tasking requirements. Often, following time spent with a dog, even though the dog may not perform the assistive tasks expected of an assistance dog, owner expectations are re-visited. In this case, while the dog is no longer termed as an 'assistance dog', they still provide emotional support.

Despite emotional attachment, if an assistance dog and handler/owner team do not meet each other's needs, following training, dogs still need loving homes. If things do not work out, there are many well-established training schools that can help with adoption of dogs, including places like [Seeing Eye Dogs Australia](#) and [Pet Rescue](#).

Associative and non-associative learning

Associative and Non-Associative learning are two types of learning between which a key difference can be identified. Associative learning refers to a variety of learning in which ideas and experiences are connected. On the other hand, non-associative learning is another variety of learning in which an association between stimuli does not take place. The key difference is while stimuli are linked in associative learning; in non-associative learning this does not take place.

Associative Learning

Associative learning refers to a variety of learning in which ideas and experiences are connected. The human brain is organized in such a way that recalling a single piece of information in isolation is often difficult. This is because it is connected to other types of information. The theory of associative learning highlights this connection or link between ideas.

According to psychologists, associative learning takes place when we learn something with the help of a new stimulus. Here the theory of conditioning comes into play. Through conditioning, psychologists emphasize how human behaviour can be altered or how new patterns of behaviour can be created in the individual. The process of associative learning takes place through two types of conditioning. They are:

Classical conditioning - a technique introduced by Ivan Pavlov where he conducts an experiment using a dog. In the first phase of the experiment, he presents the dog with food and notices how it salivates. Then he introduces a bell just as the food is being presented and notices how the dog salivates. Thirdly he rings the bell without presenting the food but notices that the dog salivates. Through this, he explains how a natural response to a stimulus can be conditioned.³⁵

Operant conditioning - developed by B. F Skinner, an American psychologist. He believed that behaviour is sustained by reinforcement and rewards and not by free will. He was famous for Skinner box and the teaching machine. This involved conditioning the voluntary, controllable behaviour and not the automatic physiological responses as in the case of classical conditioning. In operant conditioning, actions are associated with consequences by the organism. Actions that are reinforced (i.e., rewarded) become strengthened whereas actions that are punished are weakened.³⁶ See 'The four quadrants of dog training' section in this Guide for more information on positive and negative reinforcement.

³⁵ Difference Between Classical and Operant Conditioning | Compare the Difference Between Similar Terms

³⁶ Ibid

Non-Associative Learning in Dogs

Both humans and dogs have the ability to learn in non-associative ways. Non-associative learning consists of responding automatically or reflexively to a stimulus, without having to actively try. While we do proactively train our dogs to perform behaviours, a puppy or new dog develops their own non-associative responses to their new environment as well.

Two Types of Non-Associative Learning

There are two forms of non-associative learning: habituation, and sensitisation. They are essentially two sides of the same coin.

1/ Habituation: Habituation is when a dog has learned to tune out a certain stimulus because of the frequency with which they're exposed to it, for example, the sounds of traffic and horns honking eventually fade into the background to the point that dogs in cities, constantly exposed to them, barely notice them. While at first the stimulus may be jarring, through habituation every exposure causes the response to lessen until the dog no longer regards it. Each dog will habituate to individual stimuli at different rates. Horns that honk multiple times every hour will become background noise much more quickly than, say, the sound of an ambulance siren that only passes by once each week. The nature of the stimulus itself also affects how quickly a dog will habituate. Unexciting stimuli are much easier to become accustomed to and ignore than a possum on a fence or a blowing paper bag, for example.

Habituation can be used as a part of dogs' training. It helps reduce reactivity and fear. For a dog that barks at a doorbell, for example, playing the sound of a bell on YouTube at the lowest volume possible, gets the dog used to the sound. Once the dog seems calm and ignorant of the noise, it is turned up a notch. Over time, the dog will likely be less reactive.

2/ Sensitisation: On the other hand, sensitisation is a form of non-associative learning where a dog becomes more reactive over time to a stimulus. This is similar to how many people react to watching or reading horror stories - while normally they may have no problem turning the lights off before bed, they might find themselves jumping at every shadow after watching a horror film. The movie sensitises people to dark shapes and unfamiliar noises, increasing fear over stimuli that hadn't bothered them before. The same can happen with dogs when they are exposed to particularly startling stimuli.³⁷

Dogs can also become sensitised to any type of negative stimulus, and this can occur sometimes after only a single exposure. For example, if a dog has a very negative experience at the veterinarian the first time, they are vaccinated then they may show a more and more fearful response every time they return to the veterinarian for vaccination.

Habituation does not occur once fear is involved, and it is always better to ensure early experiences are positive ones to enable habituation to occur.

Training a dog to adapt to stimuli is a great way to help them remain calm, happy and unafraid. A well-adjusted dog is a secure and happy dog.

The four quadrants of dog training

A reinforcer is something that increases the chances of a specific behaviour occurring. A punishment is something that decreases the chances of a specific behaviour occurring. In common language punishment is used often for a positive punishment (see below) such as yelling or smacking, which can make it confusing for people.

³⁷ Non-Associative Learning in Dogs | Gulf Coast K9 Dog Training (gcdogtraining.com)

The four quadrants build on B. F Skinner behavioural studies. They are:

One – Positive Reinforcement and Counterconditioning:

Something rewarding is ADDED to a dog's world, and it's something that's more likely to make the dog repeat the behaviour. An example of this in action could be that you ask the dog to sit, they perform the desired behaviour, and so you give them a food treat. The consequence of sitting was the treat, so they are more likely to sit again the next time they're asked.

Positive reinforcement is also used to countercondition unwanted dog behaviour or response to a stimulus into a wanted behaviour or response by the association of positive actions with the stimulus. The best way to countercondition a dog is by combining it with dog desensitization (exposing the dog to the smallest amount of frightening stimulus and then increasing it over time so that they overcome the fear). Counterconditioning combined with systematic desensitization techniques requires some knowledge, such as recognizing subtle signs of stress.

An example of counterconditioning a dog includes reducing a dog's fear of thunder. A recording of thunder is played at a low volume while feeding the dog a treat. When the recording stops, the feeding stops. Then gradually the recording is played louder as the treat feeding continues. The dog makes the association that the sound is what brings the treat. 38

Two – Negative Reinforcement

Something aversive is REMOVED from the dog's world, and as a consequence, the dog is more likely to repeat the behaviour. For this to work, there would need to be something unpleasant in the dog's world already, so that the removal of it would be considered an improvement on the situation for the dog. An example could be that the dog is wearing a choke chain which is pulled tight until the dog sits, and then the chain is loosened. The loosening of the chain is reinforcing because it removes the dog's discomfort, and therefore increases the likelihood they'll sit next time. They learn that sitting removes the pain.

