

# **Service Dog Etiquette**

*You're not dealing with just a dog*

## **Please speak first to the person.**

It's correct human and canine manners!

## **Petting the service dog.**

Do not touch either the service dog or its person without first asking permission. Touching the service dog might distract it from its work. Touching the person might be interpreted as assault (by the dog).

## **Feeding the service dog.**

Resist the temptation to offer treats to the service dog.

## **Barking, meowing, whistling, and making other rude noises at the service dog.**

Don't. You'll look silly.

## **Conversing with the person about the service dog, disabilities, etc.**

Questions of a personal nature should be avoided. If the person volunteers information, you may decide if you wish to continue the conversation. Don't feel offended if the person declines to talk about themselves or the service dog - not everyone wants to be a walking "show and tell" exhibit.

## **What if you don't like dogs or are afraid of dogs?**

Place yourself away from the service dog. If you are a business person, discreetly arrange for someone else to wait on the person. You may ask the person to have the service dog lie down if it does not interfere with its work.

## **What if the service dog barks, growls, or otherwise forgets its manners?**

Find out what happened before taking action. Was the service dog stepped on, poked, asleep and dreaming, performing its job (some alert their owners to oncoming seizures by barking once or twice)? If the dog's behavior is disruptive or destructive, you may ask the person to remove it from the premises..

## **What if other people complain about the dog being present?**

Explain that the service dog is medically necessary and that federal law protects the right of the person to be accompanied by the service animal/service dog in public places.