

# FAKE SERVICE DOG RED FLAGS

Fakes are everywhere, and they're easy to spot once you know what to look for. This is not about judging anyone's invisible disability (mine isn't obvious either). It's about protecting the integrity of real service dogs so the good ones can keep working.

## TOP RED FLAGS I SEE EVERY WEEK

- **Dog in a stroller, shopping cart, or crate at the dinner table** — There is no task a dog can perform while confined like this. I still get calls from managers about this exact situation.
- **Dog wandering, greeting people, or visiting tables** — A real service dog stays focused on its handler and tucks quietly under the table or chair.
- **Dog barking, whining, lunging, jumping, or pulling constantly** — Real service dogs are calm and under control at all times.
- **Dog begging for food, sniffing the ground, or stealing dropped food** — Service dogs ignore food on the ground and around them.
- **Handler cannot clearly answer the two ADA questions** — “Is the dog a service animal required because of a disability?” and “What specific work or task has the dog been trained to perform?”
- **Handler claims “registration,” “certification,” or shows papers/ID cards** — There is **no** official national registry. Most online sites are scams.
- **Dog is labeled “emotional support” or “therapy” for public access** — ESAs are not protected in public places under the ADA.
- **Handler says the dog is “for anxiety” but cannot name two specific trained tasks** (my Rule of Two) — Emotional support alone does not qualify.
- **Multiple “service dogs” with one person** — Extremely rare and usually a red flag unless each dog has its own distinct trained tasks.
- **Dog reacts aggressively or fearfully to other dogs, people, or normal public activity** — Real service dogs are neutral and focused.

**Strength stands watch**

**And so do I.**

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