



Victoria Police Blue Ribbon Foundation

POLICE ASSISTANCE DOGS

PARTNER



PARTNER



MAJOR DONOR



EXPRESSION OF INTEREST PACKAGE

PTSD ASSISTANCE DOG APPLICATION OVERVIEW



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

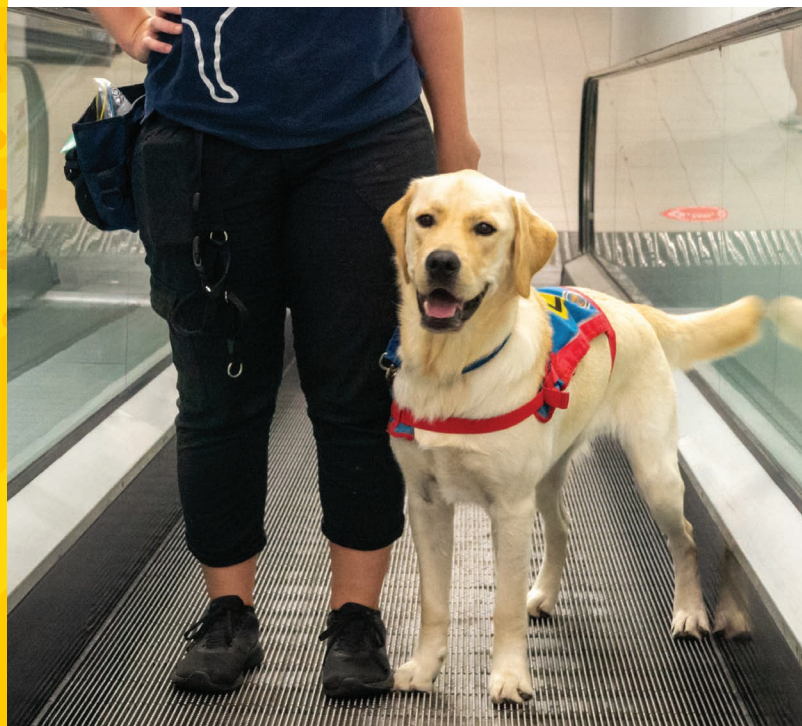
Intended for: These dogs are trained to support their recipient in their home and community environments. They are trained to travel on public transport and support the recipient in public settings.

Expectations: Each PTSD Assistance Dog will require re-testing each year in order to maintain its ability to function and be licensed as a *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 is provided and training is maintained.

**As per the required criteria of Assistance Dogs International – Governing Body for all Assistance Animals World-wide.*

Assistance Dogs Australia (ADA) trains Labradors and Golden Retrievers to enhance the quality of life of people with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). People are always astounded with the skills of a specially trained dog but, 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 completing this expression of interest form for a Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (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?

The dog is well trained and well socialised, however you need to practice skills and reinforce behaviours with a dog every day. It will be your responsibility to continue the training that we started, to maintain the high standards of your dog being able to assist you.

- Can you contribute the physical and mental energy required, particularly in the first 6-12 months?
- All dogs, in order to stay fit and healthy, must be walked a minimum of twice daily for at least 30-40 minutes on each occasion. Is someone willing to exercise the dog?

Is this the right time for you?

The first year requires a great deal of effort and you will need to make sure you have time to dedicate to the development of your skills, the dog's skills and 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 PTSD Assistance Dog can be a life changing experience with many advantages however, as with any partnership, it does not happen overnight. To reap the rewards there will 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" with all the responsibilities that this entails?

How will having a dog affect family and friends?

- How will 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 then think about:

- Who is going to pick up poo, both at home and out on walks?
- How will you deal with wounds and accidents?
- Dogs lose hair and require regular grooming....Who will do this?
- Slobber on your clothes - can you deal with this?
- Dogs can be attracted to things and potentially pull.



We do not intend this to discourage you from expressing your interest but we do strongly suggest that you consider these issues and how they would affect you. If you honestly decide that the benefits of having a dog outweigh the challenges then we welcome your expression of interest.

You may choose to have a family member, friend or other trusted advocate assist you through the various stages of applying for a Police Assistance Dog.

Expectations: To provide the dog with a secure, loving home, with a commitment to maintain the quality of training throughout the dog's life. Requirements of health and wellbeing are maintained including exercise and mental stimulation to support the benefits that accompany a well-trained Assistance Dog.

Average cost of keeping an Assistance Dog

Please consider very seriously your ability to cover the below costs 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 yearly ongoing cost for an Assistance Dog

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

| ITEM | COST | NOTES |
|--|-------------------|--|
| Feeding | \$780.00 | Premium quality dry food plus enrichments |
| Annual Health check and C5 vaccination | \$350.00* | Minimum veterinary expenses |
| 3 monthly Intestinal worming | \$100.00 | |
| Heartworm, tick and flea control | \$350.00 | |
| Grooming and care Equipment | \$150.00 | Wet wipes, brush, poo bags, epiotic, bowls |
| Toys and treats | \$150.00 | |
| Grooming/Baths | \$500.00 | |
| TOTAL | \$2,380.00 | |

**Veterinary expenses may be well above this annual estimate due to unforeseen illness and/or injury.*





PTSD client criteria

The applicant must:

- be an adult over the age of 18.
- Must have served as a sworn member of Victoria Police
- have a place of permanent residence.
- be able to provide care and all requirements of an active large dog. This includes physically supporting the animal, either directly or with help from a support person.
- have full support from other family members, or people living in the same household. This involves facilitating the relationship between the dog and client and, in many cases, having limited direct interaction with the dog themselves.
- not have any allergies to animals or, if an allergy is identified, it needs to be manageable to have the dog in the home. This includes family members having direct access to the dog.
- be in a position to adapt their lifestyle to the needs of the dog and must be able to allot time and commit to necessary care.
- be in a position to accommodate owning a dog – including a clean and safe home environment, having a place for the dog to sleep, exercise, and a suitably fenced/containment area.
- be active enough to utilise a dog. This includes regularly taking a dog into public places.
- have the financial resources to care for the dog (meet vet bills, provide food and equipment).
- have adequate verbal communication to command a dog.
- be physically able to control a dog.
- be able to see well enough to observe the actions of the dog eg. be able to pick up subtle changes in the dog's body language when it is travelling by your side.
- must be committed to 10 days (approximately) of consecutive training on receipt of the dog and further follow-up training following the dog entering the home.

Program specific criteria

The applicant must:

- have a current diagnosis of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder from a Psychiatrist or Psychologist, and have had this diagnosis for at least six (6) months.
- have had their primary experience of trauma by working in the Police force.
- be under the active care of a psychologist and/or psychiatrist.
- have stable and suitable treatments in place for any co-occurring physically debilitating conditions (eg back injury, knee injury, other existing medical difficulties).
- not be involved with self-harm, harm to others or dealings with the police for the last 12 months. This must be verified by a psychologist/psychiatrist.
- have two individuals who have agreed to provide them support.

Additional considerations

- It is recommended that you do not take on the responsibility of an Assistance Dog if you have an infant or toddler in the household (this will be assessed on a case by case basis).
- The carrying of weapons will not be tolerated at any point of engagement with Assistance Dogs Australia (workshops, interviews, training courses, follow-ups etc).

PTSD ASSISTANCE DOG APPLICATION PROCESS FLOW CHART

STAGE 1

Expression of interest

STAGE 2

2 Zoom Meetings

Interested applicants are invited to attend two one-on-one zoom meetings with Assistance Dogs Australia to gain further insight into the program

Completion of this workshop is mandatory for progression

STAGE 3

Application form & mental health professional form

Comprehensive application form is sent out
Full application is reviewed to see if applicant meets basic functional requirements

Potential candidates are also required to complete a form with their key Mental Health Professional

STAGE 4

Interview/home environment

Suitable candidates are interviewed
Home environment is observed

STAGE 5

Waitlist

Suitable candidates are accepted into the program

Some candidates may require further follow up depending on their circumstances

STAGE 6

10 day training

Once a dog match is made, candidates are required to attend a comprehensive 10 day training program at the National Training School

STAGE 7

Follow up

Up to 6 follow ups in the first year (in the first two weeks, at 3 months, 6 months and 12 months)

Phone support is always available

Ongoing support for Public Access Tests



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Assistance Dogs Australia

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 is to give you information on our service and to give Assistance Dogs Australia information to assess if you would be a suitable candidate to attend our PTSD Assist Workshop, which is the next stage in our application process.*

All information provided to us will be treated in the strictest confidence.

Please send the completed expression of interest form together with a letter of recommendation to:

Confidential
The Director - Police Assistance Dogs
Victoria Police Blue Ribbon Foundation
PO Box 2012
Moorabbin Vic 3189

OR admin@remember.org.au

*General enquiries can be made by
phoning our office on 03 9555 8000*

NAME

DATE OF BIRTH

ADDRESS

SUBURB

STATE

POSTCODE

HOME TELEPHONE

MOBILE

EMAIL ADDRESS

Preferred Correspondence Method (*please tick*):

☐

Email

☐

Post

Alternative contact (*family member or spouse*)

NAME

RELATIONSHIP TO YOU

ADDRESS

MOBILE PHONE

EMAIL

Please answer the following questions

- Do you have a clinical diagnosis of PTSD? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Was your PTSD diagnosed from working with ☐ Military Service
☐ Police Service
☐ Fire Brigade

Please provide service details.

- Are you, or have you been, under the care of a Psychologist/Psychiatrist? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Do you give consent for Assistance Dogs Australia to discuss your case with them? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Please include a letter of recommendation from your treating professional and a completed Mental Health Professional form.

- Have you had a drug or alcohol addiction in the last 12 months? ☐ Yes ☐ Minimal ☐ No
- Have you been involved with violence towards yourself or others? ☐ Yes ☐ Minimal ☐ No
- Have you had dealings with the Police in the past 12 months? ☐ Yes ☐ Minimal ☐ No

If yes, please give details below or attach a separate sheet, if required.

- Does your family support your interest in applying for an Assistance Dog?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Live alone

- If successful, do you have two individuals willing to support the team including immediate and temporary care for the dog in the case of an emergency.

☐ Yes ☐ No

Please provide details below.

1. Name

Signature

2. Name

Signature

- Describe ways in which you feel a PTSD Assistance Dog can assist you in coping with your PTSD?
Attach a separate sheet if required.

- Do you currently have a dog living in your home? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- If you are a successful applicant are you prepared to attend the National Training School in Waterfall NSW for training. This may be up to a 10 day period. The cost of travel will be at your own expense? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Do you have any other medical conditions/disabilities? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please describe.

Acknowledgement and Rights

I _____ (name) acknowledge that Assistance Dogs Australia assesses expression of interests on his or her merits and, following this assessment, Assistance Dogs Australia will have the right, at our discretion, to advise you that you are not suitable to apply for a PTSD Assistance Dog .

All applicants' personal information is treated as strictly confidential and only those with a need to know have 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.

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

FULL NAME

SIGNATURE

DATE