

Expression of Interest package for a Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) Assistance Dog

Registered Charity Number CFN 15453

Please note: This form is **not** an application form for a Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) Assistance Dog from Assistance Dogs Australia. This package provides information on our service and equips Assistance Dogs Australia with the information necessary to assess your suitability as a potential applicant.

Please send pages 1–3 of the completed Expression of Interest form and letter of recommendation to:

Assistance Dogs Australia:

PO Box 455

Engadine NSW 2233

Phone: 02 9520 6282 Fax: 02 9548 3766

Website: <http://www.assisteddogs.org.au>

Name:

Date of Birth:

Address:

Suburb:

State:

Postcode:

Home telephone:

Mobile:

Email:

Preferred correspondence method: Email Post

Alternative contact (family member or spouse):

Name:

Relationship to you:

Address:

Mobile phone:

Email:





Criteria for PTSD applicants

1. The Applicant must provide a diagnosis of PTSD certified by a medical professional.
2. There should be full support from the Applicant's family members, or people living in the same household. They must be prepared to facilitate the relationship between the dog and client. In many cases, this may require them to have limited direct interaction with the dog themselves.
3. The Applicant plus family members with direct access to the dog must not have any allergies to animals.
4. The Applicant or family member needs to be able to care and provide for all the requirements of an active, large breed dog (food, exercise, veterinary and other financial costs).
5. An able-bodied adult needs to be responsible for the dog at all times.
6. The Applicant must be in a position to adapt his/her lifestyle and accommodation to dog ownership.
7. The Applicant must be under the care of a psychologist or psychiatrist.
8. The Applicant must have been free from drug and alcohol addiction for the last 12 months. This must be verified by a psychologist or psychiatrist.
9. The Applicant must not have been involved in self-harming, harming others or dealings with the police for the last 12 months. This must be verified by a psychologist or psychiatrist.
10. The Applicant's PTSD must be caused from working within the police or military service.

Please answer the following questions:

1. Have you participated in a therapy program? Yes No
2. Do you have a clinical diagnosis of PTSD? Yes No
3. Is your PTSD caused by your employment in: Military service? Yes No
Police service? Yes No

Please give details of your service:

4. Are you or have you previously been under the care of a psychologist or psychiatrist Yes No

If yes, will you give permission for Assistance Dogs Australia to discuss your case with them?

Yes No

Please include a letter of recommendation from the above professional.

5. Have you had a drug or alcohol addiction in the last 12 months? Yes No
6. Have you been involved in self-harming or violence towards others in the last 12 months?
Yes No
7. Have you had any dealings with the police in the past 12 months? Yes No

If yes, please give details. Attach a separate sheet if required.

8. Would your family support your application for an Assistance Dog? Yes No I live alone
9. Do you currently have a dog living in your home? Yes No
10. If you were to be a successful applicant, would you be prepared to attend a 10-day training course in Sydney? You will need to cover all travel and accommodation costs. Yes No
11. Do you have any other medical conditions/disabilities? Yes No

If yes, please explain:

12. Describe how you feel an Assistance Dog could help you better cope with your PTSD?

Please attach a separate sheet if required.

Acknowledgement and rights:

I, _____ acknowledge that Assistance Dogs Australia assesses Expressions of Interest on merit and that, following this assessment, Assistance Dogs Australia will reserve the right to advise me on my suitability to apply for a PTSD Assistance Dog .

I agree that all information provided to Assistance Dogs Australia will be complete and accurate.

Full name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

All personal information is treated as strictly confidential. Only those with a professional need to know will be granted access to this information. All Applicants are protected by the ADA Privacy Policy. Assistance Dogs Australia complies with the NSW Privacy and Personal Information Act 1998.



Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) Dog Application Overview

Definition: A PTSD Dog is trained over a two-year period to assist individuals who have been diagnosed with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, by providing physical and emotional support. PTSD dogs increase the independence and self-esteem of the person and are trained to provide home support, community support and community access support.

Purpose: PTSD Dogs are trained to support their recipient in the home and community environments. They are permitted to travel on public transport and support the recipient in public settings.

Expectations: A PTSD Dog will require re-testing **each year** in order to maintain its ability to function and be licensed as an *PTSD Assistance Dog. Assistance Dogs Australia will support you and your dog in this process. However, we also require commitment from the recipient to follow specific guidelines to ensure the dog's ongoing wellbeing and training is maintained.

