



- ASSISTANCE/SERVICE ANIMAL
- THERAPY DOG
- EMOTIONAL SUPPORT ANIMAL

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

Assistance/Service Animal (ASA)

An ASA has been individually trained by an organization or person specializing in Assistance/Service Dog training to perform a task to assist an individual with their disability or with a need related to their disability, and always lives with the individual. The accessibility and accommodation of ASA Teams (human/animal) are covered by most human rights and other relevant legislation.

Therapy Dog

A therapy dog is one of many frontline working terms some service providers may use to describe their Human Services Assistance Animal (HSAA). Access to public and private spaces may require written permission, specific protocols, and contracts.

Emotional Support Animal (ESA)

An ESA refers to a companion animal (pet) that may provide comfort and emotional support to its owners but is not explicitly task-trained for a disability or evaluated for community engagement. Consequently, ESAs are not HSAA's

The term 'Human Services Assistance Animal' (HSAA) is used because it encompasses all animals involved in Human Services, regardless of species or deployment. Service providers' working terms will continue to evolve; whereas, the term HSAA provides continuity to identify animals (pets & partners) involved in Canada's unregulated and fragmented Animal-Assisted Human Services (AAHS) Industry. For more information, please download the [voluntary National Standard of Canada \(NSC\)](#).

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"This document is for informational purposes only. It is not intended as legal advice. Definitions and requirements may vary by jurisdiction."



HUMAN SERVICES ASSISTANCE ANIMAL (HSAA)

An HSAA is a domesticated, healthy, suitable, appropriately socialized, often trained, and evaluated animal and a positively motivated partner in the delivery of Animal-Assisted Human Services (AAHS).

[Learn more about Animal-Assisted Human Services \(AAHS\)](#)



[The Canadian Foundation for Animal Assisted Support Services \(CF4AASS\)](#)