Assistance dog trainers do not recommend the use of negative reinforcement.

Three – Positive Punishment

Something aversive is ADDED to the dog's world... but this time it's something that will make the dog less likely to repeat the behaviour. Positive punishment is therefore used to deter unwanted behaviours and was the go-to approach only a couple of decades ago. An example of positive punishment in action could be catching the dog chewing up the sofa and reprimanding the dog with a harsh tone of voice (in previous decades it was by hitting the dog). By introducing reprimanding as a consequence of chewing; it is less likely to occur again. While this method was sometimes used in the past, it should be noted that these days this is never considered to be a humane or acceptable technique for dog training and it is known positive punishment reduces the quality of relationship with the dog and is associated with a higher risk of negative behaviours, such as food or fear reactivity.

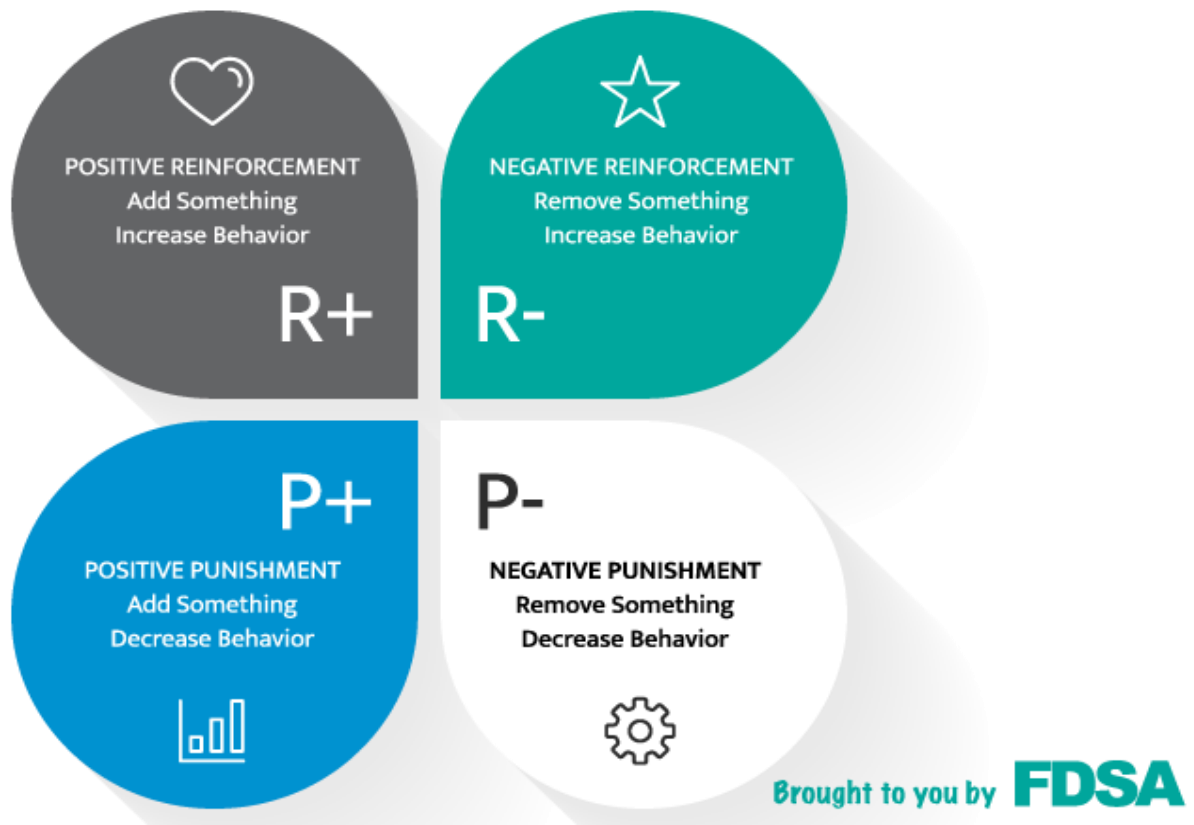
Four – Negative Punishment

Something rewarding is REMOVED from the dog's world, and the removal of that thing will make the dog less likely to repeat the behaviour that caused this consequence. An example could be that the dog/handler team are playing together, but the dog bites down too hard on the handler's skin – to apply negative punishment, the handler gets up and leaves the room.

³⁸ Understanding Dog Counterconditioning, Adrienne Farricelli April 2021 [Understanding Dog Counterconditioning - PetHelpful](#)

When the handler returns, the dog is less likely to bite hard, because this behaviour caused the removal of their playmate! They learn that biting makes the fun stop.³⁹

According to the Australian Veterinary Association, "Punishment and negative reinforcement should not be used in attempts to change the behaviour of dogs. Training of dogs is best achieved through positive reinforcement."⁴⁰



Source: Fenzi Dog Sports Academy (FDSA)

³⁹ The 4 Quadrants of Dog Training: And How They're Wreaking Havoc With Your Progress! - Listen Dog Blog (listendogtraining.com), B.F Skinner

⁴⁰ Australian Veterinary Association, The use of punishment and negative reinforcement in dog training (ava.com.au)

Operant and classical conditioning technique

- **Extinction options** – aiming for the extinction of a certain behaviour by ignoring the dog when it behaves in a particular undesirable manner (jumping on the handler for example). The dog will stop behaving in that manner if this behaviour does not warrant results and leads to reprimands in the form of loss of owner attention.
- **Shaping behaviours** – training the dog using various methods, including clicker training, using praise words and food rewards.
- **Fading techniques** – fading prompts used for initial training that are no longer required because the dog does not need prompting to perform the task.
- **Stretching the ratio** – if continuing to dole out treats for **every** single correct dog response to cues (following initial training) opportunities for improvement are removed and the quality of the behaviour is affected. On top of that, the longer the dog is rewarded for **every** correct response, the harder it becomes to start phasing out all those rewards when a dog has relied on them for so long. This results in a dog who expects a reward **every** single time and risks getting frustrated when he doesn't get it. Deciding when to reinforce a behaviour can depend on a number of factors. In cases where the handler is specifically trying to teach a new behaviour, a continuous reinforcement schedule is required. Once the behaviour has been learned, switching to a partial reinforcement is recommended to reduce the risk of satiation.

