



## The rights of assistance

### dog owners:

## What does the law say?

**Assistance dog owners have the right to access businesses and services without discrimination, according to the Equality Act 2010 and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 in Northern Ireland.**

### Allergies



Unless you are a taxi or minicab driver and you have a valid exemption certificate (issued by your local authority), it is against the law to refuse access to an assistance dog owner.

### Dislike or fear of dogs



Assistance dogs are trained to sit quietly near their owner when out and about and not make any noise or cause any disruptions. They are aids to support people with disabilities rather than pets. You cannot refuse entry to an assistance dog owner because you fear or dislike dogs.

### Food is being served



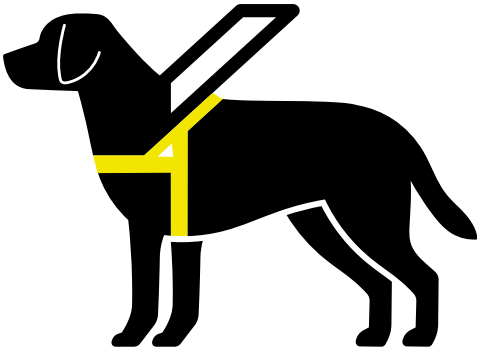
The Food Standards Agency confirms that there is nothing in food safety/hygiene legislation preventing assistance dogs accessing establishments where food is being served. The Royal Environmental Health Institute Scotland confirm that assistance dogs should be allowed into food premises as they are unlikely to be a hygiene risk because of their specialist training.

### Religion or culture

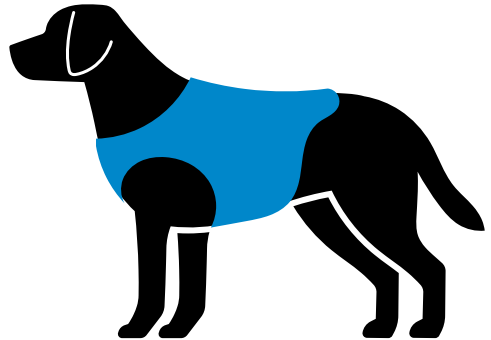


There is a legal requirement to permit access to assistance dogs, regardless of religious or cultural reasons. The Equality and Human Rights Commission agreed this with a number of religious groups including the Muslim Shariat Council.

# How to recognise an assistance dog



**Guide Dog**



**Assistance dog**

**Most guide or seeing eye dogs wear a guiding harness with a handle held by the owner, with other types of assistance dogs wearing coloured jackets; for example, those used by the Assistance Dogs UK member organisations described below:**

- Hearing Dogs for deaf people wear burgundy jackets;
- Dog AID (Assistance in Disability) Dogs and Medical Detection Dogs wear red jackets;
- Canine Partners (for people with physical disabilities) wear purple jackets;
- Dogs for Good (for people with physical disabilities or children with autism) wear green jackets;
- Support Dogs (for physically disabled adults, seizure alert dogs for people with epilepsy, and autism assistance dogs for children with autism) wear blue jackets.

**For any further enquiries or questions, please contact:**

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