**As per the required criteria of Assistance Dogs International – the governing body for all Assistance Animals worldwide.*

Important considerations before applying for a PTSD Assistance Dog

Assistance Dogs Australia trains mainly Labrador and Golden Retrievers to enhance the quality of life of people living with PTSD. As with all dog training, it takes patience, persistence, dedication and consistency on the part of the handler. A dog is not the answer for everyone, so please consider the following carefully before filling in this Expression of Interest form for a PTSD Assistance Dog. It is important that the whole family is in agreement and is fully aware of the implications of owning a dog.

It may help you to think about the following...

Do you have the time and energy?

An Assistance Dog is well-trained and well-socialised, however, you will need to practise skills and reinforce behaviours with your dog every day. It will be your responsibility to continue the dog's training to maintain the high standards that will enable your dog to assist you.

Can you guarantee you will have the physical and mental energy required?

The first year will be challenging — establishing good practices and routines is crucial to the future success of the partnership between client and dog. In order to stay fit and healthy, all dogs must be walked a minimum of twice daily for at least 30-40 minutes on each occasion. Who will exercise the dog?

Is this the right time for you?

The first year requires a great deal of effort. You will need to dedicate a lot of time to developing your skills, the dog's skills and nurturing the bond and communication between you.

- What demands do you have on your time over the next 12-18 months?
- Do you have the time to commit to working with a new dog?

Are your expectations realistic?

Living with a Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) Assistance Dog can be a life-changing experience with many advantages, however, as with any partnership it does not happen overnight. In order to reap the rewards, there will inevitably be some challenges and frustrations to overcome. You will have to make some changes to accommodate your new dog, so please consider:

- Can you plan and think ahead in order to avoid problems?
- Are you prepared to take on the role of 'leader' and all the responsibilities that this entails?

How will having a dog affect family and friends?

- How will the other people in your life feel about having a dog around constantly?
- What areas of life may be affected positively or negatively?

Are my current living arrangements suitable?

Think about the possible modifications you may need to make...

- Is your current housing suitable and safe for a dog?
- Will the dog have enough room to exercise and toilet safely?
- Are you or someone else prepared to exercise the dog in wet weather?
- Are there others who can be relied upon to help with the dog if needed?

Can I live with a dog?

Living with a dog involves some not-so-pleasant tasks. If you are fanatical about cleanliness, please consider the following...

- Who is going to pick up dog poo, both at home and out on walks?
- How will you deal with wounds and accidents?
- Dogs shed hair and require regular grooming. Who will do this?
- Dogs often leave slobber on clothes. Will you be able to deal with this?
- Dogs can be distracted by sights and smells, and potentially pull on the leash. Are you physically able to cope with this behaviour and committed to improving it?



What would Assistance Dogs Australia expect from me?

We would expect you to provide the PTSD dog with a secure, loving home, and to commit to maintaining a high standard of training throughout the dog's life. We would, of course, require that you place the dog's health and wellbeing as a priority and ensure that sufficient exercise and mental stimulation are an integral part of the dog's daily life in order to support the benefits that are associated with a well-trained Service Dog.

Please understand that our intention is not to discourage you in any way from expressing interest in a PTSD Assistance Dog, but we strongly suggest that you address all the above considerations and how they might affect your life. If, after honest self-examination, you decide that the benefits of having an Assistance Dog outweigh the challenges, we welcome your Expression of Interest.

From all the team at Assistance Dogs Australia

The average cost of keeping an Assistance Dog

Please consider your ability to cover the costs below very seriously and discuss any concerns with our staff. It is important to Assistance Dogs Australia that our Assistance Dogs' health and wellbeing is maintained at a high standard throughout their entire lives.

Recipient start-up cost for an Assistance Dog

All costs are estimates only. Your personal start-up costs may vary from the estimates below.

Item	Cost	Notes
Appropriate toys	\$60	Chew and play toys
9kg bag of premium dry food	\$80	
Bed	\$80	
ID tag (engraved)	\$15	
Water and food bowls	\$30	
Treat pouch/container	\$10	
Spare webbing lead	\$10	
Grooming equipment	\$40	Brush, etc
Mat/futon	\$50	For travel and an additional area in the home
TOTAL	\$375	

Recipient yearly cost for an Assistance Dog

All costs are estimates only. Your personal yearly costs may vary from the estimates below.

Item	Cost	Notes
Feeding	\$750	Premium quality dry food plus enrichments, including raw bones
Annual health check and C5 vaccination	\$200	Absolute minimum number of veterinary visits
3 monthly intestinal worming	\$100	
Heartworm, tick and flea control	\$350	
Grooming and care equipment	\$100	Wet wipes, brush, poo bags, ear cleaner, bowls
Toys and treats	\$150	
Grooming/baths	\$300	
TOTAL:	\$1,950	