



FAKE SERVICE DOG RED FLAGS

Protecting the Integrity of Real Working Dogs

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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