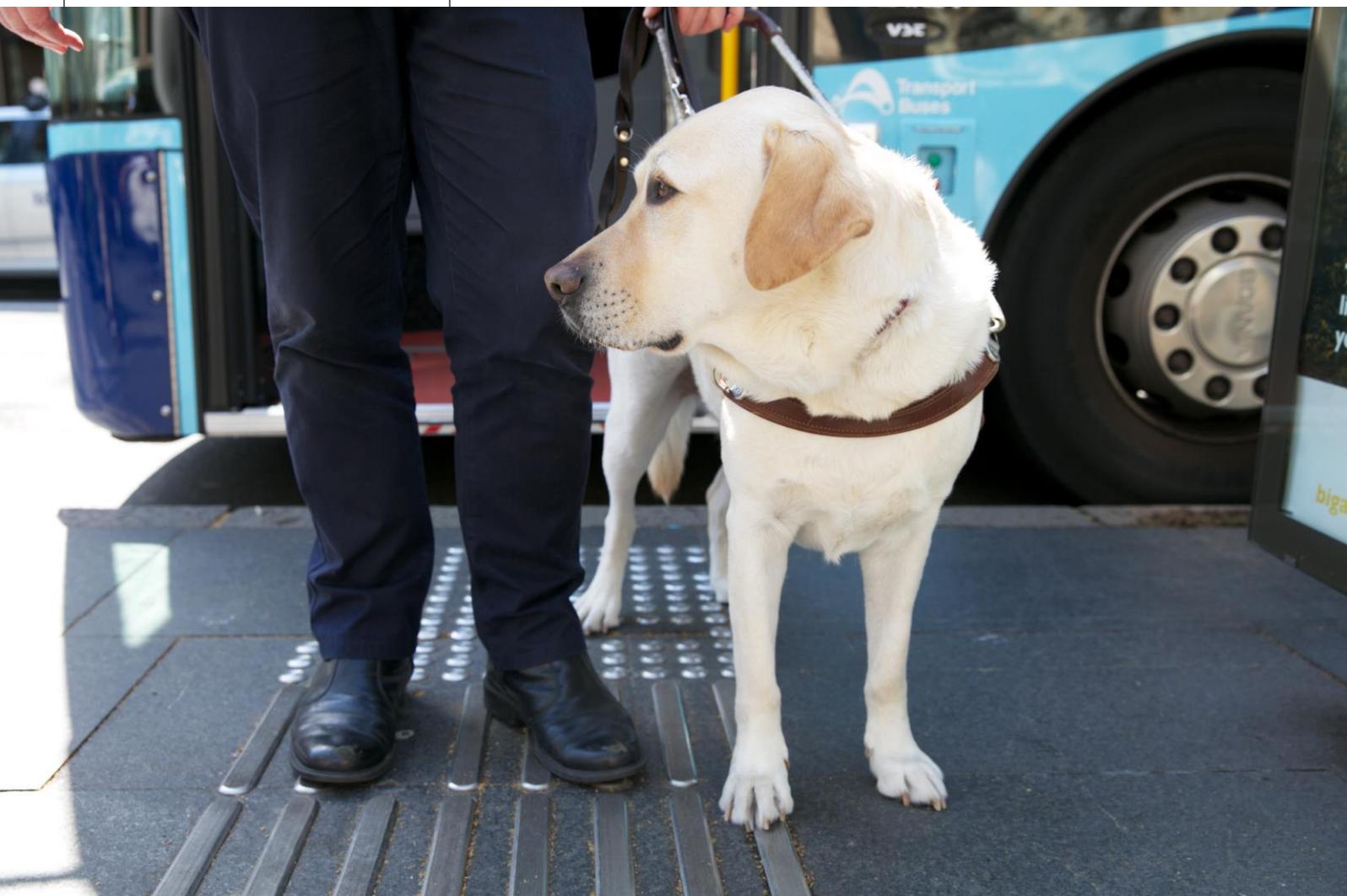


Transport
for NSW

Assistance Animals Policy

December 2022



transport.nsw.gov.au

OFFICIAL

Table of Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. Definitions.....	3
3. Categories of Assistance Animals	4
4. Assistance Animals carrying an Assistance Animal Permit issued by TfNSW	5
4.1 – Eligibility requirements for NSW residents	5
4.2 – Renewal process for NSW residents	5
4.3 – Assessment of AAP applications	6
4.4 – Registered Organisations/Trainers	6
5. Assistance Animals with accreditation from an organisation endorsed by TfNSW 7	
6. Assistance animals with interstate accreditation recognised by TfNSW.....	8
6.1 – Interstate residents applying for an AAP issued by TfNSW	8
6.2 – Interstate residents renewing an AAP issued by TfNSW	8
7. Other Animals	9
7.1 – NSW Police Dogs	9
7.2 – AAP for registered organisations with assistance animals in-training	9
7.3 – Pets and companion animals	9
Schedule A – Conditions of Travel	10
Schedule B – Accepted accreditation from organisations endorsed by TfNSW	12
Schedule C – Accepted interstate accreditation recognised by TfNSW	15



1. Introduction

This document provides guidance on the requirements for assistance animals to access NSW public transport services and NSW public transport premises. Transport for NSW (TfNSW) has the responsibility for the health and safety of all its customers.

This Policy addresses TfNSW's obligation to provide a safe service for all passengers in conjunction with legislative requirements around public access for assistance animals.

2. Definitions

Assistance animal is as defined in sections 9 and 54A of the [Disability Discrimination Act 1992 \(Cth\)](#)

Assistance Animal Permit (AAP) means the permit issued by Transport for NSW for assistance animals

Booked services mean NSW TrainLink train or coach services where a booking or reservation is mandatory to travel on the service

Disability is as defined in section 4 of the [Disability Discrimination Act 1992 \(Cth\)](#)

NSW public transport premises mean the paid and unpaid public areas of:

- a. Sydney Trains;
