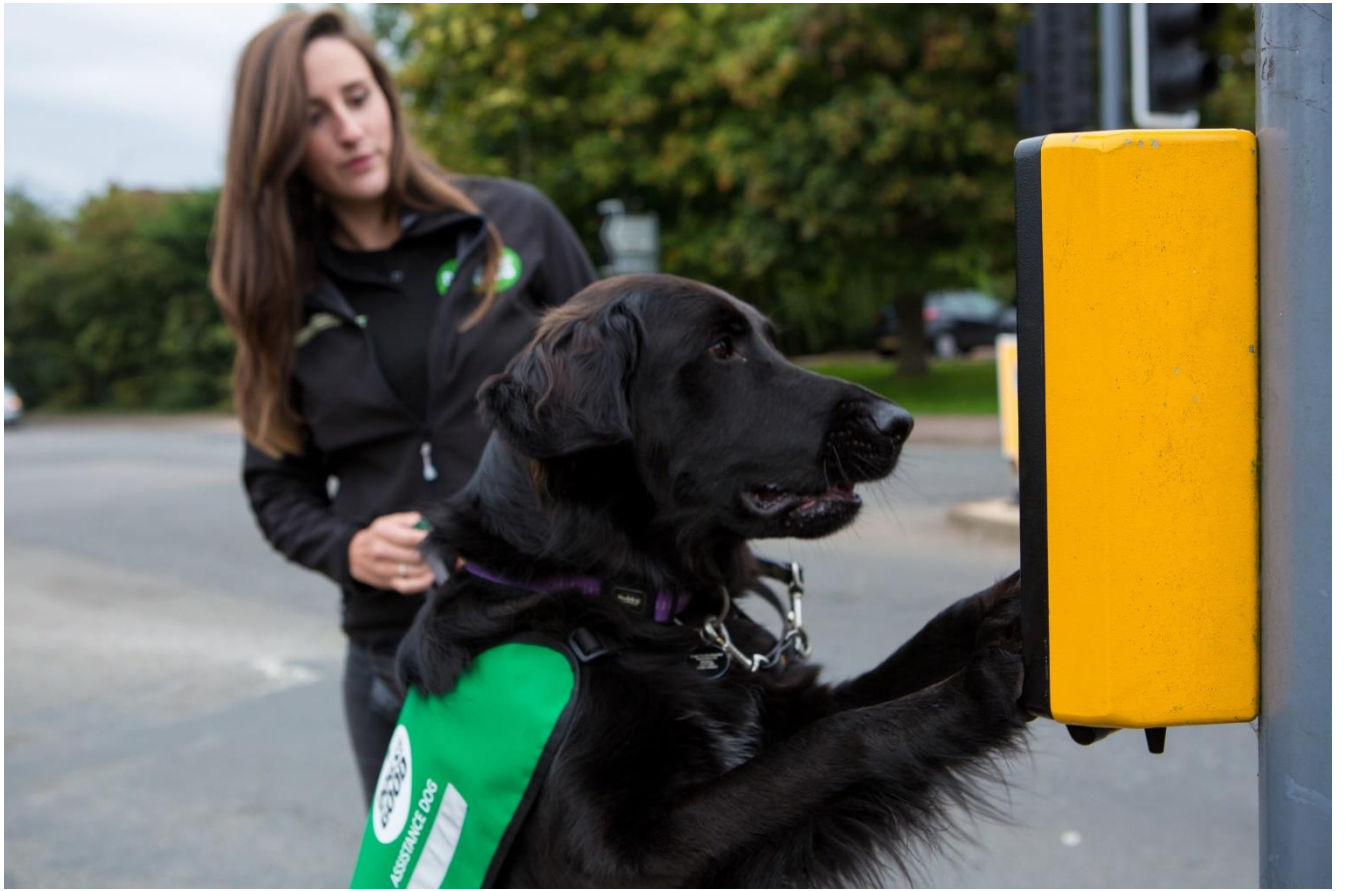




Guidance Notes

Assistance Dogs for Adults



Guidance Notes

These Guidance Notes explain some of the questions we ask and some of the information that we seek during the application process. Each part refers to a corresponding section in the Application Form. Please read through these Guidance Notes before completing the Application Form.