Least Intrusive, Minimally Aversive (LIMA) and Least Intrusive Effective Behaviour Intervention (LIEBI)

Least Intrusive, Minimally Aversive (LIMA) dog training uses the least intrusive, minimally aversive strategy out of a set of humane and effective tactics to succeed in achieving a training or behaviour change objective. LIMA does not justify the use of punishment in lieu of other effective interventions and strategies. In the vast majority of cases, desired behaviour change can be effected by focusing on the animal's environment, physical well-being, and operant and classical interventions such as differential reinforcement of an alternative behaviour, desensitization, and counterconditioning.⁴¹

The process referred to as the **Least Intrusive Effective Behaviour Intervention (LIEBI)** model is based on the ethical theory that treating others in an invasive or highly intrusive manner, where it is unnecessary to do so, is morally problematic. The basis of this practice is that we are ethically obliged to construct interventions that are not only effective but also minimally intrusive. Utilising LIEBI practices when training assistance dogs is important because companion animals cannot provide informed consent regarding the interventions that we choose to implement for them. Responsible training ought to be dedicated to ensuring that the interests of the companion animal are carefully considered and that the animal is accorded respect for their dignity by intervening in a minimally intrusive manner.⁴²

⁴¹ Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers, Least Intrusive, Minimally Aversive (LIMA) Effective Behaviour Intervention Policy

⁴²The least intrusive effective behavior intervention (LIEBI) algorithm and levels of intrusiveness table: a proposed bestpractices model. Version 5.0 James O'Heare, MLBC, CABC, CDBC, AABP-CABC Association of Animal Behavior Professionals, page 1.

Hierarchy of Procedures for Humane and Effective Practice

1. Focus on health, nutritional, and physical factors
2. Antecedents: redesign setting events, change motivations, and add or remove discriminative stimuli (cues) for the problem behaviour.
3. Positive Reinforcement: employ approaches that contingently deliver a consequence to increase the probability that the desired behaviour will occur.
4. Differential Reinforcement of Alternative Behaviour: reinforce an acceptable replacement behaviour and remove the maintaining reinforcer for the problem behaviour. ⁴³

Assistance dog training

Basic training

The foundational skills for an assistance dog aren't too difficult to begin with. Assistance dogs need socialisation with humans and other dogs, they need to be well-behaved off a leash, and they should be confident in any environment.

Socialisation is the best way to ensure that a dog becomes a friendly and confident adult. Puppies are particularly open to new socialisation experiences from the ages of 3-16 weeks, but that socialisation should really last for the dog's entire life. Puppies should be handled often by several different people, acclimated to different sounds, and taught to be alone (to prevent separation anxiety). Any interactions with the puppy should be gentle and friendly, not confrontational.

Potty-training a dog is essential to prevent messes indoors. Getting them a crate helps them have a safe place that they want to keep clean. Keeping them in the crate and letting them out to immediately go relieve themselves teaches them that "going" outside is good.

Leash training is also essential for a dog to know their limits. A dog should learn to be focused on you when appropriate, not on the things around them.

These three skills are the most important basics needed in a training program before training a dog to become an assistance dog. It is also beneficial to teach them basic obedience cues such as "sit," "heel," and "down". ⁴⁴

Attentiveness

To test a dog's attentiveness and ensure that they will be focused on you, and only you, while working, they need to be trained to respond to you. This can be accomplished by applying positive reinforcement using treats when focus (ignoring distractions) is established. ⁴⁵

Off-leash training

The next step in assistance dog training is to make sure that the dog is as confident off the leash as they are on it. The dog must be responsive to the handler, and only the handler, while conducting training sessions. For this step, the dog's leash should be taken off in a controlled environment, and the animal should be encouraged to respond to simple cues. This process should be repeated several times to ensure that the dog understands what to

⁴³ Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers, Least Intrusive, Minimally Aversive (LIMA) Effective Behaviour Intervention Policy

⁴⁴ How To Train Your Own Service Dog? A Complete Guide (servicedogregistration.org)

⁴⁵ Ibid

do. When the handler is confident that the dog responds the cues, the handler/dog team can slowly move outdoors into public spaces.⁴⁶

Specialise/conduct complex tasks

This step entails encouraging the natural drives and instincts of dogs and how these can assist humans with disability, and it depends on what the handler needs from the assistance dog. At this point, dogs should be well-socialised and trained. They respond to basic verbal cues like “sit” and “stay,” are calm and responsive on- and off-leash and can relate to the handler. From here, the handler can train them for specific tasks based on what is needed.

Definition of a complex task

Assistance dogs can be trained to perform many different practical tasks for their handlers that will help mitigate the need for additional support(s). Some of these alerts and tasks are natural to dogs; while others are what is referred to as specific and complex.

A specific task is a task a dog may be relied on to perform consistently. A complex task requires it to be trained in stages. Breaking down the parts of the task into smaller achievable segments and training the dog sequentially toward the goal of those segments finally coming together to achieve the desired objective.

A complex task such as bringing a beverage so a human partner can swallow medication, for example involves a sequence of skills, takes four to six months to master. The sequence of skills are:

1. going to the kitchen from another room to pull open a refrigerator door or cupboard door with a strap
2. picking up the beverage from refrigerator shelf before the door swings shut
3. carrying cold beverage to the partner in another room
4. going back, if need be, to shut the refrigerator door or instead
5. fetching a basket or some other container from a kitchen cupboard with a beverage and other items; may also contain antidote type medication in a vial with a childproof cap.

See section on [Human disability that may benefit from dog assistive intervention](#) for more examples of complex tasks a dog can perform.

⁴⁶ Ibid

Choosing an Assistance dog

Considerations to determine if a dog can be an assistance dog include characteristics and temperaments associated with dog breeds or breed types, a dog's emotional maturity and dog/handler partnership interactions and requirements. Some questions to ask include:

- How old is the dog? It should be over 6 months old and neutered/spayed so it is not distracted by other dogs while training. Older dogs with health conditions such as arthritis and diabetes may not be receptive to teaching. Their working life would also be shortened, reducing the value-for-money that they would represent as a disability support.
- Is the dog's temperament suitable for a handler's personal needs?
- How is the dog's attention span? The dog should have an attention span long enough to handle training sessions.
- What are the handler's needs? For instance, if a handler needs a dog to help with balance, a larger breed would be better than a smaller one.

These are important questions to answer before deciding to train a pet as an assistance dog. In general, desirable characteristics of assistance dogs are dogs that are calm and confident, intelligent, young and in good physical health, and dogs that respond well to human verbal and/or visual cues. This doesn't always depend on the dog's breed; almost any breed can be trained for the job if they meet the appropriate criteria.⁴⁷

Training an assistance dog depends on the human disability they are expected to accommodate, the temperament of the dog, and other factors. The important and difficult nature of the work they do means that training can often be unsuccessful but when the handler and assistance dog work as team the rewards are immeasurable.

