

Southwest Airlines Revised Policies for Emotional Support and Trained Service Animals

[Southwest Airlines](#) recently announced that, consistent with new regulations from the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), we are making changes to our policies regarding trained service animals and emotional support animals. Effective March 1, 2021, Southwest will accept only trained service dogs for travel and will no longer transport emotional support animals.

With this revision, we will only allow service dogs that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of a qualified individual with a disability to travel with the Customer. The types of disability include a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability, and only dogs will be accepted (including those for psychiatric service)—no other species will be accepted as a trained service animal.

We applaud the Department of Transportation's recent ruling that allows us to make these important changes to address numerous concerns raised by the public and airline employees regarding the transport of untrained animals in the cabins of aircraft. Southwest Airlines continues to support the ability of qualified individuals with a disability to bring trained service dogs for travel and remains committed to providing a positive and accessible travel experience for all of our Customers with disabilities.

As part of this change, Customers traveling with trained service dogs now must present a complete, and accurate, DOT Service Animal Air Transportation Form at the gate or ticket counter on their day of travel to affirm a service animal's health, behavior, and training. Customers should complete the form, which will be available both on the airline's website and at airport locations, after booking their travel.

Additionally, Southwest will no longer accept emotional support animals for travel effective on March 1, 2021. Customers may still travel with some animals as part of the airline's existing [pets program](#) for a charge; however, the animals must meet all applicable requirements regarding in-cabin stowage and species (dogs and cats only).

Customers who hold existing reservations for travel with unaccepted animals after February 28, 2021, may contact Southwest for more information and assistance. Southwest's policies for traveling with trained service animals can be reviewed at [Southwest.com](#).