

Training and Behaviour Standards

RAD Inc. requires all dogs working in public to adhere to the following standards.

Introduction:

These standards expand upon the Disability Discrimination Act (1992) (or DDA) definition of an Assistance Dog

“Disability Discrimination Act (1992) Section 9:

- (2) For the purposes of this Act, an assistance animal is a dog or other animal:
 - (a) accredited under a law of a State or Territory that provides for the accreditation of animals trained to assist a persons with a disability to alleviate the effect of the disability; or
 - (b) accredited by an animal training organisation prescribed by the regulations for the purposes of this paragraph; or
 - (c) trained:
 - (i) to assist a person with a disability to alleviate the effect of the disability; and
 - (ii) to meet standards of hygiene and behaviour that are appropriate for an animal in a public place.”

Definition of a Task:

A task is a behaviour or action that your Assistance Dog can perform to help you manage the impacts of your disability/ies on your daily life. A task must be directly related to your disability/ies, and alleviate the effects of your disabilities, or assist you with an aspect of daily life that is difficult or impossible for you to manage on your own.

We do not consider emotional support or companionship trained tasks.

Commands such as ‘sit’ ‘drop’ and ‘stay’ are obedience skills and also not considered tasks.

By Law

All dogs working in public as an Assistance Dog must meet this definition. Any Assistance Dog who meets the above definition are trained to work in public places.

Handlers may choose to leave the ‘in training’ label on their dog until a higher standard of training is achieved.

Within RAD this would be teams who have reached Blue Level of training, are able to work in public and are aiming for our Purple Level.

Any Assistance Dog trained to these standards, and working for a disabled handler have full access rights under Federal Law in Australia.



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Training Colour Levels:

Our Colour Level structure helps teams have a clear understanding and guide for training towards the DDA. Red and Yellow colour levels are teams working towards the DDA.

Blue and Purple teams have completed significant training to meet the standards of RAD and the DDA, and have full public access rights.

RAD teams must complete the training logs required for each Colour Level.

This is not only to ensure our teams have solid foundations for a long successful career, but to ensure under section 54A(5) of the DDA evidence can be provided to best advocate for our teams in times of need.

Such as access issues, flying with your RAD Dog, or accessing non-pet-friendly housing. Our Blue and Purple Level teams are encouraged to continue training and complete at least 2 training logs per month.

Final:

Remember you should always treat your RAD Dog with a positive attitude, and treat them with pride and care. Just as your RAD Dog should hold a positive attitude towards you, and should follow instructions happily and confidently.

These standards are in place to give our members a tangible idea of what the definition of a trained Assistance Dog under the DDA looks like, and the standard we need you to uphold for us to provide you with the best support with access issues.



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To Work In Public, A RAD Dog Must:

- 1. Have achieved the appropriate training colour level of Blue or Purple, and be approved by RAD to work in Public Access.** - RAD must ensure all dogs meet legal standards under the DDA, and are ready for public access work by having teams work through our training colour level structure. Our training structure has been developed alongside qualified trainers to ensure that dogs uphold a high standard of training and behaviour.
- 2. Have commenced training and become reliable in pet-friendly places (Colour Levels Red and Yellow).** -This ensures that our dogs are familiar with and reliable at maintaining appropriate standards in public places before moving to Blue or Purple.
- 3. Be fully and reliably toilet trained** -This must always include having a thorough understanding of your dog's toileting routine and may include toileting on command.
- 4. Be able to perform at least one task** - See definition above. This ensures that the dog is trained to alleviate the effects of an individual person's disability, as per the DDA. A task may be self-initiated by the dog or requested by the handler (i.e item retrieval).
- 5. Not display fear or signs of anxiety** -This is to ensure the dog is ready for the everyday challenges of public access work.
- 6. Be under effective control at all times** - As per the DDA this does not necessarily mean under direct physical control if the handler's disability does not allow it. The primary handler must be present.
- 7. Not unnecessarily interact with merchandise** -The dog must not interact or pick up merchandise unless instructed to or is required for a task.
- 8. Not bark unless required for a task** -This should never be the first line of communication/alert.
- 9. Be easily identifiable as an assistance dog** -RAD Dogs must be clearly labelled as an "Assistance Dog" when working in public.
- 10. Uphold a neat and clean appearance** -This includes gear being professional, clean and well maintained.
- 11. Be able to display reliable obedience commands** - Assistance Dogs must always display a high standard of understanding in their training. The dog's response should be timely and reliable.
- 12. Be able to refocus quickly** - Public access work is full of distractions, if distracted your dog should refocus soon after and be able to continue working.
- 13. Remain calm when exposed to routine distractions** - The dog should be at ease in their work. Public Access is challenging and unpredictable, but a dog must have a solid foundation in distracting environments.
- 14. The handler must stay in communication with RAD** - This is to ensure we have ongoing communication to be able to support our teams with their individual needs.
- 15. RAD Dogs must prioritize four on the floor** -The default of a team is to work four paws on the ground, with acute exceptions for tasking or safety.

