

# FACTS ABOUT SERVICE ANIMALS

## for Motorcoach Operators

U.S. Department of Transportation Americans with Disabilities Act regulations define a service animal as any guide dog, signal dog or other animal individually trained to provide assistance to an individual with a disability, regardless of whether it has been licensed or certified by a state or local government.

- Operators must allow all service animals on board.
- Customers must keep their service animals under control at all times.
- Operators may not:
  - Ask for proof of service animal certification or of the customer's disability.
  - Require service animals to board the motorcoach in a certain way.
  - Require a person traveling with a service animal to sit in a particular seat on the motorcoach. However, service animals may not block aisles or exits.
  - Charge a cleaning fee for customers who bring service animals onto the motorcoach, unless the animal causes damage.

[www.projectaction.org](http://www.projectaction.org)



Easter Seals Project ACTION is funded through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration.

## **Customer Service Etiquette for Motorcoach Operators**

- Use person-first language, such as “a customer with a disability” instead of a “disabled customer.”
- Speak directly to the customer rather than to his companion.
- Ask the customer if she needs assistance before you act.
- Be considerate of the extra time it might take a customer with a disability to speak or accomplish tasks.
- When talking with a customer who uses a wheelchair, place yourself at his eye level. Do not lean on a person’s wheelchair.
- When speaking to a customer with a visual disability, identify yourself and provide your title, if appropriate. If you are giving the person directions, use specifics, such as “turn to your right and the door is 10 feet ahead on the right.”
- When speaking to a customer who is deaf or hard of hearing, face the person and do not let objects obstruct her view. Do not raise your voice unless asked.

**To learn more about serving customers with disabilities, contact:**

**[www.projectaction.org](http://www.projectaction.org)**

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