

SERVICE ANIMAL ISSUE LIST & WORK PLAN

Approved at the Second Plenary Meeting of the ACCESS Committee

June 14, 2016

Overarching issue (per Federal Register notice that convened this group): “whether to amend the definition of ‘service animals’ that may accompany passengers with a disability on a flight.”

Current definition of a “service animal”: Any animal that is individually trained or able to provide assistance to a qualified person with a disability; or any animal shown by documentation to be necessary for the emotional well being of a passenger.

For non-U.S. carriers, the requirement is only to transport service dogs. For U.S. carriers, the the category of service animals is not limited to dogs.

Key issues to be addressed in resolving this issue:

1. (a) Should disability mitigation training for the animal be required as a condition of access?
(b) Should public access training for the animal be required as a condition of access?
2. Should the rule distinguish between psychiatric service animals and other service animals? If so, what are the practical implications of that distinction?
3. Should the rule preserve a distinct emotional support animal category? If so, what are the practical implications of that distinction?
4. Should the rule designate eligible species and, if so, what species should be allowed? Should the rule allow certain species to travel as service animals subject to certain restrictions (such as remaining contained during flight)? *[Facilitator Note: As discussed on call, certain animals such as very small capuchin monkeys travel in containers during flight but offer valuable service at the destination retrieving objects for reduced mobility passengers, etc.]*
5. Should the rule allow carriers to require documentation and, if so, what documentation and under what circumstances? What requirements should the rule impose to prevent fraud in the documentation process?
6. Should permissible documentation requirements differ according to the disability of the passenger? (See Issues 2 and 3 above.)
7. Under what circumstances, if any, should the rule allow the carrier to require advance notice of a passenger’s intention to travel with a service animal? How much notice, if any, may be required?
8. Should the rule offer additional guidance given as to how to assess the animal’s behavior?
9. Under what circumstances, if any, should the rule allow a carrier to require that the service animal be controlled by a tether or harness?
10. Should the rule allow airlines to deny passengers boarding if their animal is ineligible?
11. Should the rule specify procedures for challenging eligibility determinations by the airline, and if so, what should they be?

12. (a) Should the rule specify a limit on the number of service animals that may be brought on board by any passenger?
- (b) Should the rule specify a limit on the total number of animals that may travel as service animals on a given flight?
13. (a) Under what circumstances, if any, should the rule include within the definition of “service animal” an animal training to be a service animal, that is traveling with an individual with a disability?
- (b) Should the rule require access for service animals that are being transported by an individual with a disability solely for the purpose of delivering the animal to another person with a disability?
14. How should the rule address the (possibly conflicting) (a) service animal requirements and/or (b) animal quarantine requirements of jurisdictions outside Continental US?
15. Should the rule no longer hold US carriers responsible when its foreign code-share partners deny transportation to animals that are not service dogs?

[Service Animals Working Group Work Plan](#)
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Data/Information Needed (to be gathered by airlines and trade associations, with a report prior to the next plenary meeting):

1. Add HUD interpretation/practice of Fair Housing Amendments Act to Service Animal Matrix. (DOT)
2. Flesh out service animal matrix with information regarding practices of foreign airlines (IATA, A4A)
3. Develop questionnaire and distribute to airlines seeking information on frequency, character, species and location (in the terminal area or in flight) of reported incidents involving service animals and/or ESAs. (Jennifer Sunderman working with airline reps)*
4. Research and report on the degree to which flight attendants/manuals distinguish between psychiatric service animals and emotional support animals. (Candace Kolander)

**Facilitator’s Note: This item was re-phrased after the meeting to reflect oral agreements made in or after the meeting and not reflected in the original text.*

Next Steps:

- Facilitator to work with working group co-chairs to develop a straw proposal to address all issues for domestic airlines, while taking account of foreign carrier practices (service animal work group chairs, facilitator initially, followed by full work group discussion).