Each section includes:

An Overview – this will give you a short summary of what information is covered in the section.

References/Examples – these are designed to show you the sort of information we would like to know. This may include examples of answers to questions.

The following checklist may help you to ensure that you are providing the relevant supporting information for your application. This may include:

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| Permission from Landlord/Home Owner (if applicable) | ☐ |
| Pictures of Garden | ☐ |
| Permission from Work (if applicable) | ☐ |
| Permission from Voluntary Work (if applicable) | ☐ |
| Permission from College/University (if applicable) | ☐ |
| Pictures of Free Running Area | ☐ |
| Confirmation Letters from Support Network (two minimum) | ☐ |
| Signed Privacy Notice | ☐ |

Applicant Information

Overview

This section focuses on your contact details, any people that may live with you and any pets you may have in the home or visiting regularly.

References/Examples

- Are they good with/used to dogs:

By this, we want to know if the existing pet(s) are comfortable with a dog living in the house with them. Some terms you may choose to use are:

No issues seen / Is nervous around dogs / Aggressive towards dogs / Is worried by other dogs

If you have a pet dog, please describe how your dog interacts with other dogs both in and out of the home.

Please note, if you have a pet dog, there must be one handler per dog for lead walks, i.e. you will not be able to walk your pet dog(s) and assistance dog on lead together by yourself. This may mean walking your assistance dog separately, or having someone else with you who can handle your pet dog(s).

If you have 2 or more pet dogs, you must have another adult in the household who can assist with the dogs, so that you can focus on your assistance dog.

Some pets such as cats, birds, rabbits and guinea pigs may not have been exposed to or used to dogs. In this case, please enter 'unknown'.

Health

Overview

This section tells us about your health and any mobility aid(s) that you use.

Your Life With A Dog

Overview

In this section, we would like you to tell us about your goals and aspirations. We'd like to know how a dog could help you. We'd also like to know what activities, if any, a dog would help you to become involved with. Are there any new skills you would like to develop,

or experiences you would like to have if you had an Assistance Dog? Tell us if there are any new places that you hope a dog could help you to access.

Property Details

Overview

This section looks at the physical features of your place of residence and whether you have any plans to move or have building work carried out.

Garden Details

Overview

This section looks at how secure your garden is for a dog, the features of your garden and whether you need/wish to install a toileting pen. Generally, applicants will plan to allow the dog full access to their garden for the purpose of letting their dog out to toilet. The area needs to be safe and secure for a dog to be in. Our policy states that you must have a fence securing your garden of at least 5ft tall. You will also need to consider how quickly you can get the dog into the garden should the dog be unwell.

References/Examples

- Is the garden directly accessible from the house:
Yes ☐ No ☐
If no, state how you access the garden:

“To access my garden I have to leave my flat, proceed down a corridor, through a door and into the garden.”

- Where and on what surface will the dog toilet:

It is helpful for us to know what surface the dog is expected to toilet on and where this will be in the garden. For example:

“Corner of the garden next to the green house, surface is grassed.”

“Outside the conservatory on gravel.”

“Anywhere in the garden”

- If needed, are you prepared to install a toileting a pen:
Yes ☐ No ☐
If no, please detail reasons as to why:

The dog needs a safe and secure area for the purpose of toileting. Dogs learn by association, so by having a safe and secure area in which they can be let off lead to toilet, means that they firstly learn to not toilet on the lead, which is important to ensure that the dog maintains the standard of behaviour required for public access rights.

As stated above, access to the whole of the garden is sufficient for a dog to use to toilet, in some instances however, you may need to install a toileting pen. This may be if your garden is communal or unable to be fenced in securely.

We will advise you accordingly during your home assessment if we feel that you need to install a toileting pen. Please note a toileting pen must be at least 6ftx6ft in size however, the bigger the better, and we suggest at least 10ftx10ft to be more comfortable for one of our dogs where possible.

We ask that all toileting mess is cleaned up immediately after your dog has toileted, so it is important any identified toileting space is easily accessible for you to do this.

The toileting pen can be placed on grass or concrete slabs. We do however advise that if the toileting pen is to be situated on concrete, astro- turf or bark chippings should be used to create a covering for its floor. This would be confirmed at the final stages of matching a dog to you and be prior to placement of the dog.