When a handler is not suitable to have an assistance dog

There are occasions where a handler could benefit from the many positive aspects of having an assistance dog though they aren't yet suitable to take that step. Many social, economic, health and functioning considerations need to be made.

In a case where careful consideration concludes that the prospective handler does not have sufficient capacity or capability to provide for the needs of an assistance dog this person should be referred back to their treatment team with some clearly communicated options for remedy to be reconsidered at a later time.

Doing this with compassion and understanding is paramount, equally important is the trainer's avoidance of making promises that cannot be fulfilled. Even when it comes to dog and handler teams who are initially assessed as appropriate for consideration and training to commence there should never be any promise or guarantee of success. Each team has their own specific and unique situations that the trainer cannot control.

⁴⁷ How To Train Your Own Service Dog? A Complete Guide (servicedogregistration.org)

Welfare of assistance dogs during their working life and retirement

During the working life of an assistance dog, the animal's welfare is of paramount importance.

Welfare of Assistance dogs

Caring for an assistance dog basically entails treating them as part of the family and recognising that the dog is not just there for human assistive activity. The dog needs time to play, relax and be cared for. Caring for a dog includes the following:

Feeding

- Feed dogs high quality dog food
- Feed dogs on a regular schedule (the recommendation is for twice a day)
- Avoid giving dogs an excessive amount of treats or human food (there are many foods such as chocolate, avocados, onions and grapes that are hazardous to a dog's health)
- Give dogs access to water at all times

Health

- Care for dogs' health and have a good, registered veterinarian
- Get dogs vaccinated according to the Australian Veterinary Association's recommended vaccine schedules
- Get pet insurance, ideally a plan for assistance dogs, which provide higher levels of 3rd party liability cover than typical pet insurance. See websites such as: <https://www.guidedogsinsurance.org.au/guide-dog-insurance>
- Fit dogs with ID chips
- Use regular parasite preventative treatments
- Consider desexing dogs

Grooming

- Groom/brush dogs
- Keep dogs' coat clean
- Keep dogs' nails trimmed

Exercising/Socialising and Playing

- Provide dogs with plenty of exercise
- Stimulate dogs' minds with reward-based training
- Socialise dogs
- Allow dogs to play and display behaviours that are normal for the breed

Love and Respect

- Register dogs and put tags on collars
- Treat dogs with respect and never punish with physical force or demean dogs in any way
- Be aware that dogs have basic needs - toileting, relaxation, shelter (do not keep a dog cooped up in a kennel for hours)
- Make sure dogs have access to a comfortable place to sleep and is not left out in extreme temperatures
- Build a bond of mutual love and respect with your dog(s).⁴⁸

Insurance Options: Frequently Asked Questions | RSPCA Pet Insurance

⁴⁸ How to Take Care of a Dog (with Pictures) - wikiHow Pet

Signs That the Dog Is Distressed

An anxious dog may first use subtle body language to diffuse the situation. For example:

- Lowered head carriage
- Whale eyes, where the white cornea shows around the iris
- Lowered ears
- Tail tucked between the back legs
- Raised hackles over the shoulders (a sign of severe anxiety or fear)
- Displaying the belly.⁴⁹

There are many guides on how to care for a dog. **Links include:** [How to Take Care of a Dog \(with Pictures\) - wikiHow Pet](#)

For further information about the monitoring and maintenance of dogs' work/life balance, condition and physical, emotional, mental health needs see the sections on '*Animal welfare – 5 domains - the types of enrichment*' and *Dog Training Establishments Code of Practice*.

Retirement

It can be hard to pinpoint when the right time for the retirement of an assistance dog. Many assistance dogs work until around age 10, with some retiring before and a few retiring after. It will really depend on the dog's health, personality, their working role and the owner/handler's ability to care for an older dog.

The best advice is to gradually wind down the Assistance dog's working life rather than going from all to nothing overnight, unless a veterinarian recommends an immediate stop due to health issues.

The following signs often show that an Assistance dog is nearing retirement:

- They don't seem as happy or enthusiastic about working or going out
- Their mobility isn't what it once was – they seem slower or more accident prone
- They are having behavioural or memory issues
- They're missing cues for familiar tasks
- They become less flexible about changes to routine or lose confidence doing things they once took in their stride
- They want to sleep more than in the past
- They lack energy after a full night's sleep
- They have been diagnosed with a long-term health condition.⁵⁰

Retiring an assistance dog can be an emotional experience, even if they don't have to be rehomed. The human/assistance dog team have spent years together learning each other's needs and cues in a way that few people will ever experience. Sometimes assistance dogs can retire by continuing to live in their usual/familiar habitat and continue to receive love and support. If this is not possible, the dog may be rehomed in a loving pet home to finish out the remainder of their days.

Usually, the training organisation will help with rehoming a retired dog because they typically retain legal ownership of the dog for its working life. If an owner or small training provider requires dog rehoming services the following sites may be of help: [Seeing Eye Dogs](#)

⁴⁹ 7 Keys to Reading Your Dog's Body Language - Petful

⁵⁰ Retiring Your Assistance dog | The Ralph Site Blog (theralphsitetshop.com)

Dog Training Equipment: The Right Tools for the Job

Basic pieces of training equipment are the bare essentials needed for most types of dog training.

General Equipment

- No-pull harness
- Chest plate
- Collar
- Halter/martingales
- Control obedience – walking/guiding harnesses
- Grooming equipment

Training kit

- Harness with padded buddies
- Markers/Clickers
- Working jackets/coats/identification vests
- Night glow
- Training treat pouch
- Tug toy
- Treat pouches
- Personal protective equipment (PPE), *if required*
- **Gloves** used to keep other scents from being transferred to the utility articles.
- **An article bag** - used to transport and store utility articles.
- **Standard leashes** may be used for any training but are not ideal for all. Materials include nylon, and leather, and some styles are also available in a retractable unit.
- **Nylon show leads** such as Martingales come with a slim collar attached that can be adjusted for a customized fit.
- **Utility articles** - an assortment of dumbbell-like objects used in the scent discrimination exercise. **A utility mat** is used as the base under the utility articles. For early training, the decoy articles may be tied to the mat to discourage the dog from selecting them, helping him/her to focus on detecting the correct item by scent. *Utility articles are specific to odour detection.*

Desensitising and socialising equipment used for assistance dogs entails exposure, e.g., umbrellas, chairs, noisy objects like vacuums, mop/broom, various floor types) as well as more specialised objects like wheelchair, walking stick, alert lights used by people with hearing impairment. Assistance dogs also need to be exposed to lots of different types of people and animals, so having access to people of all shapes, sizes, races, genders, and all sorts of friendly, or at least tolerant, animals is important.

