

TABLE 5.3
One Health Approach to Disability Accommodations

Prepare Your Team	Resources and Strategies
Ensure office spaces are ADA compliant.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From the parking lot to the examination room, make sure your space is accommodating for people with disabilities. For more information, see https://www.ada.gov/law-and-regs/design-standards/.
Develop procedures for working with individuals with disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government guidelines can help with crafting accessible social media posts, handouts, and presentations. See https://www.section508.gov/create/.
Learn about and use appropriate and inclusive language for people with disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The National Disability Rights Network provides guidance on language and resources.
Learn about disabilities and the role of working and assistance animals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invite a working and assistance animal organization to present at a local veterinary association meeting. Research local resources to support your clients with working and assistance animals. Review the <i>AAHA Working, Assistance, and Therapy Dog Guidelines</i> at aaha.org.
Get written permission from clients to speak to their providers when indicated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a consent form for clients to sign to allow you to speak with their health care provider. Make sure to keep copies in the patient's medical record. Recognize that some health care systems may still require clients to sign their own forms. Although this case did not require discussion with a medical provider to address the MRSP exposure, other cases might require that communication.
Create Your Community Network	Resources and Strategies
Create a resource list for services.	<p>Consider including the following resources that clients can be referred to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social workers Mental health professionals Short-term foster programs in case the client is hospitalized and/or otherwise temporarily cannot care for the animal patient Transportation programs.
Using Tools & Patient Follow-up	Resources and Strategies
Be creative in developing solutions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategies like using rubber bands on bottles to differentiate medications can be essential to client compliance and treatment success. Involve the client—chances are they have many solutions already and know what will work best for them.
Conduct regular follow-ups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that patient care stays on track. Assess the impact a client may be experiencing from absent or reduced help from their assistance animal. Delegate a CrVT to plan and implement a regular schedule.

The 2025 AAHA One Health Guidelines are available at aaha.org/onehealthpartnerships.

These guidelines were prepared by a Task Force of experts convened by the American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA) and were subjected to a formal peer-review process. This document is intended as a guideline only, not an AAHA standard of care. These guidelines and recommendations should not be construed as dictating an exclusive protocol, course of treatment, or procedure. Variations in practice may be warranted based on the needs of the individual patient, resources, and limitations unique to each individual practice setting. ©2025 AAHA.

