

Emotional Support and Service Dog Laws in Oklahoma

Yes, a landlord can ask if you have an emotional support animal (ESA): They can also ask what your animal is trained to do.

- **Documentation**

Landlords can request documentation from a licensed mental health professional to verify that your ESA is legitimate. This documentation should include the professional's contact information, license number, and the letter should be on their professional letterhead.

- **Fair Housing Act**

Landlords are required to make reasonable accommodations for tenants with disabilities who have ESAs, even if the rental property has a "no pets" policy.

- **Lease terms**

If you don't tell your landlord about your ESA and it breaks the terms of your lease, your landlord can ask you to remove the animal or you could be evicted.

Which Animals Are Covered in Oklahoma?

The primary law about service dogs and emotional support animals is the federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Under the [ADA](#), only dogs and some miniature horses are recognized as service animals.

According to the [Oklahoma government](#), there are five main types of service dogs:

- **Guide dogs** – Also known as seeing-eye dogs, guide dogs help people who are blind or have significant visual impairments navigate their daily lives. Guide dogs may also assist with some household tasks.
- **Hearing dogs** – Signal or hearing dogs help people who are deaf or have severe hearing loss by alerting them when a sound occurs, such as a knock at the door or a fire alarm.
- **Psychiatric service dogs** – Psychiatric service dogs help people with severe mental health conditions in many ways. For example, a psychiatric service dog's tasks may include reminding its handler to take their medications, searching rooms for potential dangers, and preventing people who are disoriented or have certain disorders from hurting themselves.
- **Sensory signal dogs** – Also known as social signal dogs, sensory signal dogs help people with autism by alerting them when doing distracting, repetitive movements.
- **Seizure response dogs** – A seizure response dog is trained to provide different services depending on its handler's needs. The service dog may guard its handler during a seizure, alert others that it needs help, or warn its handler that a seizure may be coming.

Because service dogs help people with disabilities perform crucial everyday tasks, these animals have far more protections under the ADA. The ADA provides that local and state governments, businesses, and nonprofits that serve the public must allow people with disabilities to bring their service dogs anywhere the public can go.

Rules for Your Service Animal

You need to know your fundamental rights if you have a service animal, including the right to bring your animal:

- To any state or local government agency, business, or nonprofit that serves the public

- To an apartment, townhome, condo, or other housing complexes, even if the complex does not allow pets
- To your job
- With you when traveling, including on airplanes
- To a school, college, or university

While people with service animals have certain rights, there are also specific rules they must follow, including:

- They must maintain control of their service animal at all times. For example, if their disability prevents them from leashing or tethering their service animal, they must have control through voice commands or other means.
- Their service animal must be housebroken.
- Their service animal must be vaccinated according to local laws.
- Businesses, nonprofits, and government agencies do not have to allow service animals still in training.

Service Animals in Oklahoma Housing

The ADA and the Fair Housing Act clearly state that service animals must be allowed in Oklahoma housing. This rule applies even if the building does not allow pets, as service animals are not considered pets under the ADA. Housing complexes can ask for documentation to show you need the animal. However, they cannot:

- Charge extra fees
- Require deposits
- Ask about the nature or extent of your disability

Different Types of Laws for Emotional Support Animals

Emotional support animals are not considered service animals under the ADA, and there are no emotional support animal laws in Oklahoma. Therefore, businesses, government agencies, and nonprofits are not required to allow emotional support animals. However, in some situations, emotional support animals are covered by the ADA or other laws.

Under the Fair Housing Act, a housing complex may be required to allow an emotional support animal if you can show a disability-related need for the animal. Your employer may also be necessary to allow your emotional support animal if you indicate that you genuinely need it and that it is a reasonable accommodation. An attorney can tell you more about what restrictions may apply to your emotional support animal in Oklahoma.

Restrictions on Emotional Support Animals

The main difference between service animals and emotional support animals is that service animals must be allowed at most businesses and public accommodations. Emotional support animals do not have to be allowed in most circumstances. A company, nonprofit, or government agency may enable emotional support animals at their discretion. But there is usually no legal requirement for them to allow it. You can secure reasonable accommodations if you have documentation showing a specific need for your emotional support animal.