



The *Guide, Hearing and Assistance Dogs Act 2009* provides for significant fines for individuals and corporations breaching the Act.

This reflects the Queensland Government's commitment to ensuring that people with a disability are not disadvantaged when accessing public places, public passenger vehicles or places of accommodation with guide, hearing or assistance dogs.

### Individuals

The penalty for an individual in control of a public place, public passenger vehicle or place of accommodation – such as cafes, clubs, taxis and buses, private rental arrangements, holiday accommodation – who prevents a person with a guide, hearing or assistance dog, trainer or puppy carer accompanied by a dog from entering a public place, public passenger vehicle or place of accommodation can be up to \$11,000.

An individual in control of a public place, public passenger vehicle or place of accommodation who refuses service or separates a handler from their dog or charges an extra fee because the dog is present can also be fined up to \$11,000.

However, the Act does not prevent people in control of public places, public passenger vehicles or places of accommodation from lawfully preventing a person from entering, or require them to leave, a place or vehicle. For example, it does not affect the ability of a person exercising control of a shopping centre to require a person with a guide dog to leave the premises because the shopping centre is closing or unable to rent a place of accommodation because it is fully booked.

### Corporations

Under the Act, any businesses that serve the public, such as restaurants, hotels, retail stores, taxi cabs, theatres, concert halls and sports facilities, are prohibited from refusing service, refusing entry, segregating or separating a person from their dog or charging an extra fee because the dog is present.

The Act requires these businesses to allow people with disabilities to bring their certified guide, hearing and assistance dog onto the premises in all areas where customers are generally allowed.

The executive officers of a corporation must ensure their corporation complies with the Act. Failure to comply could see a corporation facing a fine of up to \$55,000.

### Failure to help during the investigation a complaint or allegation

A person required to assist with an investigation must cooperate with an Authorised Officer (a person appointed by the Department of Communities) unless they have a reasonable excuse. The maximum penalty is \$5,500.

It is a reasonable excuse for an individual to fail to comply with the requirement if by complying with the requirement he or she might tend to incriminate that individual.

#### For further information:

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