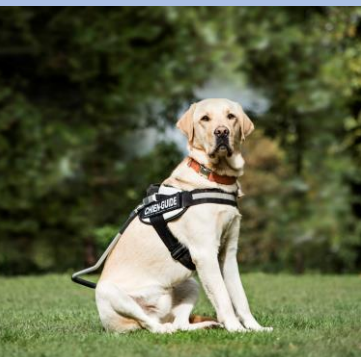


# Assistance Dogs continued.



Another thing to consider is taking your dog onto public transport. If you want to have your assistance dog accompany you on trains, buses, and ferries in NSW, you need to have a permit from Transport for NSW (TfNSW). Pets are not allowed on public transport unless crated and certain rules apply to their carriage so having the correct paperwork is important. You can apply for a permit online. The information that will be required includes a medical certificate confirming that the handler has a disability, documentation of registration with council, a colour photograph of the dog and documentation dated within the last 6 months detailing the skills and actions that the animal has been trained to exhibit and how these skills alleviate the effects of the handler's disability. Once you obtain this accreditation you must always carry it with you as proof of entitlement.

Like all companion dogs, assistance dogs must be microchipped and registered in NSW. You can choose to register your dog as an assistance dog with your local council however there is no requirement to do so. Further, registering your dog as an assistance dog does not provide proof the animal is an assistance animal nor give you automatic public access rights.

It is important to note that whilst wearing a service vest is an important requirement for an assistance dog it does not automatically qualify your animal as one. There are many components to training an assistance dog including a PAT and obtaining permits. A vest is the final step in having them recognised appropriately. Further, whilst the DDA protects people with assistance dogs from being discriminated against it is legal for owners or workers in public spaces to respectfully request proof of an assistance dog's status.

As the benefits of having an assistance dog become more widely accepted and appreciated they are becoming a more frequent sight day to day in the community. Assistance dogs in schools for instance are becoming more common. There are special rules and requirements around dogs in schools. For further details you can refer to NSW Department of Education: School Support Dog Guidelines.

There are many ways that dogs help people in their role as assistance animal, from helping cross the road and navigating public places to helping get washing in or out of a machine. They can reduce reliance on care givers, boost self-esteem, provide medical assistance and calm and comfort. It is important that the needs of an individual are considered when considering bringing an assistance dog into your life. Here are some references to assist you in your decision making.

## References

Assistance Animal Permit:

<https://www.service.nsw.gov.au/transaction/apply-assistance-animal-permit>

Assistance Dogs Australia: <https://www.assistancedogs.org.au>

Dogs in School Guidelines:

[https://nswschoolanimals.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Dogs-guidelines\\_august21.pdf](https://nswschoolanimals.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Dogs-guidelines_august21.pdf)

NSW Pet Registry: <https://www.petregistry.nsw.gov.au/#/>

Disability Discrimination Act 1998: <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2018C00125>

Travelling with animals and pets (Transport NSW):

<https://transportnsw.info/travel-info/using-public-transport/travelling-with-animals-pets>

mindDOg Australia: [www.minddog.org.au](http://www.minddog.org.au)

Seeing Eye Dogs Australia: [sed.visionaustralia.org](http://sed.visionaustralia.org)

Guide Dogs Australia: [nsw.guidedogs.com.au](http://nsw.guidedogs.com.au)

Google 'assistance dog training' in your local area for a good starting point for your research.

*The details provided in this Fact Sheet are for general informational purposes only. Please consider your personal circumstances and always do your own research to ensure the right outcome for you.*

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