Appendix A: Organisations that train Assistance Dogs

Assistance Dogs Australia

Link: [Assistance dogs Australia](#)

Organisations such as Assistance dogs Australia trains and places unique dogs with Australians in unique situations. They currently train dogs that specialise in support for people with a physical disability, autism or PTSD. As well as providing a range of services to these individuals and their families.

Re PTSD: *‘Assistance dogs can help guide those living with trauma back to a sense of safety, helping to improve interpersonal connections, encourage engagement in the community, and regain areas of functioning that may have been diminished by their trauma. All ADA trained and qualified dogs have full Public Access Rights, allowing them to accompany their handlers on all public transport and into almost all public areas. Our dogs are trained to the highest standards and are accredited by Assistance dogs International.’⁵¹*

Programs include PAWS (Parents Autism Workshops and Support) which bring together parents of children with autism.⁵²

Australian Support Dogs

Link: [Apply for a Dog | ASDOG](#)

‘Being partnered with an assistance dog can be a tremendous asset to a person’s life and quest for enhanced independence. Assistance dogs complete advanced skills training and are trained to travel on public transport. They are happy and willing to help at home and in community environments by retrieving dropped items, assisting with household tasks, opening and closing doors and drawers, removing clothing and much more. It is important to remember that having an assistance dog is also a serious and long-term commitment. You must be prepared to have your dog accompany you 24 hours per day and be responsible for maintaining its skills, health and general wellbeing. If you would like to talk to ASDOG about how an assistance dog could benefit you, please call 1300 788 721.’⁵³

Australian Veterinary Association (AVA)

Link: <https://www.ava.com.au/>

Policy and advocacy

‘The AVA maintains relationships with national, state and local levels of government, and provides advice on all aspects of animal health and welfare policy.

Members feel strongly about issues being debated in public forums, and the association actively campaigns for change on a range of animal health and welfare issues. We comment publicly on topics being discussed in the media or being considered by parliaments and regulators.

The AVA also helps members to communicate association policies to their local governments, members of parliament, and the media.

⁵¹ People living with PTSD - Assistance dogs Australia

⁵² PAWS - Assistance dogs Australia

⁵³ Apply for a Dog | ASDOG

The AVA Policy Advisory Council includes a representative from every AVA division and special interest group. It develops a range of national policies and position statements after extensive consultation with members. These are approved by the Board before becoming official policies or positions of the association.⁵⁴

Both Ends of the Leash

Link: BOTH ENDS OF THE LEASH | Your Inner Dog

Both Ends of the Leash is a training and certification organisation for individuals with disability who seek to train their own dog to public access standards to be certified via a public access test. Both Ends of the Leash was co-founded by Diane Petersen and Briahne Kelly who each have a lived experience with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder that they have their own certified assistance dogs for.

Both Ends of the Leash was developed to fill what Di and Bri felt was missing in the assistance dog training space in designing specific training to suit the individual handler and their dog for their goal of improved functioning and independence.

As relationship-centred, positive reinforcement trainers Di and Bri oppose the use of compulsion or positive punishment when training teams. The major focus for Both Ends of the Leash is the human-animal bond between the handler and their dog. From this foundation the capturing and shaping of a dog's natural alerts are the primary focus in initial training.

The areas of specialisation are psychiatric assistance dogs and medical alert dogs. With a sound basis of experience in the Volatile Organic Compound (VOC) detection that dog's naturally have and demonstrate, Di and Bri aim to spend sufficient quality training time with their teams to ensure each team reaches their full potential. Among their proudest achievements with their training program is their commitment to the feedback loop response. Di states "it's a wonderful thing when the handler's life becomes fuller, more independent and capable because of their assistance dog's alerts and tasking, but we feel that is only part of the value our assistance dog's offer us. When we work with the human end of the leash to establish clear responses to their dog's alerts and tasking, we see our teams grow exponentially in their functioning with measurable symptom reductions. This is what Both Ends of the Leash is most committed to, teams where the dog and handler enjoy synchronicity that becomes unconscious competence, moving as one unit throughout life."⁵⁵

Link: [Canine Helpers for the disabled](#)

Service Dogs are very highly trained animals that take a long time, and a lot of money to train. The amount of time required to train a Service Dog is the same as that of a Guide Dog. If you encounter a Service Dog (or any type of Assistance dog) when wearing its identification coat, please remember that it deserves the same respect that you would afford a Guide Dog. Please do not try to touch or talk to the Service Dog without first asking its handler.

Service Dogs Can

- *Lift and carry items*
- *Retrieve dropped or lost items*

⁵⁴ Australian Veterinary Association | Policy & Advocacy (ava.com.au)

⁵⁵ Both Ends of the Leash Assistance Dog-Handler Training Program Information Pack

- Be used as a brace for people with walking difficulty
- Open and close doors
- Activate light switches
- Pull a manual wheelchair
- Accompany their owner in public
- Bark an alert for help
- Assist with daily tasks such as making the bed, doing the laundry etc
- Move limbs for people with paralysis
- And many more.....

Service dogs are also a wonderful companion and friend to their owner. Often people comment that the emotional and social benefits of having a service dog are of equal importance to the physical benefits. Service dogs help people to make friends, encourage an initial talking point for first time meetings and also give people the opportunity to gain self-esteem by doing things for themselves.⁵⁶

Centre for Service and Therapy Dogs Australia (CSTDA)

Link: [Centre for Service Therapy Dogs - Autism, Epilepsy, Dementia, PTSD \(cstda.com.au\)](http://cstda.com.au)

The CSTDA is focused on working with specifically trained dogs within mutually defined programs, to assist people to achieve predefined therapeutic and educational goals and to create a lasting partnership that aims to improve quality of life, enhance independence and facilitate increased participation in society.

CSTDA, a “for benefit organisation”, accepts that its responsibility is to the community and is committed to delivering services in a professional, ethical, sustainable, inclusive and transparent manner, ensuring the benefits of its programs are enjoyed by all stakeholders.⁵⁷

Empower Assistance dogs

Link: [Welcome to Empower Assistance dogs Queensland, Australia](http://www.empowerassistance.com.au)

Empower Assistance dogs enhance quality of life and independence for people with disabilities by providing professionally trained and government certified guide, hearing and assistance dogs. They were the first organisation that was government certified to train all three types of service dogs – guide, hearing and assistance dogs. The organisation achieves this through a program of selecting, raising and training dogs to assist disabled people with everyday tasks.

