



Assistance Dogs
INTERNATIONAL

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Assistance Dogs International, Inc.

North America Regional Chapter

March 17, 2020

Dear ADINA Members and Candidate programs,

I am happy to report that the ADI North America Regional Chapter Board of Directors has been hard at work for the last two years to make airline travel more accessible for the 15,573 (2018 Census) accredited Assistance Dog teams that are working throughout North America.

Recently, the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) for the Air Carrier Access Act (ACAA) was released for public comment. The ADINA Legislation and Advocacy Committee reviewed the new proposed rules and presented their recommendations to the ADINA Board for consideration. The Board wholeheartedly agrees that ACAA Act should align its definition of a Service Animal with that of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). If this passes, the airlines will only consider DOGS as Service Animals, Psychiatric Service Dogs will be in the same category as Guide, Hearing and other Assistance Dogs. Emotional Support Animals will be considered by the airlines as PETS and will fly in carriers as airline regulations stipulate. They will not have airline access like Service Dogs because they are not trained to do tasks that mitigate their partner's disabilities or trained for public access.

To help put a stop to "Fraudulent Service Dogs", the DOT is recommending that forms be submitted that attest to the Service Dog's behavior, health and for flights longer than 8 hours, a Service Animal Relief attestation form, to verify that the Service Animal will not relieve itself during the flight. Although ADINA Board **does not support forms**, they do support a check box on the ticket reservation that attests to these items.

To make sure the new proposed rules for the Air Carrier Access Act are implemented, we need your help! As a member or candidate program of ADI, send a letter to align the definition of a Service Animal with that of the ADA, to the Department of Transportation's (DOT), no later than April 6, 2020. Please ask all of your graduate teams to support this as well by sending in their comments to the DOT.

Attached you will find the NPRM for the ACAA as well as an abbreviated NPRM with our responses to the DOT's questions regarding Service Animals and Emotional Support Animals. We

understand that every program has a different culture and that we may not all agree with every answer to the DOT's questions but we hope **you all agree to support the alignment of the ACAA with the ADA's definition of a Service Animal.**

ALSO, PLEASE SAVE THE DATE MARCH 24, 2020 FOR AN ADI NORTH AMERICA TOWN HALL AT 1:30 PM EST where the ADINA Board members will answer your questions and update on all that we have been working on. More details to follow.

If you have any questions please reach out to me at Sheila@vetdogs.org or Sheri Soltes, the Chair of the ADINA Legislative and Advocacy Committee at Sheri@servicedogs.org.

Thank You.

Sheila

Sheila O'Brien
Chairman of ADINA Regional Chapter Board