



Service Animals are Welcomed on **marta**

What is A Service Animal?

A service animal is any guide dog, signal dog, or other animal individually trained to work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability, including, but not limited to, guiding individuals with impaired vision, alerting individuals with impaired hearing to intruders or sounds, providing minimal protection or rescue work, pulling a wheelchair, or fetching dropped items.

While most service animals are dogs, DOT's definition recognizes the possibility of other animals. Service animals are animals that are "individually trained to work or perform tasks." This training can be by an organization or by an individual, including the individual with a disability.

If an animal's only function were to provide emotional support or comfort for the rider, for example, that animal would not fall under the regulatory training-based definition of a service animal. Simply providing comfort is something that an animal does passively, by its nature or through the perception of the owner.

Some persons with hidden disabilities use animals that meet the regulatory definition of a service animal. This would include, for example, animals that are trained to alert individuals with seizure disorders to an oncoming seizure or respond to a seizure and animals that are trained to remind persons with depression to take their medication.

Can an operator ask for documentation?

No. Under the Americans with Disabilities Act, MARTA personnel cannot require riders to provide documentation for their service animal before boarding a bus or train or entering a facility, but MARTA personnel may ask riders **two questions: (1) is the animal a service animal required because of a disability? and (2) what work or task has the animal been trained to perform?** Service animals are welcome in all MARTA facilities and on all modes of transportation.

Can a customer traveling with a service animal be required to sit in a particular seat?

No. A customer with a service animal cannot be segregated from other customers and the service animal must be permitted to accompany its owner on the vehicle. However, service animals should not block aisles or exits and must be under the owner's control at all times.

MARTA personnel may refuse to transport service animals that are deemed to pose a direct threat to the health or safety of employees, operators or other riders, create a seriously disruptive atmosphere, or are otherwise not under the rider's control. Service animals must be harnessed, leashed, or tethered, unless these devices interfere with the service animal's work or the individual's disability prevents using these devices.

- Operators may not handle service animals
- There are no limits on the number of service animals that accompany riders on a single trip. Different service animals may provide different services to a rider during trips or at the rider's destination if they remain under the owner's control
- On MARTA Mobility riders must inform reservations that they will be traveling with a service animal in order to help ensure adequate space is available for the animal.
- Other riders' or agency personnel's allergies or fear of dogs or other animals would not be grounds for denying service to a person accompanied by a service animal.

**Questions? Call the office of Diversity & Inclusion
404-848-4615**