Guide, Hearing and Assistance dogs are trained to enhance the quality of life of vision or hearing impaired, and/or physically or mentally challenged persons whilst still maintaining as much independence for the handler. This means that the dog will be a permanent working companion for the disabled handler and will assist with a myriad of guide, noise alert or task work but whilst still having the handler work and interact as much as physically or mentally possible. In many cases, a secondary handler will be necessary to help with health, hygiene and exercise and to give play and environmental enrichment to the dog.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Canine Helpers for the disabled

⁵⁷ Centre for Service Therapy Dogs - Autism, Epilepsy, Dementia, PTSD (cstda.com.au)

⁵⁸ Welcome to Empower Assistance dogs Queensland, Australia

Graceful Dog Training

Link: [Dog Training - Graceful Dog Training](#)

"At Graceful Dog Training I believe all animals should be trained in a force free method." - Grace

'Assistance dogs are no exception to this and should be happy, confident, and relaxed to train and work with their handler.

The situations Assistance dogs are presented with in their daily role means the handler is required to completely trust in their dog's ability to help them achieve a better quality of life.

Grace is the Owner and Trainer Graceful Dog Training.

*Grace has never lived without a dog of her own and has many years of experience as a Dog Trainer. Due to her own experience of requiring an Assistance dog, Grace decided to specialise in Assistance dog Training. The desire Grace holds close to her heart is to help other people that require an Assistance dog on their journey towards a special relationship with their own dog.'*⁵⁹

Guide Dogs Australia

Links: [Guide Dogs NSW/ACT](#), [Guide Dogs Victoria](#), [Guide Dogs SA/NT](#), <https://www.guidedogswa.com.au>, [Providing Guide & Assistance dogs in Tasmania - Guide Dogs Tasmania](#), [Homepage - Guide Dogs Queensland](#)

'Help to support your patient's independence and mobility by referring them to Guide Dogs.... While our beloved Guide Dogs play a crucial role in the work we do, we have a versatile range of additional supports to meet your patient's unique needs.

*Whether your patient is young or young-at-heart; if they have recently experienced a change in vision or had long-term low vision, we will always provide support.'*⁶⁰

Guide, Hearing and Assistance dogs (Qld Government)

Link: [Choosing a guide, hearing or assistance dog | People with disability | Queensland Government \(www.qld.gov.au\)](#)

'You may need a guide, hearing or assistance dog if you have a disability and need support to live more independently and access public places, public passenger vehicles, or rental or holiday accommodation in Queensland.

⁵⁹ Dog Training - Graceful Dog Training

⁶⁰ Guide Dogs NSW/ACT

Most people are familiar with the guide dogs used by a person with vision impairment. However, there are many other ways that dogs can be specifically trained to assist people in their everyday lives, including:

- alerting people with a hearing impairment to specific sounds
- pulling wheelchairs or carrying and picking up items, or helping with balance for people with mobility impairments
- alerting an oncoming medical episode, for example, diabetic attack or epileptic seizure
- alerting a person with psychiatric illness to move away from a situation that increases symptoms.⁶¹

Helping Paws Service Dog Training (HPSDT)

Link: <https://helpingpawsservicedogtraining.com.au>

Assistance dog/Animal Assisted Therapy/Therapy Dog

“Empowering people with a disability to train their own Assistance dog”

“Dogs provide comfort, affection, and love without judgement to children and adults; especially through the most challenging time of a person’s life”

‘HPSDT will provide you with the necessary information and training, encouragement and support at every step through your training journey to certification in one of the following areas:

Assistance dogs are trained to alleviate the effects of a person’s disabilities through performing tasks that directly relate to the person’s needs, this results in the person achieving more independence and confidence. You and your mate will work together as a team and developed an everlasting bond through this training journey.

Animal Assisted Therapy is carried out by Counsellors, Allied Health Practitioners and Psychiatrists who use animal interactions with clients to assist in their recovery. The options of incorporating dogs in the goal setting process are extensive.

Therapy Dog, provide opportunities to enhance people’s quality of life in a variety of settings.⁶²

Integra Service Dogs Australia

Link: [Integra Service Dogs Australia - Integra Service Dogs Australia \(isda.com.au\)](https://www.isda.com.au)

‘Integra is a Not-for-Profit Organisation, founded by Veterans for supporting Veterans and First Responders suffering from PTSD. Integra specialises in the sourcing, matching, placement, ongoing training and development of high-quality Labrador trainee Service Dogs with Veterans and First Responders suffering from PTSD. We are a national provider, delivering Assistance dog services in most states and

⁶¹ Choosing a guide, hearing or assistance dog | People with disability | Queensland Government (www.qld.gov.au)

⁶² <https://helpingpawsservicedogtraining.com.au>

territories, and have efficiently matched and placed more than one hundred (100) high quality Labrador dogs with Veterans and First Responders. Our mission is to support people suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and other mental health-related illnesses, as a result of trauma during service.

*Integra was founded in 2016 to deliver the vision established by Mr Ken Lloyd, OAM MSs JP (NSW), which is to provide excellent Service Dogs to Veterans and First Responders who have served our country.*⁶³

K9 Assistance Australia

Link: [K9 Support - Therapy Dog Training](#)

*‘K9 Support only train a small number of Assistance dogs each year. This is a practical training with no online component and can only be carried out at our facility in Benalla, Victoria.’*⁶⁴

Leader Dogs for the Blind

Link: Welcome to Leader Dogs for the Blind

‘Since 1939, Leader Dogs for the Blind has operated one of the world’s most respected and innovative guide dog programs. Our free training program welcomes clients who are legally blind, at least 16 years old, have good orientation and mobility skills and are able to care for a dog.

Training is personalized for each client. Thanks to sophisticated breeding, puppy raising and dog training programs, we are able to match clients with a dog that best fits their lifestyle, travel pace, physical size, stamina and other considerations. Clients have the opportunity to train with their guide dog in a wide variety of situations to fit current and future needs, including urban, suburban and rural locations; college campuses; busy stores and malls; public transit and other environments.

Guide Dog Training at Leader Dog is available for people who are:

- Legally blind
- At least 16 years old
- Able to care for a dog
- Efficient with orientation and mobility skills

*We offer our Guide Dog Training program in a variety of formats: on-campus training (our most popular option), in-home delivery, flex training, urban training, warm weather training, and training specifically for individuals who are Deaf-Blind.’*⁶⁵

MindDog

Link: [Home - mindDog Australia](#)

⁶³ About Us - Integra Service Dogs Australia (isda.com.au)

⁶⁴ K9 Support - Therapy Dog Training

⁶⁵ Guide Dog Training - Leader Dogs for the Blind

'A mindDog is a psychiatric assistance dog. An assistance dog (also known as a service dog) is covered by the Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992. An assistance dog is trained to assist their handler in public and is guaranteed access to all public places including shopping centres, hospitals, public transport and restaurants. According to this Act, an assistance dog is trained to alleviate the effect of a disability and must meet standards of hygiene and behaviour.

