

## Assistance Dogs on Licensed Premises

Assistance dogs play an essential role in supporting people with disability to safely and independently access the community, including licensed venues.

Under *The Guide, Hearing and Assistance Dogs Act 2009 (QLD)*, venues must allow certified assistance dogs to enter and remain on the premises with their handler.

This applies to all areas of licensed premises that are open to the public (excluding certain restricted areas such as food preparation zones).

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## What is an Assistance Dog?

Assistance dogs are highly trained working dogs that support people with disability by performing specific tasks.

These may include:

- Guiding a person with vision impairment
- Alerting a person with hearing impairment
- Assisting with mobility or medical conditions (e.g. seizures, diabetes)

These dogs are not pets — they are trained professionals performing critical tasks.

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## Access Rights in Licensed Venues

Staff must ensure that:

- Assistance dogs are allowed entry into the licensed venue
- The handler is not separated from their dog
- No additional fees are charged

Venues cannot rely on “**no pets**” policies to refuse entry.

Failure to comply may result in penalties for both staff and the venue.

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## Identification and What Staff Can Ask

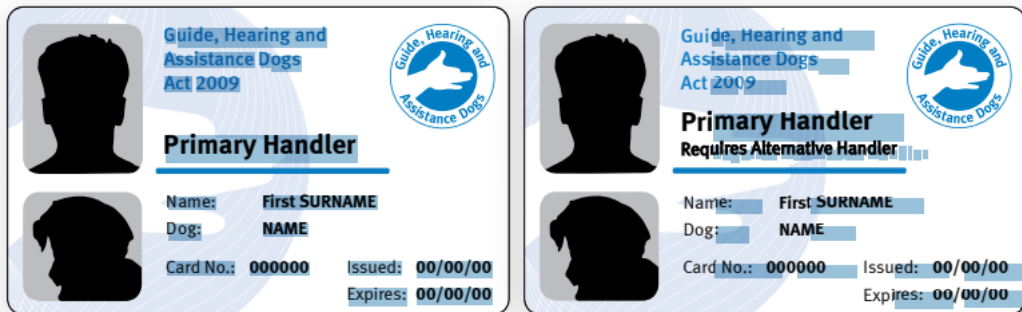
Assistance dogs are typically identifiable by:

- A blue and white badge on their harness or coat
- A handler ID card

Staff may politely ask to sight the handler's ID card to confirm certification.

### ⚠ Important:

- Not all disabilities are visible
- Lack of visible ID does not automatically mean refusal of entry is appropriate



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## Do's and Don'ts for Staff

### ✅ Do:

- Speak directly to the person (not the dog)
- Understand the dog is working and highly trained
- Educate other staff and patrons that the dog is working
- Allow the dog to remain with the handler at all times
- Treat the interaction as part of normal customer service

### ❌ Don't:

- Touch or distract the dog without permission
- Call out, whistle, or make noises at the dog
- Feed the dog
- Give the dog commands
- Ask personal questions about the person's disability
- Take offence if the handler declines interaction

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### **When Can Entry Be Refused?**

Entry refusal is only appropriate in limited circumstances, such as:

- The dog is behaving aggressively or uncontrollably
- The situation presents a genuine health or safety risk
- The reason for refusal of entry is not related to the dog itself

#### **For example:**

- A venue closing time applies to all patrons
  - A person behaving in a disruptive or unsafe manner
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### **Key Message for Staff**

Assistance dogs are working animals that support independence and safety.

Your role is to:

- Provide respectful service
- Ensure compliance with legislation
- Support an inclusive and safe venue environment