- b. Sydney Metro;
- c. NSW TrainLink;
- d. Sydney Light Rail;
- e. Newcastle Light Rail;
- f. Sydney Ferries; and
- g. Newcastle Ferries

NSW public transport services mean:

- a. Train services operated by Sydney Trains, Sydney Metro and NSW TrainLink;
- b. Coach services operated by NSW TrainLink;
- c. Sydney Light Rail and Newcastle Light Rail services;
- d. Sydney Ferries and Newcastle Ferries services;
- e. Metropolitan, outer metropolitan and regional regular route bus services; and
- f. Taxi, private bus and private ferry services throughout NSW

3. Categories of Assistance Animals

For the purposes of administering this policy, assistance animals are categorised as follows:

<p>Assistance animals carrying an Assistance Animal Permit issued by TfNSW</p> <p>See Chapter 4</p>	<p>Assistance animals carrying accreditation from an organisation endorsed by TfNSW</p> <p>See Chapter 5</p>	<p>Assistance animals carrying interstate accreditation recognised by TfNSW</p> <p>See Chapter 6</p>
--	---	---

To access NSW public transport services and premises, an assistance animal must fall under one of these categories, with the handler and their animal carrying the appropriate type of valid accreditation.

This accreditation is required by TfNSW to ensure that the animal travelling on the network is an assistance animal that exhibits the skills and actions to alleviate the handler's disability on public transport whilst also meeting the standards of behaviour and hygiene appropriate for a public place. All assistance animals and their handlers must abide by the 'Conditions of Travel' (see Schedule A).

4. Assistance Animals carrying an Assistance Animal Permit issued by TfNSW

This Chapter applies to NSW residents. For information on interstate residents, see Chapter 6.

Unless carrying an alternative form of accreditation (see Chapters 5 and 6), assistance animals or their handlers must carry a valid Assistance Animal Permit (AAP) to travel on public transport services or be within public transport premises in NSW. An AAP is issued by TfNSW and is valid for 24 months.