Some examples of toileting pens:



Vehicle Details

Overview

This section looks at your vehicle and any public transport you may use.

References/Examples

- How do you access your vehicle:

If you use a mobility aid, please let us know if you have a vehicle with a ramp or if you can self transfer into your vehicle. This lets us know how a dog may also need to access your vehicle.

- How will the dog travel in the vehicle:

Rule 57 of the Highway Code states:

“When in a vehicle make sure dogs or other animals are suitably restrained so they cannot distract you while you are driving or injure you, or themselves, if you stop quickly. A seat belt harness, pet carrier, dog cage or dog guard are ways of restraining animals in cars.”

It is important to make sure that the dog can be safely restrained but also has enough room to be comfortable. If using a crate, the crate must be large enough for a large dog to be able to stand up, lay and turn around whilst in this space. It is worth considering how easy it would be for you to put a harness on a dog or use a crate or whether you will need help with this

- Please detail any public transport that you currently use:

Example:

Type	Frequency	Duration
Bus	Twice a week	15 minutes each way
Train	Once a month	30 minutes each way
• Will you be seeking permission to take your dog abroad with you? If so, please detail where, type of transport used and how often:		

It is important for us to know if you wish to take your dog abroad with you. It is not always advisable to take a dog abroad depending on travel, destination, duration and nature of your trip. Your assessing instructor will discuss this with you when they complete a home visit.

Please provide as much information as possible. We appreciate that you may not know about future trips at this stage but please outline anything you would like to work towards with a dog, or any regular trips abroad you have currently or plan to complete in the future.

Employment, Voluntary Employment and University/College Details

Overview

This section looks at your workplace (paid or voluntary) and/or University/College. If you are not in employment and/or in further education, then please state N/A in the relevant section and move to the next.

The supplementary leaflet entitled “Taking an Assistance Dog to Work” provides information on the logistical considerations of taking an Assistance Dog with you into a working environment. It will also help you with questions that your employer or University/College may have about an Assistance Dog accompanying you to work or study.

You will need to make your employer or University/College aware that, if your application is successful, you will want to bring a dog to work/study with you. Hopefully, the aforementioned leaflet will help to answer their immediate questions. You will also need to provide us with a letter of permission from them.

During your assessment visit, you will be asked to complete a workplace visit on the same date or another date with your instructor. Please also advise your employer of any planned visits. It is not only an opportunity to ensure the environment is appropriate and meets all of an assistance dog's needs, but often provides an opportunity for an employer to meet a representative of the charity and discuss any questions they might have at this stage.

Please note that our dogs cannot be left for more than 4 hours in a 24 hour period.

References/Examples

- Hours of work:

	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
Start Time	9.00	8.30	9.00	9.00	X	X	X
AM Break	10.30	No break	10.30	10.30	X	X	X
Lunch Break	12.30	No Break	12.30	12.30	X	X	X
PM Break	3.30	No Break	3.30	3.30	X	X	X
Finish Time	5.00	12.00	5.00	5.00	X	X	X

X means that you do not work during this time

- Where and on what surface will the dog toilet:

This is similar to the Garden Details section. You will need a secure area to allow the dog to spend in. Often a toileting pen is the easiest to install so it is important that you identify where this will be and the surface that will be used (grass, concrete etc). Please ensure any toileting space is easily and quickly accessible from your place of work or study.

- Where will the dog be located during the day:

In this question you will need to indicate where the dog will be during the day. You need to have somewhere close to you, so the dog can get to you if needed. This area must have enough room for a bed and water bowl.

- Is your workplace aware of and supportive of the time required of you to complete early training with an assistance dog?

The training course will last 5-7 days. We try to give at least 2-3 weeks' notice before the course begins. After the training course, an Instructor will visit you regularly over the following weeks. Generally, we will visit 2-3 times per week for up to 3 hours at a time over a period of 5-6 weeks. Check with your employer or University/College that they will allow you enough time to train with a dog. We suggest that the first week of training you remain off work or away from study, and then efforts to make a gradual introduction to the environment will be completed alongside your dog and instructor in coming weeks.

Weekly Routine

Overview

This section includes a table for each day of the week. This is so you can outline your average daily routine. This helps us to understand the times and places in which an Assistance Dog will need to work, as well as the environments it will encounter during a typical week.

