



TRANQUIL
CITY

Amadora



Service Dogs



Introduction - Who is this guide for?

This guide is intended for all businesses, establishments, public and private services that receive customers, visitors or users, regardless of whether they are paid or free.

The aim is to clarify the legal obligations regarding access for people accompanied by service dogs, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

These rules apply to restaurants, hotels, shops, transportation, health services, public institutions, events, and virtually all spaces open to the public.



What is a service dog?

Service dogs are highly trained to assist people with various disabilities (visual, hearing, mobility, epilepsy, diabetes, etc.)

- They are not pets
- They perform practical tasks and provide emotional support
- They are recognizable, but the law does not require a harness or jacket
- They behave in a calm and controlled manner in public



Why allow assistance dogs?

Refusing access to assistance dogs is discriminatory and illegal, with rare exceptions.

- It prevents people with disabilities from accessing goods and services
- It can result in complaints, compensation, and loss of customers
- It promotes inclusion, independence, and well-being



Legal obligations

It is illegal to discriminate against people with disabilities:

- Direct discrimination: refusing entry or service
- Indirect discrimination: policies such as “no dogs allowed”
- Failure to make reasonable accommodations: not adapting rules to allow service dogs
- Harassment or degrading treatment
- Discriminatory advertising
- Positive discrimination: it is permissible to treat people with disabilities more favorably



Frequently asked questions

How can I recognize an assistance dog?

- Trained not to wander, they sit or lie down next to their owner
- They may or may not wear a harness or jacket

What if the dog soils or causes a nuisance?

- Very unlikely due to rigorous training

What about food establishments?

- They should be allowed, as they do not pose a hygiene risk

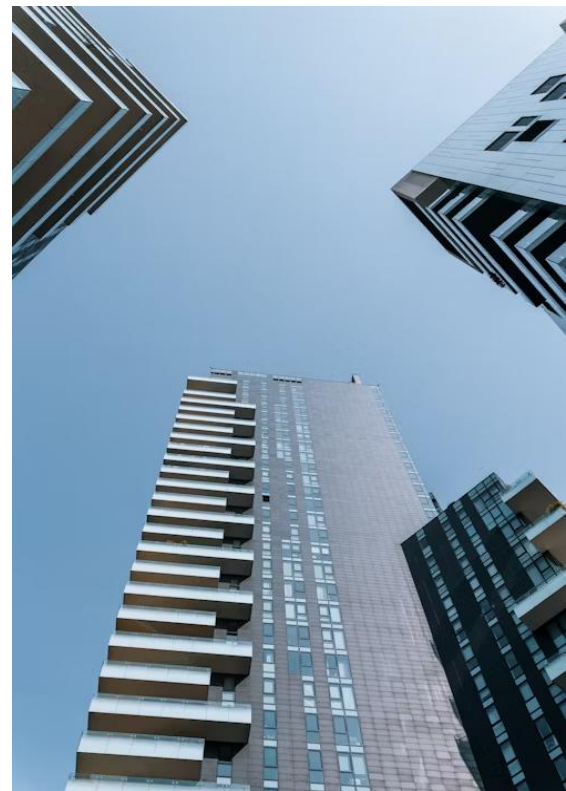
Cultural or religious issues or allergies?

- These do not justify refusing access; reasonable adjustments should be made



Good practices for businesses

- Inform all employees about the right of access
- Put up signs indicating that assistance dogs are welcome
- Adapt policies and spaces where possible
- Treat all customers with respect and dignity



Conclusion

Allowing access to assistance dogs is a legal obligation and a matter of respect and inclusion.

Refusal is only permitted in very exceptional circumstances.

It promotes a fairer, more accessible, and friendlier society for everyone.

[Self evaluation quizz](#)

