

The Dog and Cat Management Board

Accreditation of Disability Dogs



Government of South Australia

Dog and Cat Management Board

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Definitions:

The Act	<i>The Dog and Cat Management Act 1995</i>
The Board	The Dog and Cat Management Board
Board Secretary	The Board Secretary of the Dog and Cat Management Board
Board Staff	Staff that service the Dog and Cat Management Board
DDA	<i>The Disability Discrimination Act 1992</i>
Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - total or partial loss of the person's bodily or mental functions; or - total or partial loss of a part of the body; or - the presence in the body of organisms causing disease or illness; or - the presence in the body of organisms capable of causing disease or illness; or - the malfunction, malformation or disfigurement of a part of the person's body; or - a disorder or malfunction that results in the person learning differently from a person without the disorder or malfunction; or - a disorder, illness or disease that affects a person's thought processes, perception of reality, emotions or judgment or that results in disturbed behaviour
Disability Dog	A dog that is trained and used, or undergoing training to be used, for the purpose of assisting a person who is wholly or partially disabled, wholly or partially hearing disabled or wholly or partially blind.
Effective Control	Responds to commands at all times
Examiner	Person appointed by the Board to administer the 'Public Access Test'.
Handler	Disabled person responsible for the control of a disability dog
Positive Reinforcement	Encouraging desired behaviour through the use of rewards (food treats, praise, and play) and discouraging unwanted behaviour by removing rewards.
Public Place	A place accessible to the general public
Public Vehicle	A vehicle accessible to the general public
Training	Education and Instruction

Policy

1. Background

Section 21A of the *Dog and Cat Management Act 1995* (the Act) allows the Dog and Cat Management Board (the Board) to accredit a 'disability dog'.

Accreditation by the Board allows a dog, when accompanied by a disabled person, to access areas that a dog would not ordinarily be allowed e.g. public transport, supermarkets, restaurants etc. This right of access to public places is referred to as 'Public Access Rights'.

Accreditation of a disability dog under the Act, is not an absolute requirement for a person with a disability to claim public access rights due to the protection that is available under the federal *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (the DDA). For protection to be provided under the DDA, a disability dog handler must be able to provide evidence that proves the dog '*is trained to meet standards of hygiene and behaviour that are appropriate for an animal in a public place*' (Section 9 (2) (c) (ii)).

Handlers of dogs that have been trained by an organisation accredited by Assistance Dogs International or the International Guide Dog Federation can demonstrate that the dog meets the standard required for protection under Section 54A of the DDA. In South Australia, these organisations are Lion's Hearing Dogs, Guide Dogs SA/NT and the Royal Society for the Blind.

If the dog has *not* been trained by an accredited organisation, it may be difficult for the handler to demonstrate that the dog meets the required standard for access to public places. This can be remedied by obtaining accreditation under the *Dog and Cat Management Act 1995* (the Act) which is recognised under the DDA. This provides protection and public access rights to handlers and dogs that have not been formally trained, or that have been trained by an unaccredited organisation.

2. Legislative context

The Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 states the following in relation to disability dogs:

21A—Accreditation of disability dogs, guide dogs etc

- (1) *The Board may, on application, accredit a dog, or renew the accreditation of a dog, as—*
 - (a) *a disability dog; or*
 - (b) *a guide dog; or*
 - (c) *a hearing dog.*
- (2) *An application for accreditation must—*
 - (a) *be made to the Board in the manner and form approved by the Board; and*
 - (b) *be accompanied by the fee fixed by the Board.*
- (3) *An applicant must provide the Board with any information required by the Board for the purpose of determining the application.*
- (4) *Accreditation of a dog remains in force for the life of the dog unless it is earlier revoked by the Board or surrendered by the owner of the dog.*
- (5) *The Board must maintain a register of dogs accredited under this section by the Board (which may be kept in the form of a computer record) that is to be readily available for public inspection without fee.*

3. Purpose of the Policy

This policy sets out the requirements for the accreditation of disability dogs by the Board.

