



SASKATCHEWAN
HUMAN RIGHTS
COMMISSION

SAMPLE GUIDELINES FOR ACCOMMODATING HOTEL PATRONS WITH WORKING DOGS

Frequently, the negotiated settlement of a human rights complaint will incorporate policies and other measures to prevent discrimination from re-occurring. The following policy guidelines are based on those adopted by a Saskatchewan hotel as part of the settlement of a complaint by a blind patron.

Guidelines for Accommodating Hotel Patrons with Working Dogs

The *Saskatchewan Human Rights Code* requires the accommodation of persons with disabilities, including persons who rely on service animals. The needs of a person with a disability must be accommodated in a manner which most respects the person's dignity and which recognizes the right to privacy, confidentiality, comfort, autonomy and self-esteem of persons with disabilities. The accommodation should maximize the person's ability to participate in society.

Persons with disabilities frequently use "working dogs" as service animals. Working dogs are trained to provide services ranging from guiding a blind person to picking up small items which may have been dropped and are not retrievable by the handler/partner.

Staff Guidelines

This organization is committed to accommodating persons with disabilities who rely on working dogs for support, and asks staff members to observe the following guidelines.

- Allow the working dog to accompany the guest or visitor at all times except in areas where animals are prohibited from entering for safety reasons.

- Do not separate or attempt to separate the person from the working dog.
 - Do not pet or talk to a working dog when it is working – this distracts the animal from its tasks.
 - Do not feed a working dog, which may have specific dietary requirements. Unusual food or food at an unexpected time may cause the animal to become ill.
 - Do not deliberately startle a working dog or make noises at the animal (e.g. barking or whistling).
 - Be aware that many people with disabilities do not care to share personal details.
 - Working dogs are an exception to the “no pets” rule because they are working animals rather than pets. Compliance with *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code* requires the admission of working dogs to business premises.
 - Ensure that guests who rely on working dogs receive the same amenities as other guests, including the right of non-smoking guests to have non-smoking accommodation.
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Examples of Working Dogs

Guide Dog

Serves as a travel tool for persons who are blind or who have low-vision or severe visual impairments.

Hearing Dog

Trained to alert a deaf person or person with significant hearing loss when a sound such as a knock on the door occurs.

Service Dog

Trained to assist a person with a mobility or health impairment. Types of duties the dog may perform include: carrying, fetching, opening doors, ringing doorbells, activating elevator buttons, steadying a person while walking, helping a person up after the person falls, etc. Service dogs are sometimes called Assist Dogs.

SSigDog (Social Signal Dog)

Trained to assist a person with autism. The dog may alert the partner to distracting repetitive movements common among those with autism (e.g. hand flapping), allowing the person to stop the movement. Recognizing familiar persons in a crowd, steering around a mud puddle, and responding to other people or social signals are possible roles for SSigDogs. A person with autism may have problems with sensory input and need the same support services that a working dog might give to a person who is blind or deaf.

Seizure Response Dog

Trained to assist a person with a seizure disorder. How the dog serves the person depends on the person's needs. The dog may stand guard over the person during a seizure, or go for help. A few dogs are capable of predicting a seizure and can warn the person in advance.