



CITY OF  
**TEA TREE GULLY**  
*Naturally Better*

[www.cttg.sa.gov.au](http://www.cttg.sa.gov.au)

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# ASSISTANCE DOGS

## WHAT IS AN ASSISTANCE DOG?

A dog trained and used, or undergoing training to be used, for the purpose of assisting a person who is wholly or partially disabled (as defined under the *Dog and Cat Management Act 1995*).

## HOW ARE ASSISTANCE DOGS USED?

They help the disabled or partially disabled who have conditions including vision or hearing loss, epilepsy, diabetes or mental illness by providing guidance, confidence, alerting when there is a sound or smell (e.g. fire alarm or a person's

low blood sugar) or by helping someone if they are prone to falls.

## CAN ANY DOG BE AN ASSISTANCE DOG?

An assistance dog can be any shape, colour or size from a Chihuahua to a Great Dane and needs to be physically healthy and capable of performing in the capacity of an assistance dog.

The dog must not demonstrate guarding of people, territory, possessions or food, display any inappropriate aggressive behaviour (growling, biting, raising hackles, showing teeth, etc.) or uncontrollable behaviour,

suffer from anxiety, stress, fear or undue excitement when in public places.

### **CAN A COMPANION DOG BE ACCREDITED AS AN ASSISTANCE DOG?**

A companion dog can be accredited as an assistance dog if:

- The applicant (the handler) has a disability (as diagnosed by a registered medical practitioner)
- The applicant cannot carry out functions as an able bodied person without the aid of a dog to assist them or alleviate the effects of the disability
- The applicant is over 18 years of age
- The dog is trained to meet the required standards
- The dog is not a prescribed breed.

### **WHAT TRAINING DOES MY DOG NEED TO BE AN ASSISTANCE DOG?**

The dog must have completed obedience training with a qualified dog trainer and have reached level 4. The dog must meet high standards of hygiene and behaviour that are appropriate for a dog in a public place (including toileting on command). The dog must not be aggressive, anxious, easily distracted or easily startled.

### **WHERE TO APPLY TO HAVE AN ASSISTANCE DOG ACCREDITED**

Contact the Dog and Cat Management Board on 8124 4962 or [dcmb@sa.gov.au](mailto:dcmb@sa.gov.au)

The Board has developed criteria to assess if an assistance dog meets the requirements to be granted public access rights. The requirements and application process is set out in the Board's Accreditation of Assistance Dogs Policy.

### **WHAT NEEDS TO BE PROVIDED TO HAVE AN ASSISTANCE DOG ACCREDITED BY THE BOARD?**

The owner must provide evidence to the Dog and Cat Management Board that they can't carry out daily functions as well as an able bodied person without the aid of the dog.

### **ARE THERE OTHER ACCREDITATION BODIES?**

- The Royal Society for the Blind of SA Inc.
- The Guide Dogs Association of South Australia and Northern Territory Inc.
- Lions Hearing Dogs Inc.

### **HOW IS AN ASSISTANCE DOG IDENTIFIED?**

Assistance dogs that have been trained by an organisation may wear a jacket or harness which identifies them as assistance dogs. The handlers of accredited assistance dogs are issued with a photographic identification card as proof that the dog is accredited and has public access rights.

The identification card is only valid for the dog and handler whose names and photographs appear on the card when they accompany each other. Accreditation cannot be transferred to another dog or handler.

### **DO I NEED TO REGISTER MY ACCREDITED ASSISTANCE DOG WITH COUNCIL?**

Yes – the dog must be registered with the local council and also needs to be desexed, vaccinated, wormed and microchipped.

### **DO I NEED TO PROVE THE DOG IS ACCREDITED WHEN REGISTERING WITH COUNCIL?**

A copy of the photographic identification card issued to the handler for the dog or a certificate from another accreditation body (e.g. Guide Dogs Association) must be shown when registering an assistance dog for the first time.

### **WHERE ARE ASSISTANCE DOGS ALLOWED?**

Accreditation provides assistance dogs with public access rights which permits them, when accompanied by a disabled person, to go anywhere that a member of the public can go including shops, cinemas, restaurants, buses, trains and libraries.

Assistance dogs may not be permitted where the public is not permitted or where there is a public health risk, e.g. intensive care units in hospitals, food preparation areas, private residences.