

On this page:

[Assistance animals explained](#)

[Related funding](#)

[Research and resources](#)

[Contact your local NDIS office](#)

Assistance animals explained

Some NDIS participants use assistance animals (most commonly dog guides) as a disability support.

Before funding an assistance animal, the NDIA will consider whether an assistance animal is a reasonable and necessary support that will meet your needs and help you pursue your goals.

To consider if an assistance animal is a reasonable and necessary support, the NDIA requires evidence in writing with input from all of the following:

- a registered assistance animal provider
- allied health professional(s)
- the participant.

Generally, the NDIA will only fund an assistance animal which has passed, or will pass, your state or territory's Public Access Test. This ensures that the animal is suitable to accompany and support you as you participate in the community.

Related funding

If an assistance animal is included in your NDIS plan, funding may also be provided for necessary training of the animal and its handler, as well the extra maintenance costs of an assistance animal (over those of an equivalent companion animal or pet).

For further detail please refer to the updated [Our Guideline - Assistance animals including dog guides](#).

We've also updated the [Would we fund it guide](#) to clarify how assistance animals, therapy animals and pets and companion animals are funded:

- [Would we fund it guide – Assistance animals](#)
- [Would we fund it guide – Therapy animals](#)

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- [Would we fund it guide – Pets and companion animals](#) .

Research and resources

A 2019 study clarified the key terms for animals in disability assistance roles. It also assessed the evidence relating to NDIS participant trained assistance dogs.

- [NDIS participant-trained assistance dogs \(DOCX 482KB\)](#)
- [Key terms for animals in disability assistance roles \(DOCX 356KB\)](#)
- [Reviewing assistance animal effectiveness \(PDF 1MB\)](#)

Visit the [Providing assistive technology \(AT\)](#) page for more information about:

- [Assistance animals assessment template](#)
- Completing a dog guide assessment
- Pricing and payments for AT providers.

Contact your local NDIS office

Do you have a question, request or urgent issue relating to assistive technology? You can now email your local NDIA office directly. [Find your local office](#).

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