Policy Implementation

4. Application for Accreditation of a Disability Dog

The Board has developed criteria to assess if a disability dog meets the requirements to be granted public access rights.

It is the responsibility of the person lodging an application, or the person's representative, to ensure that all of the information required by the Board is available and correct. Accreditation remains in force for the life of the dog unless it is revoked by the Board or surrendered by the dog handler. The application form for accreditation of a disability dog is at Attachment A.

The Application must include:

- General Practitioner Report (Attachment B) or;
- Specialist Report (Attachment B) and;
- Veterinary Report (Attachment C)

When received, the application will be processed by a member of the Board's staff to ensure that it meets the requirements of the Board's policy. The Board is responsible for approving or rejecting accreditation of disability dogs. The applicant will be advised by Board staff if the application is successful.

Under Section 21A (5) of the Act the Board is required to keep a register of accredited disability dogs (which may be kept in the form of a computer record) that is readily available for public inspection without fee. Only disability dog details will be recorded in the public register. All medical and personal information relating to applicants is confidential and will be handled and kept in accordance with the South Australian Government's Information Privacy Principles.

a. Identification Card

The Board will issue a card to the handler which can be used as proof that the dog has met the requirements to be granted public access rights. The identification card is only valid for the dog and handler whose name appears on the card when they accompany each other. Accreditation cannot be transferred to another dog or handler.

b. Eligibility

A person with a disability must provide the Board with evidence that demonstrates their requirement for a disability dog to assist them to carry out functions or alleviate the effects of a disability.

Board accreditation provides protection for handlers and disability dogs that access public places but does not provide access to private property. This includes private and strata title residences.

Companion dogs will not be accredited. A need or desire for companionship does not amount to a disability under the DDA (Australian Human Rights Commission).

c. Eligibility- Dogs

For a dog to meet the requirements for Board accreditation they must:

- be desexed, vaccinated, microchipped, registered and wormed
- be physically healthy
- not be a prescribed breed (Japanese Tosa, Fila Brasileiro, Dogo Argentino, Presa Canario, American Pit Bull) under the Act
- not be subject to a control dog order under the Section 50 of the Act
- meet standards of hygiene and behaviour that are appropriate for a animal in a public place

5. Public Access Test

The dog and handler are required to undergo a Public Access Test. The purpose of the Public Access Test (Attachment D) is to ascertain if the handler and dog interact safely with the public and if the dog is well mannered. The handler must demonstrate that they can effectively control the dog in public.

Due to the diverse disabilities that require a person to have a disability dog, the test is conducted to suit each individual case.

Payment for the public access test is the responsibility of the applicant. The test can take approximately four hours to complete.

a. Examiner

The Dog and Cat Management Board engages a certified service dog trainer to carry out assessments on its behalf. Prior to the test beginning the examiner is required to:

- explain each task
- decide when, where and how the testing will be carried out, accounting for the handler's disability
- ensure that the testing process and grounds for termination are understood by the handler

The examiner reports directly to the Board and must not indicate the outcome of the test to the applicant prior to the Board decision. The examiner can seek a second opinion from a suitably qualified person (dog behaviourist, trainer) as required. The Public Access Test can be filmed or recorded with the agreement of all parties.

b. Termination of Public Access Test - Dog

The examiner may terminate the test at any time if there is a risk to public safety, the handler or the dog. Immediate termination will occur if the dog:

- is found to have health issues that are likely to affect its ability to be a disability dog
- has a temporary illness on the day of the test which will unfairly affect its ability to perform
- shows signs of stress, fear anxiety or hesitation
- displays aggression
- displays undue excitement

c. Termination of Public Access Test - Handler

The examiner may terminate the test if the handler:

- inappropriately uses negative reinforcement to maintain control,
- are not in control of the dog,
- are not willing to abide by positive reinforcement training methodologies,
- use a pinch collar, citronella collar or electric collar to maintain control of the dog.