4.1 – Eligibility requirements for NSW residents

All of the following evidence must be produced by NSW residents when applying for an AAP:

1. A medical certificate confirming that the handler has a disability within the meaning of the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cth)
2. Documentation showing that the assistance animal (where relevant) has been registered with the handler's local Council
3. A colour photograph of the assistance animal
4. Documentation dated within the last six months from either:
 - a. An organisation/trainer registered with TfNSW; or
 - b. An organisation/trainer NOT registered with TfNSW; or
 - c. The handler submitting the application.

This documentation must detail the skills and actions that the animal had been trained to exhibit by stating:

- How these skills and actions alleviate the effects of the handler's disability;
- How these skills and actions meet the appropriate behaviour and hygiene standards for a public place; and
- How the handler controls the animal.

4.2 – Renewal process for NSW residents

NSW residents renewing their AAP must provide documentation dated within the last six months from either:

- a. An organisation/trainer registered with TfNSW; or
- b. An organisation/trainer NOT registered with TfNSW; or
- c. The handler submitting the application.

This documentation must detail the skills and actions that the animal had been trained to exhibit by stating:

- How these skills and actions alleviate the effects of the handler's disability;
- How these skills and actions meet the appropriate behaviour and hygiene standards for a public place; and
- How the handler controls the animal.

4.3 – Assessment of AAP applications

Where an application provides certification from an organisation or trainer registered with TfNSW, the application will be checked for completeness and in most cases a pass issued.

Where an application includes certification from either an organisation/trainer NOT registered with TfNSW, or the animal's handler, the application will be reviewed against the relevant criteria and assessed by Transport for NSW. When undertaking the review of an application of this nature, TfNSW may seek to contact the applicant to request further information to help clarify their application before any decision is made as to whether a pass will be issued.

It is noted that individuals who are seeking passes are not required to seek certification from an organisation or trainer registered with TfNSW

4.4 – Registered Organisations/Trainers

Organisations or trainers are highly encouraged to register with TfNSW if they assess assistance animals for clients who utilise public transport with an assistance animal to assist their client and help their clients obtain a pass. For an organisation or trainer to be registered with TfNSW, they must provide the following information for assessment:

1. Details of the organisation – this includes corporate information, charity status if applicable and extent of operations
2. All policies relevant to the delivery and/or review of training programs and testing regimes for assistance animals and their handlers, as well as policies covering the qualifications of trainers and assessors.
3. Training materials – these materials should detail the training that is provided to both the animal and handler. Training materials must indicate that all assistance animals on completion of the training:
 - a. Are trained to perform skills or actions that alleviate a disability; and
 - b. Meet standards of behaviour and hygiene that are appropriate for an animal in a public place.
4. Assessment/Testing – this information should detail the testing criteria used to assess both handlers and their animals. This information should also include information on re-accreditation processes for the handler and their animal to maintain their accreditation and how often this re-accreditation is conducted.

Organisations and trainers who provide sufficient information to satisfy the requirements will be registered with TfNSW for the purpose of enabling applicants to meet the eligibility requirements for the AAP.

[A list of organisations currently registered with TfNSW is available.](#)

5. Assistance Animals with accreditation from an organisation endorsed by TfNSW

Handlers who have an assistance animal trained or in-training with an organisation endorsed by TfNSW can use the accreditation provided by that organisation. The organisations currently endorsed by TfNSW are:

- Australian Lions Hearing Dogs
- Guide Dogs Australia
- MindDog Australia
- Vision Australia Seeing Eye Dogs

The accepted accreditation provided by each of these organisations can be viewed at Schedule B.

6. Assistance animals with interstate accreditation recognised by TfNSW

Handlers who have an assistance animal with select forms of accreditation from interstate jurisdictions are accepted by TfNSW as valid accreditation. The accepted accreditation from such interstate jurisdictions can be viewed at Schedule C.

