

International Association Canine Professionals Position Statement on Counterfeit Service Dogs*

Counterfeit: adjective

1. made in exact imitation of something valuable with the intention to deceive or defraud.

The International Association of Canine Professionals (IACP) is a premier association pertaining to dog care and training. Founded in 1999, the IACP was established to develop and promote the highest standards of professional and business practice among canine professionals. A worldwide membership of many of the most respected and experienced dog professionals from all facets of the industry makes up its membership. The IACP encourages governments, provincial, state and federal agencies to contact the IACP Service Dog Committee (IACP SD Committee) when considering legislation.

With the proliferation of service dogs and their proven value in assisting persons with physical and mental impairments such as post-traumatic stress, diabetics, deafness, blindness, autism, etc. also comes the predictable plethora of unscrupulous trainers and suppliers of “fake” service dogs and service dog supplies. The IACP has taken a professional position on this growing problem and strongly opposes the counterfeit use of service dogs (SDs).

The IACP encourages the use of valid service dogs within guidelines of accepted uses. The IACP is the first association to address the subject from all aspects; the user, the trainer and the public. This group is called the IACP Service Dog Committee. It is concerned about worldwide reports of misuse and misrepresentation as well as more positive and innovative development of these valuable animals.

Industries exposed to these animals have rights and interests that must be considered as do the handlers and trainers. Airlines, hotels, schools, hospitals and retail operations need and want to accept the trained SD but have trouble distinguishing between the legitimate and the counterfeit (fake) SD. The IACP SD Committee has developed working standards for the training and use of SD dogs. The committee has developed education packets for businesses and public entities to use to train their employees regarding interactions with persons who utilize SDs. There is also SD information for the public. Both of these are available online at <http://www.canineprofessionals.com/service-dogs>

The IACP SD Committee has formulated a service dog trainer certification with the objective of credentialing experienced service dog trainers. Members and non-members of the IACP are encouraged to contact the committee at IACPSDCmte@gmail.com for information on training and use of these canines.

*Outside the USA, the term Assistance or Disability Assistance Dog is synonymous with Service Dog.

For more information: <http://www.canineprofessionals.com/service-dogs>