6. Temporary Accreditation

Temporary disability dog accreditation can be provided to visitors to South Australia for 28 days. To be eligible the dog must have been granted similar accreditation in their state of origin. The Temporary Accreditation Application Form is at Attachment E and must be completed and submitted to the Board prior to entering South Australia.

7. Grandfather Clause

Dogs and handlers that have been accredited by the Board under a previous policy retain accreditation for the life of the dog.

8. Revocation/Review of Accreditation

Under the Act the Board may revoke accreditation if satisfied that –

- the dog's ill-health, injury or advanced age prevents the dog from carrying out its functions as a disability dog, guide dog or hearing dog (as the case may be) or:
- the dog is temperamentally unsuitable to continue to be accredited as a disability dog, guide dog or hearing dog (as the case may be); or
- the owner of the dog is unable to maintain effective control of the dog (whether by command or by means of physical restraint)

The owner of the dog must inform the Board if the dog ceases to be physically or temperamentally fit to continue as a disability dog, is subject to a control order or is expiated for an attack under the Act.

The Board may review accredited disability dogs and if they no longer meet the required standard, will revoke accreditation. The Board can require that a disability dog is reassessed due to a complaint from the public or the age/health of the dog.

9. Access

Accredited disability dogs are generally permitted to access public areas where a dog is not usually allowed however, Part 54A of the DDA states that it is not unlawful for access to be refused to any disability dog, including those that are Board accredited, in the following circumstances:

(5) This Part does not render it unlawful for a person to request the person with the disability to produce evidence that:

- (a) the animal is an assistance animal; or
- (b) the animal is trained to meet standards of hygiene and behaviour that are appropriate for an animal in a public place.

(6) This Part does not render it unlawful for a person (the discriminator) to discriminate against the person with the disability on the ground that the person with the disability has the assistance animal, if:

- (a) the discriminator requests or requires the person with the disability to produce evidence referred to in subsection (5); and
- (b) the person with the disability neither:
 - (i) produces evidence that the animal is an assistance animal; nor
 - (ii) produces evidence that the animal is trained to meet standards of hygiene and behaviour that are appropriate for an animal in a public place.

10. Accreditation of Species Other than Dogs

Under the Act the Board can only accredit dogs (*canis familiaris*).

11. Responsibilities

Dog and Cat Management Board - The Board must approve / reject disability dog applications. The Board must maintain a register of accredited disability dogs (which may be kept in the form of a computer record) that is readily available for public inspection without fee.

Board Secretary - The Board Secretary administers the policy and approves the disability dog accreditation card on behalf of the Board.

Board staff - Board staff are to ensure that all required documentation is available to the Board to consider an accreditation application.

12. Associated Documents

Attachment A: Disability Dog Accreditation Application

Attachment B: Disability Dog Accreditation Application
Medical/Specialist Report

Attachment C: Disability Dog Accreditation Application – Veterinary Report

Attachment D: Public Access Test

Attachment E: Disability Dog Accreditation Application - Temporary



Disability Dog Accreditation Application

Applicant Name _____ (please print)

Address _____

Postcode _____ D.O.B _____ / _____ / _____

Contact Details

(p) _____ (m) _____ (e) _____

What is the best way to contact you in relation to this application?

Health Details and Related Information

Please describe the nature of your disability

Dog Name _____

Registration no. _____ Council _____

Dog _____ Breed _____

Age _____

Training Level Achieved (evidence may be requested)

Attachment A

Has the following ever been issued in relation to the dog?

Dangerous, menacing, nuisance or barking dog order? Yes No

Expiation issued for an attack? Yes No

Expiation issued for wandering at large? Yes No

Expiation issued for barking? Yes No

If Yes to any of the above please provide details:

Application (applications will not be assessed until all relevant documentation is received)

Medical Report Attached? Yes

Specialist Report Attached? Yes

Veterinary Report Attached? Yes

Signed _____ Date _____

The Dog and Cat Management Board (the Board) will collect and store the information you voluntarily provide to enable processing of the disability dog accreditation application. The information will be provided to relevant staff and Board members where necessary. Any personal information provided by you will be stored in a database. The information will only be used for the purpose it was collected and in line with the South Australian Government's Information Privacy Principles.