6.1 – Interstate residents applying for an AAP issued by TfNSW

Interstate residents with such accreditation can also choose to apply for an AAP issued by TfNSW. When applying for an AAP, interstate residents must produce all the following evidence:

1. A certified copy of the handler’s active interstate assistance animal accreditation (which includes a photo of both sides of the handler’s permit) as confirmation that the assistance animal has been assessed to:
 - a. Perform skills and actions that alleviate the effects of the handler’s disability on public transport;
 - b. Meet the appropriate behaviour and hygiene standards for a public place; and
 - c. Be under the control of their handler
2. Agreed consent to having the details of an interstate assistance animal accreditation verified with the issuing authority
3. A colour photograph of the assistance animal

An interstate resident with an AAP issued by TfNSW can use this in lieu of their recognised interstate accreditation when travelling in NSW.

6.2 – Interstate residents renewing an AAP issued by TfNSW

Interstate residents renewing their AAP must provide a certified copy of the handler’s active interstate assistance animal accreditation (which includes a photo of both sides of the handler’s permit). An interstate resident with an AAP issued by TfNSW can use this in lieu of their recognised interstate accreditation when travelling in NSW

7. Other Animals

7.1 – NSW Police Dogs

NSW Police Dogs are permitted to access NSW public transport premises and services with their handlers at all times.

7.2 – AAP for registered organisations with assistance animals in-training

An AAP may be issued by TfNSW at its discretion to an organisation registered with TfNSW whose trainer(s) travel with assistance animals in-training on NSW public transport services and premises.

7.3 – Pets and companion animals

Animals that do not have an accepted type of valid accreditation are classified as pets and companion animals. Pets and companion animals may not be permitted on all NSW public transport premises and NSW public transport services. [Information about whether a pet or companion animal is able to travel and any applicable conditions for travel is available.](#)

In accordance with industry recognition, therapy animals, facility animals and emotional support animals are considered to be companion animals under this Policy. For more information on this distinction, please see:

- [RSPCA – What is an Assistance Animal](#)

Full public access rights do not apply to therapy, facility and emotional support animals as these animals are generally companion animals providing physical or mental support in the home setting and may not have been specifically trained and/or certified.

- [Aware Dogs – Assistance Dogs, Emotional Support Animals and Facility Dogs](#)

An emotional support animal is a companion animal that may not have been task-trained and is used in the home. The distinction between an assistance animal and an emotional support animal is that the latter does not have public access rights and may not gain access to no-pets-allowed places.

Penalties may apply where animals not covered by this Policy are found to be accessing NSW public transport services and premises.

Schedule A – Conditions of Travel

1. A handler and their assistance animal with a valid form of accepted accreditation are entitled to access NSW public transport premises and NSW public transport services.
2. A handler and their assistance animal must carry or display an accepted type of valid accreditation at all times on NSW public transport premises and NSW public transport services.
3. An accepted type of valid accreditation must be produced if requested by an authorised officer (including Transport Officers and Police Officers) on NSW public transport premises and NSW public transport services.
4. Only one (1) assistance animal may accompany a handler at any one time on NSW public transport premises and NSW public transport services.
5. An assistance animal must be kept under the handler's direct physical control at all times on NSW public transport premises and NSW public transport services.
6. When accessing NSW public transport premises and NSW public transport services, an assistance animal must not:
 - (i) cause any distress or inconvenience to customers or staff;
 - (ii) cause any risk to the health, safety and welfare of any employee or any other person;
 - (iii) disrupt the operations;
 - (iv) sit on seats provided; or
 - (v) block, impede or obstruct doorways or aisles or any access path.
7. An assistance animal can consume food and/or water on NSW public transport premises.
8. An assistance animal must be clean and properly groomed at all times on NSW public transport premises and NSW public transport services.
9. A handler is responsible for the care, conduct and hygiene of their assistance animal at all times on NSW public transport premises and NSW public transport services and must clean up any mess made by their assistance animal.
10. A handler must comply with all reasonable directions given by staff whilst entering, being upon, or leaving NSW public transport premises and NSW public transport services with their assistance animal.

