

# Your guide to assistance dogs



For hackney carriage and private hire drivers and operators



## Welcome

People working in the taxi and private hire industry have an important role to play in helping people with assistance dogs travel. Here, we provide you with information about some of the different types of assistance dogs and outline your responsibilities to passengers who need to travel with them.

## Assistance dogs in the UK

Many thousands of people in the UK rely on highly trained assistance dogs to help them get around and to complete every-day tasks. Assistance Dogs UK is an organisation that helps ensure that assistance dogs meet high standards of training and are well cared for.



Assistance dogs provide disabled people with the support and confidence to live an independent life, and are allowed unlimited access to all services.

- Michele Jennings, Assistance Dogs UK

### Did you know?

- Some assistance dogs are trained by their owners and some are trained by assistance dog charities such as Guide Dogs
- Under British law, passengers with assistance dogs have the same rights to private hire services as everyone else. This applies to visitors from other countries too
- Taxi and private hire drivers cannot refuse a passenger because they have an assistance dog
- Passengers cannot be charged more for a journey because they have an assistance dog
- Assistance dogs must be seated with their owners at all times
- It is illegal to refuse to carry a passenger with an assistance dog. Drivers doing so could risk losing their licence or face a fine



## Assistance dogs help their owners navigate the world

Some drivers may feel they have reasons for refusing an assistance dog or charging more for a journey. However, the page opposite outlines some myths and the truth behind them.

## Myth busters

**'Dogs are a safety risk'** - All assistance dogs are trained to lie quietly by their owners' feet

**'Dogs are a health hazard'** - Assistance dogs have regular health tests, which means they are unlikely to be a risk to hygiene

**'Dogs are against my religion'** - UK law says that there are no religious grounds which would allow a driver to refuse or overcharge a passenger with an assistance dog

**'Dogs might bite me'** - All assistance dogs are specially chosen for their calm and caring nature

**'I will need to assist the dog'** - The owner of the assistance dog will know how to guide their dog into a vehicle



## Assistance dogs are your passengers too

In this section, you can find out about some of the different types of assistance dogs and what they are mainly used for.

## What different types of assistance dogs are there?

There are a number of different types of assistance dogs recognised in the UK. The seven charities accredited by Assistance Dogs UK are:

- Guide Dogs
- Hearing Dogs for Deaf People
- Dogs for Good
- Canine Partners
- Dog AID
- Support Dogs
- Medical Detection Dogs

In addition there are people who have self-trained dogs. This means they have trained their dogs to meet their own particular physical, mental or other needs. You should accept these dogs as well.

Passengers from other countries have assistance dogs also and you must accept these for travel.

## How to spot some of the different types of assistance dogs

You can sometimes work out the type of assistance a dog provides by looking at the colour of the jacket it is wearing. Remember, though, that a dog may not always wear a jacket.

Please note these dogs are not always the same breed and the illustrations are for guidance only.

### Hearing Dogs for Deaf People

‘We wear burgundy jackets.’

Hearing dogs are for adults and children with hearing impairments.



## Guide Dogs

'We wear white harnesses with yellow fluorescent stripes.'

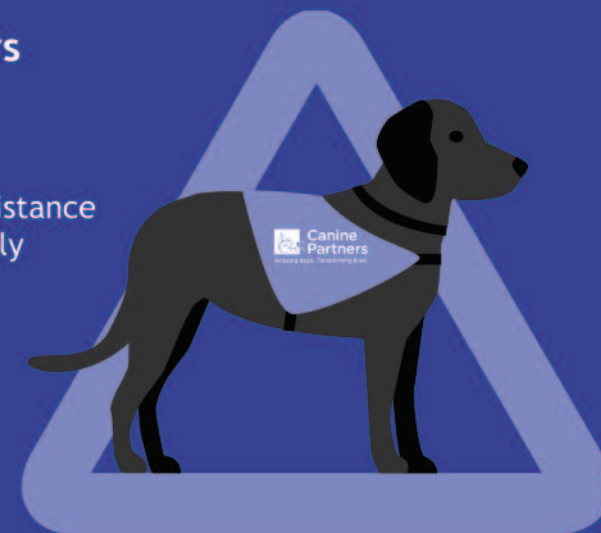
Guide dogs are for young people and adults who are blind or partially sighted.



## Canine Partners

'We wear purple jackets.'

Canine Partners' assistance dogs are for physically disabled adults.



## Dog AID (Assistance in disability)

'We wear red jackets.'

Dog AID dogs are for physically disabled adults.



## Support Dogs

'We wear blue jackets.'

Assistance dogs for physically disabled adults, seizure alert dogs for people with epilepsy, and autism assistance dogs for children with autism.



## Dogs for Good

'We wear green jackets.'

Dogs for Good assistance dogs are for people with physical disabilities, or children with autism.



## Medical Detection Dogs

'We wear red jackets.'

Medical alert assistance dogs are for adults and children with complex health conditions.



If you have an assistance dog and have experienced any problems when trying to use hackney carriage or private hire services please let us know using the details below.

If you are a private hire driver or operator and would like to report a problem, you can also contact us in the same way.

Taxi and Private hire drivers cannot refuse a passenger because they have an assistance dog, unless the driver holds an exemption certificate issued by Ipswich Borough Council. This certificate **MUST** be kept in the vehicle and produced on request.

Taxi Licensing Section, Ipswich Borough Council,  
15-17 Russell Road, Ipswich, IP1 2DE  
Tel: 01473 432065 or  
Email: [taxi.licensing@ipswich.gov.uk](mailto:taxi.licensing@ipswich.gov.uk)