Disability Dog Accreditation Application - General Practitioner / Specialist Report

General Practitioner / Specialist Name

_____ (please print)

Address of Practice

Contact Details

(p) _____ (e) _____

I support _____ (patient's name) application for the accreditation of a disability dog as defined under the *Dog and Cat Management Act 1995*.

The applicant has the following medical diagnosis that requires the support of a disability dog

(Please attach additional information or relevant evidence)

A disability dog will benefit the applicant in the following way:

- Assist with mobility
- Assist with social interaction and access to the community
- Alert the applicant to the onset of a medical condition
- Undertake tasks within the home

I give permission to be contacted in relation to this application Yes No

Signed _____ Date _____

The Dog and Cat Management Board (the Board) will collect and store the information you voluntarily provide to enable processing of the disability dog accreditation application. The information will be provided to relevant staff and Board members where necessary. Any personal information provided by you will be stored in a database. The information will only be used for the purpose it was collected and in accordance with the South Australian Government's Information Privacy Principles.



Disability Dog Accreditation Application - Veterinary Report

Veterinarian's Name

_____ (please print)

Address of Practice

Contact Details

p) _____ (e) _____

I support _____ (applicant's name) application

for accreditation to use _____ (name of dog) as a disability dog as defined under the *Dog and Cat Management Act 1995* to:

- Assist with mobility
- Assist with social interaction and access to the community
- Alert the applicant to the onset of a medical condition

I verify that the dog:

- | | | |
|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Is physically fit | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Has been health checked | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Is vaccinated and wormed | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Is desexed | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Is microchipped and details registered | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

Additional comments:

I give permission to be contacted in relation to this application Yes No

Signed _____ Date _____

The Dog and Cat Management Board (the Board) will collect and store the information you voluntarily provide to enable processing of the disability dog accreditation application. The information will be provided to relevant staff and Board members where necessary. Any personal information provided by you will be stored in a database. The information will only be used for the purpose it was collected and in accordance with the South Australian Government's Information Privacy Principles.

Attachment D



Government of South Australia
Dog and Cat Management Board

Public Access Test – Disability Dog Accreditation

Public Access Test Examination – to be completed by examiner		
Date		
Name of Examiner		
Name of Applicant		
Dog's Name		
Dog Age		
Dog Breed		
1. Dog Management and Control		
a	The dog is settled/relaxed, has a relaxed demeanour and is always under control	<input type="checkbox"/> Pass <input type="checkbox"/> Fail
b	The dog responds to voice/visual/signal/lead correction commands	<input type="checkbox"/> Pass <input type="checkbox"/> Fail
c	The dog is well managed by the handler e.g. dog responds to the handler's demands. Handler praises and rewards the dog.	<input type="checkbox"/> Pass <input type="checkbox"/> Fail
d	The dog recovers if startled and does not respond aggressively, show fear, or continue to be affected after the incident has taken place.	<input type="checkbox"/> Pass <input type="checkbox"/> Fail
Comments		
2. Dog Management and Control – public transport		
a	Owner to control the dog (sit/stay, down/stay) when embarking or disembarking a public vehicle. Dog to remain calm and controlled.	<input type="checkbox"/> Pass <input type="checkbox"/> Fail
b	Owner to control the dog when another dog is in the vehicle. Dog to remain calm and controlled.	<input type="checkbox"/> Pass <input type="checkbox"/> Fail
Comments		