Additional conditions on NSW TrainLink booked services

11. A handler travelling on booked services with their assistance animal must notify NSW TrainLink at the time of booking that their assistance animal will be travelling with them.
12. On booked services, the assistance animal will sit on the floor and must not sit on any seat.
13. On booked services, it may be permissible in consultation with NSW TrainLink staff for the assistance animal to be temporarily left alone and not under the direct physical control of the handler (for example, in order for the handler to obtain food from the buffet car or visit the toilet).
14. On booked services, an assistance animal can consume food and/or water following consultation with and approval from NSW TrainLink staff. All food for an assistance animal must be provided by the handler.
15. On long journeys, it may be permissible in consultation with NSW TrainLink staff for the handler and assistance animal to disembark at the most suitable designated stop for a toilet break. This stop will be at a scheduled and timetabled location, as no special stops can be made to accommodate a requested toilet break.

Additional conditions for Accreditation and Permits

16. Upon review, if there is sufficient evidence that a handler and/or their assistance animal do not comply with these conditions then TfNSW reserves the right to:
 - (i) revoke an Assistance Animal Permit;
 - (ii) deregister a recognised pre-approved organisation; and/or
 - (iii) remove an exemption.
17. TfNSW reserves the right to revoke an Assistance Animal Permit if any breach of relevant legislation or these conditions relating to an animal occurs. Relevant legislation includes, but is not limited to, the *Companion Animals Act 1998* (NSW).
18. An Assistance Animal Permit must be renewed every 24 months and it is the responsibility of the assistance animal's handler to renew the Assistance Animal Permit prior to the expiry of the current Assistance Animal Permit.

Schedule B – Accepted accreditation from organisations endorsed by TfNSW

MindDog Australia

 Handler Katie Brown 87 Jones Drive Mapleton NSW 2250 Australia	<p>Bunny Cavalier X</p>  Valid to 30/06/23	<p>Assistance Dog</p> <p>Access protected by the Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992</p> <p>Psychiatric Assistance Dog Assoc 145 Collins Ave Kulnura NSW 2250 www.minddog.org.au</p> 
---	--	---

Identification card (front and back)

 Handler Mary Jones 11/52 Smith St Liverpool NSW 2170 Australia	<p>Macy Border Collie</p>  Valid to 30/06/23	<p>Assistance Dog</p> <p>Access protected by the Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992</p> <p>Psychiatric Assistance Dog Assoc 145 Collins Ave Kulnura NSW 2250 www.minddog.org.au</p> 
--	--	---

Animal in-training Identification card (front and back)



Marked vest (animals in-training are labelled 'trainee')

Australian Lions Hearing Dogs



Identification card (front and back)



Marked vest and leash (animals in-training are labelled with L plates)

Vision Australia Seeing Eye Dogs



Identification card (front and back)



Marked harness and handle (animals in-training are labelled with L plates)

Guide Dogs Australia



The important role that Guide Dogs perform is recognised in N.S.W. law. People who are blind or vision impaired can enter any public place and use any form of public transport with their Guide Dog in N.S.W., other states and territories. This includes **restaurants, hotels, motels, buses, trains, taxis and planes**. Preventing a person with a Guide Dog from entering public places or vehicles, or imposing fees for permitting them into public places, is a criminal offence. **Fines apply to those who are found in breach of the law.** Discrimination against Guide Dog handlers is also prohibited by antidiscrimination legislation in all states and territories. **Please treat the bearer of this card with courtesy.**

Identification card (front and back)



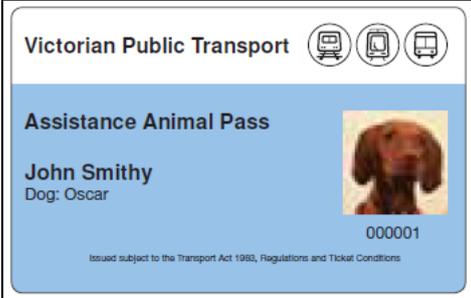
Leather harness and handle (animals in-training wear marked vest)



Medallion (front and back)