For individuals with a mental health disorder and a dog, mindDog will test that dog for suitability, oversee the training, test, and certify that dog as an assistance dog.

*MindDog assists people with mental health disorders whose lives are often severely compromised by anxiety and fear. With their mindDog they are able to travel on public transport, access public places and take part in social activities which have been closed off to them.'*⁶⁶

Personal Assistance dog Solutions (PADS)

Link: [About us | Pads Australia \(pads-australia.org\)](http://About us | Pads Australia (pads-australia.org))

'Based in Mudgee, NSW, Adele Lindley is the proprietor of PADS and is a passionate and dedicated trainer with over 30 years' experience in the animal industry. Her aim with PADS is to help you train your dogs with scientifically proven positive reinforcement training. This has been proven to be the most effective way to train any animal. This approach to training is also very widely used around the world in zoos, farming etc to train animals for animal husbandry requirements as well as for medical intervention and treatments.

*Over the past 15 years there has been a major shift in dog training and the way we train our dogs, or in fact any animal. Training has changed dramatically as more scientifically proven research becomes available. Adele has spent many years researching and learning these new skills to be able to bring them to her clients. Adele has a wealth of experience not just in training but running a multi dog household, breeding, rearing and training her own dogs and pups and she is aware of the positive outcomes and the pitfalls of having dogs and can help you to manage your dog/s with a more positive approach.'*⁶⁷

⁶⁶ About Us - mindDog Australia

⁶⁷ About us | Pads Australia (pads-australia.org)

Pet Industry Association of Australia (PIAA)

Link: [PIAA](#)

'Established in 1979, the Pet Industry Association remains the ONLY trade-only Association within Australia, dedicated to the protection of the pet industry, and promoting responsible pet ownership.

The pet industry is very heavily regulated by Government Agencies at federal, state and local levels. There are also many animal welfare and animal rights groups within the community that want to influence or prevent us doing legitimate business. It is becoming more important that the operators within the Australian Pet Industry take greater control of their own destiny. As such, the Pet Industry Association regularly makes formal submissions on pet industry issues at the request of Government agencies and industry regulators.⁶⁸

Pets Australia

Link: [Pets Australia - Australian Pet Site \(mypets.net.au\)](#)

'My Pets is a Pet information site with information about a great many different types of pets..... Pets that can be a friend, a companion, a hobby and more.'⁶⁹

Righteous Pups Australia

Link: [Home - Righteous Pups Australia](#)

'Righteous Pups exists to BRING PROMISE TO LIFE and we do that by raising Champions and launching Heroes!

Our Champions are our Assistance, Type 1 Diabetes medical alert and Therapy Dogs who have that incredible ability to connect, bond and assist children with disability or disease, at risk teens and young people with disabilities to heal and thrive in life. Our Champions bring out the best in us and time and again we have seen lives transformed through canine intervention.

Our Heroes are the people we have the privilege to serve, our children and families living with Type 1- Diabetes and/or Autism Spectrum Disorders, our at risk teens deemed to be at significant educational risk, our young people with disabilities who allow us to assist them to bring their promise to life. We launch our Heroes into a new day, a new normal and a better tomorrow with quality, dignity and hope.

We do all this because we believe that we are supposed to be the people who turn to the person on our left and the person on our right and care about them and help them in their moment of great need. This makes us better human beings and gives us the opportunity to make a difference in this world and our communities.'⁷⁰

The Royal Society for the Blind, Guide & Assistance dog Service SA

Link: [Royal Society for the Blind of SA Inc | healthdirect](#)

⁶⁸ About Us — PIAA

⁶⁹ Pets Australia - Australian Pet Site (mypets.net.au)

⁷⁰ Home - Righteous Pups Australia

*'The RSB Assistance dog program **assists** blind and vision impaired clients, children with Autism and Veterans experiencing Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome (PTSD). Find out more about the RSB Guide and Assistance dog services Organisations for training and support.'*⁷¹

Seeing Eye Dogs, Vision Australia

Link: About us | Seeing Eye Dogs Australia (visionaustralia.org)

The mission of Seeing Eye Dogs, a division of Vision Australia is: To enhance the mobility and independence of people who are blind, or vision impaired throughout Australia by providing Seeing Eye Dogs, mobility training and rehabilitation services.

'A Seeing Eye Dogs journey to success

Breeding and health: The dogs with the highest quality health and temperament are selected to produce the future generations of Seeing Eye Dogs. The Seeing Eye Dogs Vet team maintain and monitor the health of the pups and dogs throughout their development.

Puppy Development: The pups spend the first eight weeks of their lives in the puppy centre. Then, volunteer carers will raise them for the next 12 months under the guidance of a Puppy Development Trainer.

Training: After reaching approximately 12 months of age, dogs undertake an advanced training program lasting approximately five months. This rigorous training ensures the dogs can safely guide their future partners.

Matching: Instructors work closely with clients on the waiting list in order to match the right dog with the right person. Instructors stay in regular contact with clients so they can continue working safely and successfully with their dog.

Retirement: A Seeing Eye Dog's average working life is eight years. Before a dog's retirement, our team supports the client to plan their next steps.

Internationally accredited, Seeing Eye Dogs is a member of the International Guide Dog Federation (IGDF) and Assistance Dogs International.⁷²

⁷¹ Royal Society for the Blind of SA Inc | healthdirect

⁷² Seeing Eye Dogs program | Seeing Eye Dogs Australia (visionaustralia.org)