Attachment D

3. Startle Test		
a	Place dog in a sit/stay down/stay. Make a loud noise approximately three metres behind the dog (e.g. use a stainless steel bowl and drop a chain collar into it). The Dog remains calm and if startled recovers quickly.	<input type="checkbox"/> Pass <input type="checkbox"/> Fail
b	Place dog in a sit/stay down/stay. Make a loud noise approximately two metres in front of the dog (e.g. a party popper) The Dog remains calm and if startled recovers quickly.	<input type="checkbox"/> Pass <input type="checkbox"/> Fail
c	Place dog in a sit/stay down/stay. Approach the dog from the side and create a visual startle (e.g. opening an automatic umbrella). The Dog remains calm and if startled recovers quickly.	<input type="checkbox"/> Pass <input type="checkbox"/> Fail
Comments		
4. Public Areas		
a	In a shopping centre car park heel the dog. Do the same in crowds and in narrow walkways. The dog displayed a neat and practical heeling position.	<input type="checkbox"/> Pass <input type="checkbox"/> Fail
b	The dog remained calm and confident around traffic.	<input type="checkbox"/> Pass <input type="checkbox"/> Fail
c	The dog remained calm and controlled around people and crowds showing no suspicion at unusual objects or people.	<input type="checkbox"/> Pass <input type="checkbox"/> Fail
d	The dog stopped and was controlled when commanded to stop or automatically when the owner stopped.	<input type="checkbox"/> Pass <input type="checkbox"/> Fail
Comments		
5. Effective Control		
a	Walk past a dog at a minimum of two and a maximum of five metres. The owner showed effective control when moving past the dog.	<input type="checkbox"/> Pass <input type="checkbox"/> Fail
b	The dog showed no aggression to the other dog.	<input type="checkbox"/> Pass <input type="checkbox"/> Fail
Comments		

I verify that this test is an accurate record of the public access test that was conducted to assess the applicant and dog named above.

Examiner Signature _____ Date _____



Temporary Disability Dog Accreditation Application

Applicant Name _____ (please print)

Address _____

State _____ Postcode _____

Contact Details

(p) _____ (m) _____ (e) _____

What is the best way to contact you in relation to this application?

Dog Name _____

Registration no. _____ Council _____

Age _____ Breed _____

Accredited in your home state by: _____

Organisation Contact name: _____

(p) _____ (m) _____ (e) _____

Date accreditation approved _____

Signed _____ Date _____

The Dog and Cat Management Board (the Board) will collect and store the information you voluntarily provide to enable processing of the disability dog accreditation application. The information will be provided to relevant staff and Board members where necessary. Any personal information provided by you will be stored in a database. The information will only be used for the purpose it was collected and in accordance with the South Australian Government's Information Privacy Principles.



DISABILITY DOG INFORMATION SHEET

It is important that owners of accredited disability dogs understand that the behaviour of themselves and their dog can impact on the health and welfare of others and the reputation of disability dogs in general. Please consider the following when taking your dog into the community.

DO:

- ✓ Keep your dog on a lead at **ALL TIMES** when you are in public.
- ✓ Keep your dog in good health and in a hygienic condition (well groomed).
- ✓ Show your Board issued accreditation card whenever it is requested.
- ✓ Stay relaxed and calm if someone challenges you – it is lawful for business proprietors to ask to see your identification and it is lawful for you to be refused entry in some cases (e.g. a critical care area in a hospital).
- ✓ Take poop bags, antiseptic wipes and water with you in case your dog has an accident or makes a mess – cleaning up indiscretions yourself will demonstrate that you are a responsible dog owner and that it was an accident.
- ✓ When seeking to access areas, treat being an accredited disability dog as your dog's job and ensure they are always professional (well mannered, well presented).
- ✓ Make sure your dog has some downtime to play and be like any other dog.
- ✓ Keep training your dog and reminding them of how they should behave in public.
- ✓ Keep your dog's worming and vaccinations up to date.

DON'T:

- ✗ Allow your dog to jump up on or approach people.
- ✗ Allow your dog to bark when in public.
- ✗ Feed your dog in public or allow your dog to scavenge.
- ✗ Do not allow people to pat your dog unless they have asked first, and you and your dog are comfortable (it is wise not to let children pat your dog as their behaviour can be unpredictable).
- ✗ Do not allow your dog to play with other dogs while they are 'working' or 'on duty'.
- ✗ Do not expose your dog to extreme weather.