Schedule C – Accepted interstate accreditation recognised by TfNSW

Victorian Public Transport Assistance Animal Pass



Victorian Public Transport   

Assistance Animal Pass

John Smithy
Dog: Oscar



000001

Issued subject to the Transport Act 1993, Regulations and Ticket Conditions

Identification card (front)

Queensland Government Handler Identity Card



Guide, Hearing and Assistance Dogs Act 2009

Primary Handler

Name: **First Surname**
Dog: **Name**

Card No.: **0000000** Issued: **01/06/2016**
Expires: **01/06/2019**

The rightful holder of this card has rights under the Act to access public areas, public passenger vehicles and places of accommodation accompanied by a guide, hearing or assistance dog. Refusal of entry to a restaurant, bus, taxi, private rental or holiday accommodation, for example, may attract monetary penalties for an individual or a corporation. Discrimination against guide, hearing or assistance dog users may also breach Commonwealth anti-discrimination legislation.

For more information or if card is lost or damaged phone: **13QGOV (13 74 68)**

This card remains the property of the Queensland Government. On expiry or cancellation the holder must surrender the ID to the Issuing Authority. If found please return to: State Government Security, PO Box 15464, City East, QLD 4002

Identification card (front and back)



Guide, Hearing and Assistance Dogs Act 2009

Alternative Handler

Name: **First Surname**
Dog: **Name**

Card No.: **0000000-1** Issued: **01/06/2016**
Expires: **01/06/2019**

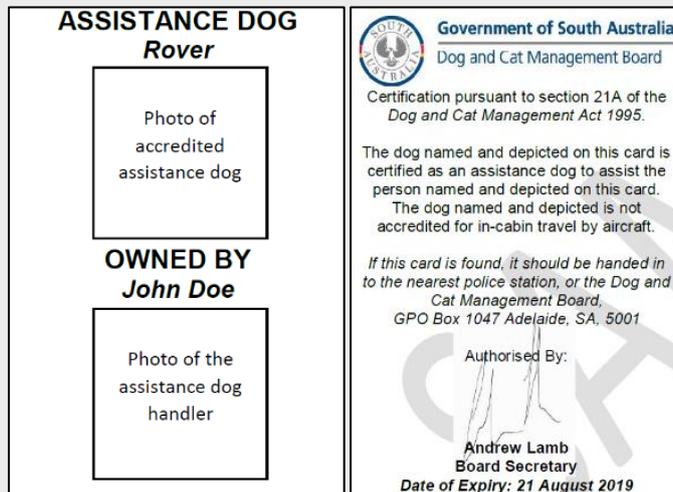
Alternative identification card (front)

Western Australia Department of Local Government Public Access Permit



Identification card (front and back)

South Australian Dog and Cat Management Board Pass



Identification card (front and back)

The following passes accepted in South Australia under the *Dog and Cat Management Act 1995* (SA):

Royal Society for the Blind

Card - Front - 125%



The person pictured is an RSB Guide Dog Owner
Thank you for respecting their public access rights.

NAME
SURNAME



Card - Back - 125%

Part 8, 81(1) of The Dog & Cat Management Act 1995 States:

- (a) a person who is otherwise disabled is entitled to be accompanied by an accredited disability dog in a public place or a public passenger vehicle; and
- (b) the occupier or person in charge of a public place or public passenger vehicle must not refuse access to the place or vehicle to a person who is otherwise disabled, on the ground that the person is accompanied by a disability dog.

For further information please call the RSB Guide Dog Service on (08) 8417 5656

Guide Dog Identification card (front and back)

Card - Front - 125%



The person pictured is an Assistance Dog Owner under the auspices of RSL/RSB.
Thank you for respecting their public access rights.

NAME
SURNAME



DOG



Card - Back - 125%

Part 8, 81(1) of The Dog & Cat Management Act 1995 States:

- (a) a person who is otherwise disabled is entitled to be accompanied by an accredited disability dog in a public place or a public passenger vehicle; and
- (b) the occupier or person in charge of a public place or public passenger vehicle must not refuse access to the place or vehicle to a person who is otherwise disabled, on the ground that the person is accompanied by a disability dog.