References

- [Scientific Reasons Dogs Are Humans' Best Friends \(insider.com\)](#)
- [Why Dogs and Humans Love Each Other So Much | Time](#)
- [Scientific Reasons Dogs Are Humans' Best Friends \(insider.com\)](#)
- [Why Dogs and Humans Love Each Other So Much | Time](#)
- Fernandez EJ, Myers M, Hawkes NC (2021) The Effects of Live Feeding on Swimming Activity and Exhibit Use in Zoo Humboldt Penguins (*Spheniscus humboldti*). *Journal of Zoological and Botanical Gardens*, 2(1), 88-100.
- David Fraser Understanding Animal Welfare
<https://actavetscand.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/1751-0147-50-S1-S1>
- <https://www.mdpi.com/2076-2615/10/10/1870>
- [What Are The Different Types Of Enrichment | ZOOSnippets](#)1 [Choosing a guide, hearing or assistance dog People with disability | Queensland Government \(www.qld.gov.au\)](#)
- [Laws in Australia - Canine Essentials](#)
- [Federal \(Commonwealth\) Disability Discrimination Act 1992 \(DDA, 1992\)](#)
- [Assistance Animals - Office of Local Government NSW Completing the public access test and certifying your dog | People with disability | Queensland Government \(www.qld.gov.au\)](#)
- [Assistance animals - City Services \(act.gov.au\)](#)
- [Guide dogs, seeing eye dogs and Assistance dogs | Dogs | Animal Welfare Victoria | Livestock and animals | Agriculture Victoria](#)
- [View - Tasmanian Legislation Online](#)
- [Assistance dogs | Dog and Cat Management Board \(dogandcatboard.com.au\)](#)
- [Northern Territory - Assistance animals | Disability Gateway](#)
- <https://www.casa.gov.au/operations-safety-and-travel/travel-and-passengers/passengers-disability-and-reduced-mobility/travel-assistance-dogs>
[Including Specific Types of Supports in Plans Operational Guideline - Assistance Animals | NDIS](#)
- [Domestic Animals Act 1994 \(legislation.vic.gov.au\)](#). Guide Dogs Code for Staff and Volunteers
<https://www.bing.com/newtabredir?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.guidedogs.org.uk%2F-%2Fmedia%2Fproject%2Fguidedogs%2Fguidedogsdotorg%2Ffiles%2Flanding-pages%2Fvolunteers-toolkit%2F2018-safeguarding-adults-code-of-conduct.doc>
- Animal Therapies Ltd [Microsoft Word - ATL Code of Ethics \(animaltherapies.org.au\)](#)
- <http://aubreyhfien.com>
- <http://gregoryberns.com>
- Human Animal Bond Research Institute, <https://habri.org>
- https://www.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0032/88655/pat-certification-handler-card-form.pdf
- [Difference Between Associative and Non-Associative Learning | Compare the Difference Between Similar Terms](#)
- [Non-Associative Learning in Dogs | Gulf Coast K9 Dog Training \(gcdogtraining.com\)](#)
- [The 4 Quadrants of Dog Training: And How They're Wreaking Havoc With Your Progress! - Listen Dog Blog \(listendogtraining.com\)](#), B.F Skinner
- Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers, Least Intrusive, Minimally Aversive (LIMA) Effective Behaviour Intervention Policy
- Understanding Dog Counterconditioning, Adrienne Farricelli April 2021
[Understanding Dog Counterconditioning - PetHelpful](#)

- The least intrusive effective behavior intervention (LIEBI) algorithm and levels of intrusiveness table: a proposed best practices model. Version 5.0 James O’Heare, MLBC, CABC, CDBC, AABP-CABC Association of Animal Behavior Professionals
- Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers, Least Intrusive, Minimally Aversive (LIMA) Effective Behaviour Intervention Policy
- [How To Train Your Own Service Dog? A Complete Guide \(servicedogregistration.org\)](http://servicedogregistration.org)
- <https://www.guidedogsinsurance.org.au/guide-dog-insurance>[Frequently Asked Questions | RSPCA Pet Insurance](https://www.rspca.org.au/pet-insurance) [How to Take Care of a Dog \(with Pictures\) - wikiHow](https://www.wikihow.com/Take-Care-of-a-Dog) [Pet](https://www.wikihow.com/Pet)
- [Retiring Your Assistance dog | The Ralph Site Blog \(theralphsitieshop.com\)](https://theralphsitieshop.com)
- [How To Train Your Own Service Dog? A Complete Guide \(servicedogregistration.org\)](http://servicedogregistration.org)
- [Basic Feeding Guide for Dogs \(dogbreedinfo.com\)](http://dogbreedinfo.com)
- [Assistance dogs Australia Apply for a Dog | ASDOG](http://asdog.org)
- [AVA policies and position statements](https://www.ava.com.au)
- [BOTH ENDS OF THE LEASH | Your Inner Dog Canine Helpers for the disabled](https://www.caninehelpers.com)
- [Canine Helpers for the disabled Welcome to Empower Assistance dogs Queensland, Australia](https://www.caninehelpers.com)[Dog Training - Graceful Dog Training Guide Dogs NSW/ACT, Guide Dogs Victoria, Guide Dogs SA/NT, https://www.guidedogswa.com.au, Providing Guide & Assistance dogs in Tasmania - Guide Dogs Tasmania, Homepage - Guide Dogs Queensland](https://www.dogtraining.com.au)
- [Choosing a guide, hearing or assistance dog | People with disability | Queensland Government \(www.qld.gov.au\)](https://www.qld.gov.au)
- [Centre for Service Therapy Dogs - Autism, Epilepsy, Dementia, PTSD \(cstda.com.au\)](http://cstda.com.au)
- <https://helpingpawsservicedogtraining.com.au>
- [Integra Service Dogs Australia - Integra Service Dogs Australia \(isda.com.au\)](http://isda.com.au)
- [K9 Support - Therapy Dog Training](https://www.k9support.com.au)
- [Home - mindDog Australia](https://www.minddog.com.au)
- [About us | Pads Australia \(pads-australia.org\)](http://pads-australia.org)
- [Pet Industry Association of Australia \(PIAA\)](https://www.piaa.com.au)
- [Pets Australia - Australian Pet Site \(mypets.net.au\)](http://mypets.net.au)
- [Home - Righteous Pups Australia](https://www.righteouspups.com.au)
- [Royal Society for the Blind of SA Inc | healthdirect](https://www.healthdirect.gov.au)
- [https://www.iaadp.org/psd_tasks.html\).](https://www.iaadp.org/psd_tasks.html)
- [https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fvets.2018.00056/fu](https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fvets.2018.00056/full)
- episode 30 of their publication e-360 Epilepsy Action Australia 6 <http://www.frontier.org/articles/10.3389/fvets.2018.00056/full>
- Canine Olfaction Science and Law: Advances in Forensic Science, Medicine, Conservation, and Environmental Remediation, Jezeirski et al
- Australian Veterinary Association, [The use of punishment and negative reinforcement in dog training \(ava.com.au\)](https://www.ava.com.au)
- <https://qld.guidedogs.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Volunteer-Guidelines-and-Code-of-Conduct.pdf>
- [About us | Seeing Eye Dogs Australia \(visionaustralia.org\).](https://www.visionaustralia.org)