
HOUSE BILL 1965

State of Washington

61st Legislature

2009 Regular Session

By Representatives Hunt, Upthegrove, Dickerson, and Simpson

Read first time 02/04/09. Referred to Committee on State Government & Tribal Affairs.

1 AN ACT Relating to leave for service animal training; and adding a
2 new chapter to Title 49 RCW.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** It is in the public interest to reasonably
5 accommodate employees with sensory disabilities in order to allow them
6 to enjoy equal benefits and privileges of employment as are experienced
7 by similarly situated employees without disabilities. Employees with
8 sensory disabilities are occasionally compelled to attend training
9 necessary to attain a new service animal. This training provides the
10 employee with skills and resources necessary to maintain and enhance
11 his or her job performance in the workplace, but may cause the employee
12 to miss work. It is in the public interest to provide allowances for
13 employees with sensory disabilities who must attend training necessary
14 to attain a new service animal.

15 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** The definition in this section applies
16 throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise.
17 "Sensory disability" means a sensory condition that materially

1 limits, contributes to limiting, or, if not corrected or accommodated,
2 will probably result in limiting an individual's activities or
3 functioning.

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** The department of personnel shall adopt
5 rules that authorize state agencies to provide allowances to employees
6 with sensory disabilities who must attend training necessary to attain
7 a new service animal. The employee's absence must be treated in the
8 same manner as that granted to employees who are absent to attend
9 training that supports or improves their job performance. The
10 department of personnel shall adopt rules as necessary to implement
11 this chapter.

12 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** If the necessity to attend training for a
13 new service animal is foreseeable and the training will cause the
14 employee to miss work, the employee shall provide the employer with not
15 less than thirty days' notice, before the date the absence is to begin,
16 of the employee's impending absence. If the date of the training
17 requires the absence to begin in less than thirty days, the employee
18 shall provide notice as is practicable.

19 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** An agency may require that a request to
20 attend service animal training be supported by a certification issued
21 by the relevant training organization. The employee must provide, in
22 a timely manner, a copy of the certification to the agency.
23 Certification provided under this section is sufficient if it states:
24 (1) The date on which the service animal training session is scheduled
25 to commence; and (2) the session's duration.

26 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** Sections 1 through 5 of this act constitute
27 a new chapter in Title 49 RCW.

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