For further information please call the RSB Guide Dog Service on (08) 8417 5656

Assistance Dog Identification card (front and back)

Card - Front - 125%



Name
is training an RSB Guide Dog

VOLUNTEER
Expiry Date: **01/08/2019**

Card - Back - 125%

PUBLIC ACCESS IS A LEGAL RIGHT OF ALL RSB GUIDE DOGS & THEIR TRAINERS

Dog & Cat Management Act 1995 States:

Guide Dog means a dog trained & used, or undergoing training to be used, for the purpose of guiding a person who is wholly or partially blind;

Thank you for your cooperation
For further information please call the RSB Guide Dog Service on (08) 8417 5656

Trainer Identification card (front and back)

Assistance Dogs Australia

ASSISTANCE DOGS AUSTRALIA
 ABN 90 074 748 180
 PUBLIC ACCESS LICENCE - Ph. 1800 688 364

LICENCE NO: FDE555

LICENCE EXPIRES: 1/01/2018

Accredited HANDLER:
 John Sample
 1 Sample Street
 Sample, SA 5000

QUALIFIED PHYSICAL
 DISABILITY SERVICE DOG: Dunston
 VALIDATED BY: Richard Lord (CEO)





Disability Discrimination Act 1992
 Part 1. Section 9 Disability discrimination - Assistance Dogs
 For the Purposes of this Act, a person (discriminator) discriminates against a person with disability; (aggrieved person) if the discriminator treats the aggrieved person less favourably because of the fact that aggrieved person possesses, or is accompanied by a dog trained to assist the aggrieved person to alleviate the effect of the disability.

Identification card (front and back)

Righteous Pups Australia

AUTISM ASSISTANCE DOG

Licence Expiry: 31 MARCH 2018

SONEY AND SIMON SMITH

Description of Dog
 Colour: Yellow, Labrador
 Sex: Female
 Microchip No: 9560 0000 2231 274
 DOB: 14 August 2008
SONEY is a certified Autism Assistance Dog placed with recipient child: Shaun Smith— under the handling of Simon Smith.

SONEY is the property of Righteous Pups Australia Inc.

Jennifer Atkins-Operations Manager
Together we can...

SONEY, Autism Assistance Dog— has been granted full public access under the handling of Simon Smith




www.righteouspups.org.au

AUTISM ASSISTANCE DOG
 Public Access Certification

DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION ACT 1992 - SECT 9

Disability discrimination—guide dogs, hearing assistance dogs and trained animals
 For the purposes of this Act, a person (discriminator) discriminates against a person with: a visual disability; or a hearing disability; or any other disability; (aggrieved person) if the discriminator treats the aggrieved person less favorably because of the fact that the aggrieved person possesses, or is accompanied by: a guide dog; or a dog trained to assist the aggrieved person in activities where hearing is required, or because of any matter related to that fact; or any other animal trained to assist the aggrieved person to alleviate the effect of the disability, or because of any matter related to that fact; whether or not it is the discriminator's practice to treat less favorably any person who possesses, or is accompanied by, a dog or any other animal. Subsection (1) does not affect the liability of a person with a disability for damage to property caused by a dog or other animal trained to assist the person to alleviate the effect of the disability or because of any matter related to that fact.

Disability Discrimination and Other Human Rights Legislation Amendment Bill 2008
 New subsection 9(1) defines 'carer or assistant' as a carer, assistant, interpreter or reader who provides assistance or services to a person because of his or her disability. The new section 7 clarifies that discrimination against a person because of the disability of any of his or her associates also amounts to discrimination under the Disability Discrimination Act.

Together we can...



www.righteouspups.org.au

Identification card (front)



© Transport for New South Wales

Users are welcome to copy, reproduce and distribute the information contained in this report for non-commercial purposes only, provided acknowledgement is given to Transport for NSW as the source.