References/Examples

Monday	
06.00	
07.00	Wake up, shower, get dressed.
08.00	Have breakfast watch the News
09.00	Go next door for coffee with neighbour
10.00	Go to the supermarket for weekly shop
11.00	Supermarket
12.00	Supermarket
13.00	Have lunch at local café in town
14.00	Return home – do washing and ironing
15.00	Relax in the home – watch TV, read, etc
16.00	Go to the park
17.00	Return home – prepare evening meal
18.00	Evening meal
19.00	Relax in the home – watch TV, read, etc
20.00	Relax in the home – watch TV, read, etc
21.00	Relax in the home – watch TV, read, etc
22.00	Get ready for bed
23.00	Bed

Environments encountered during this day: Local residential area, supermarket, shops, Local park area, and busy roads.

Tuesday

06.00	
07.00	Wake up, shower, get dressed.
08.00	Have breakfast watch the News
09.00	Get on the bus to go to work
10.00	At work
11.00	At work
12.00	At work
13.00	At work
14.00	At work
15.00	At work
16.00	At work
17.00	Get on the bus to go home
18.00	Arrive home, prepare dinner
19.00	Dinner
20.00	Relax in the home – watch TV, read, etc
21.00	Relax in the home – watch TV, read, etc
22.00	Get ready for bed
23.00	Bed
Environments encountered during this day: Town environment, bus, office environment	

Saturday

06.00	
07.00	Wake up, shower, get dressed.
08.00	Have breakfast watch the News
09.00	Get bus into town, have coffee at Costa
10.00	Costa
11.00	Get bus to Sisters house to visit nephews
12.00	Sisters house
13.00	Sisters house
14.00	Sisters house
15.00	Get bus back home
16.00	Relax in the home – watch TV, read, etc
17.00	Relax in the home – watch TV, read, etc
18.00	Relax in the home – watch TV, read, etc
19.00	Dinner
20.00	Relax in the home – watch TV, read, etc

21.00	Relax in the home – watch TV, read, etc
22.00	Get ready for bed
23.00	Bed
Environments encountered during this day: busy town environment, bus, Coffee shop, young children,	

It is important to understand that Assistance Dog ownership can add around two hours per day to your daily routine. This ensures that the dog's health, socialisation and taskwork are maintained. The below sections provide more detail on each aspect of Assistance Dog life. The times and durations quoted are based on a qualified partnership who have completed their initial training.

Note that the amount of time that needs to be dedicated to training will be greater when you are first paired with a dog than what is stated below - this will be covered in more detail under the Training Course section.

Task work – It is important to allocate time during the day for short sessions to practice obedience and task work. This helps to keep the dog's skills fresh. Typically this can amount to 30 minutes per day broken into three 10 minute sections.

Walking – Ideally, this would consist of a minimum of two 30 minute lead walks a day. These can be working walks where the dog may wear its Assistance dog jacket, complete public access or a lead walk to a free running area. Some clients may need a member of their support network to help with walks from time to time, such as in bad weather or when they are ill. It is important that support such as this is available and willing to work with the instructor during early training too.

Free Running – Dogs need time off lead. We call this free running. The amount of time that each dog needs will depend on its individual circumstances but should be a minimum of 30 minutes per day. This will be discussed with you by your individual Instructor and structured to your situation.

Grooming and Health Checking – This is a daily job that takes up to 10 minutes. Ideally you should groom and check your dog daily.

Feeding – The Charity will advise you on the type of food that the dog needs. Our dogs are fed twice each day; once in the morning and once in the evening. Our typical feeding times are:

AM – 7.00 - 9.00

PM – 6.00 – 8.00

These times can be earlier or later if needed but feeding times must be consistent i.e. the same time each day.

It is essential that a dog is **not** exercised 1 hour **before** feeding and 1 hour **after** feeding. This helps to prevent the dog developing gastric bloat, otherwise known as gastric torsion, which can be lethal for dogs.

Free Running

Overview

Free running is off lead activity that is essential for all dogs.

