

Submitted by email to the Canadian Transportation Agency

Subject : Service Animals

Hello,

It is incumbent on us as a society to clearly define and regulate service animals that are allowed into public places and on public transportation. Only government licensed , legitimate service DOGS should be allowed in these circumstances. The current fad of dressing up one's pet in a vest and providing a bogus certification (of which there are numerous websites to waste one's money) and bullying/hoodwinking the general public into this practice must end.

It is a public health issue also. Many people are allergic to animals; contact can result in a myriad of health issues, from hives and itchy eyes to life-threatening breathing issues. Even the cleanest and most looked after animals can carry pathogens that can sicken the public, especially the most vulnerable among us- the ill and elderly. Surely the rights of the general public override the few who abuse the rules and bring their pets into places where they are off-limits.

I acknowledge that pets do enrich people's lives and play an important emotional role for many; however, they do not rise to the level of legitimate service dogs that perform life saving and vital functions for people.

An "emotional support animal" is a pet and should be treated in the public domain as such. It is not analogous to a true service dog. The Canadian government should certify service dogs, after medical consultation defining the type of service the person requires, and proof of appropriate training and skills on the part of the dog. Only then should these animals be allowed on transportation and in public venues that are normally pet-free.

Respectfully submitted,

Michele

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