References/Examples

- Please list the areas that you intend to free run your dog. The Guidance Notes provide information that can help you decide on a sufficiently secure free run area. (Please provide pictures):



Free run areas need to be safe for your dog to be off lead in. Suitable free run areas may include local footpaths, fields, parks or woods (see the above examples). Unsuitable free runs would include for example an open common surrounded by roads with no fencing to keep your dog safe. When considering the size of a free run, it should take you 30 minutes to get around the space to ensure it is appropriate for a dog, if you are able to get around the space quicker than this it is likely to be too small to be considered appropriate. You should also check that dogs are allowed off lead in the free run areas you are considering and whether there are certain times of the year where dogs must be on lead.

Consider what in this environment a dog may find distracting. This could be things such as ponds, lakes or other animals.

Also think about if you can access these areas at all times of the year, for example do they have a path around them. If you are unable, decide what measures you can put in place to meet a dog's exercise needs. You also need to think about how you will be able to pick up after the dog if it spends on a free run.

- Are you prepared to ensure that the dog is exercised every day regardless of the weather:

Yes ☐

No ☐

Please detail how you will ensure the dog is exercised each day:

Applicants need to be able to ensure that their dog receives enough exercise. Consider what provisions you will need to put in place to exercise your dog every day. For example, you may seek help from a neighbour, a local dog walker, family

member or friend, or choose to access different locations throughout the year to maintain access

Be aware that if you plan on regularly using someone else to exercise the dog, then this could affect the bond between you and the dog. It is advisable that the majority of free running is carried out by yourself.

It is recommended that you have a minimum of 3 different free run areas that you can use as variety is best for a dog where possible.

We ask that clients visit their identified free run spaces to get photos to share with their instructor but also to ensure it is accessible to you all year around, this should take place prior to an assessment visit.

Support Network

Overview

This section outlines who will look after the dog if you are unable. This may include times when you are sick, in hospital or on holiday. You must be satisfied that your nominee's house and garden are suitable and that they are able to look after a dog as instructed. You will need people who can look after the dog for both long and short periods of time. Your support may be required in an emergency scenario, please ensure any nominated persons are aware and willing.

Please be aware that only adults over the age of 16 can solely walk our dogs

Your nominated people will need to confirm in writing that they agree to look after the dog should your application be successful. Please include copies of these letters when you submit your application.

Dog Experience

Overview

It is helpful for us to know about any experience you have had handling dogs, as well as any breed or gender preferences.

References/Examples

- Are you happy to accept any dog that the Charity identifies as being suitable regardless of breed, sex, colour:

Yes ☐

No ☒

If no, please detail:

Dogs for Good primarily trains Labradors and Golden Retrievers. From time to time, we will also train other breeds. These come mainly from the Gundog Category and include breeds such as: Cocker Spaniels and Flat-Coated Retrievers.

If you have specific reasons for wanting a particular breed and/or gender, such as a phobia, then please enter it in this section.

We are often asked about Poodle cross breeds by applicants seeking to avoid allergic reactions and hair drop. Sadly, there is a misconception that Poodle crosses are hypoallergenic. Poodle crosses can shed hair depending on the ratio of Poodle to the other breed of dog used in the cross.

It is important to remember that each dog is different. Even if there is a particular breed of dog in which you are interested, its personality, working ability or temperament may not match your needs and requirements. Should your application be successful, your individual Instructor will discuss different dogs with you as part of our matching process.

Training Course

Overview

This section provides us with information about your ability to attend a handling session following your assessment and prior to looking to match you to a dog and your ability to attend a placement training course (once a dog is placed with you), including any care needs that you might have.

In order to maximise our limited resources, we sometimes train two to three clients at a time at a hotel located near to one of our centres in Banbury, Culcheth and Bristol. Sometimes we may train from your own home depending on your specific care needs, the best thing for the dog and the instructor's availability and commitments.

Training courses that take place from hotels/site last for a minimum of five days and require overnight stays. Consider the arrangements you will need to make to look after any family members or pets during your stay away.

After the training course, an Instructor will visit you 2-3 times a week for a period of up to 3 hours each time. On the days in between the visits, you will need to invest a similar amount of time in training with the dog by yourself. Having time off from work and someone to help with children or other animals is vital.

When you have completed your application, please email or post it to us at:

trainingsupport@dogsforgood.org

Post:

FAO Client Services
Dogs for Good

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Oxfordshire
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