



*** SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION DOES NOT GUARANTEE YOU WILL RECEIVE A SERVICE DOG ***

Preliminary Application Procedure

- The first step in applying for a service dog from Service Dogs for America (SDA) is to fill out and submit the preliminary application attached to these instructions. If you are unable to download the application, please contact SDA and a paper copy can be sent to you. Before submitting a preliminary application, please review the following eligibility requirements:
 - Applicant must be 12 years of age or older and possess the physical and developmental capacity to handle a service dog independently.
 - Applicant must reside within the United States and be able to travel to the SDA campus in Jud, North Dakota, for training.
 - If applying for a PTSD service dog, applicant must meet both of the following criteria:
 - have an official PTSD diagnosis from a qualified and licensed mental health professional ;
 - be actively engaged in therapy for a minimum of one (1) year for the PTSD diagnosis.
 - Applicant must present a verifiable medical need for a service dog and understand SDA may not be able to train a dog specific to their needs.
 - Applicant must be available and willing to communicate with SDA staff throughout the application and placement process.
 - Applicant must demonstrate proficiency in handling a service dog at home and in a variety of public environments, while managing the dog's safety, behavior and working skills.
 - Applicant will be required to supply proof of financial resources sufficient for the care of a service dog, including veterinarian care.
- Preliminary Applications are reviewed monthly. If the applicant meets SDA's selection criteria, an approval letter will be sent out along with a full application packet.

Full Application Procedure – **APPLICANTS ARE ONLY ELIGIBLE FOR THIS NEXT STEP IF THEIR PRELIMINARY APPLICATION IS APPROVED.**

- The second step in applying for a service dog is to return a full application to SDA – including all necessary signatures and a **non-refundable \$50.00 application fee**. Applications returned without the \$50 fee will not be processed.
- Once all supporting documentation for the full application has been received, an independent Medical Review Board (MRB) reviews the application and determines final eligibility. The MRB bases their decision regarding service dog placement per the following criteria:
 - is a service dog necessary for the applicant so as to mitigate the applicant's disability
 - can a service dog perform enough specific tasks so as benefit the applicant
 - can the applicant properly care for and handle a service dog

Notification, Travel and Training Procedures

- Following the MRB's review of the full application, the applicant will be notified by mail as to whether their request for a service dog has been approved or denied or if the MRB needs additional information before making their decision. **Approval of the application by the MRB does not guarantee the applicant will receive a service dog. SDA reserves the right to terminate the application and placement process at any time.**



PROCEDURE FOR APPLICATION

GREAT PLAINS ASSISTANCE DOGS FOUNDATION DBA
SERVICE DOGS FOR AMERICA
PO BOX 513
JUD, ND 58454

- If approved for a service dog, SDA's Executive Director will schedule the applicant for their Team Training at SDA's Jud, North Dakota, campus. SDA's Client Services Coordinator will also send out a welcome packet detailing all aspects of Team Training and the placement process. *NOTE: "Team" denotes the pairing of an applicant with a service dog.*
- Team Training is a minimum, mandatory three (3) weeks, and applicants must **successfully complete** their Team Training Course before leaving campus with their service dog. It is highly recommended to purchase travel insurance in conjunction with any airline or train tickets, in the event Team Training needs to be extended or cancelled.

Arrival to campus and participation in Team Training does not guarantee an applicant will leave campus with a service dog. SDA reserves the right to stop placement at any time.

- All applicants traveling to the SDA campus are responsible for making their own travel arrangements, including ground transportation and attendant care (if necessary). There are two (2) fully-furnished guest cabins on campus that are available to applicants for Team Training. This lodging is included in the cost of the service dog, however while on campus applicants are responsible for their own groceries, toiletries, etc. If applicants prefer not to stay on campus, off-campus accommodations will need to be approved by SDA prior to arrival and will be the sole financial responsibility of the applicant.
- Prior to the applicant's arrival on campus, SDA will conduct either an in-home visit or a video tour of the applicant's home.
- Each applicant must be prepared to meet his/her own financial needs during Team Training, including outings and any equipment needs or modifications. Applicants with electric wheelchairs must plan on bringing or arranging for a manual wheelchair in the event of an electric wheelchair malfunction.
- Any individuals or family members accompanying the applicant in a supportive role are the responsibility of the applicant and are welcome to stay on campus with the applicant; their attendance during Team Training is at the discretion of the SDA training department.

Team Sponsor

- Each Team is required to have a sponsor; this is not a financial sponsor but rather a mentor or advocate who will look after the best interest of the dog and report back to SDA.
- The sponsor has to be one or more individuals outside the applicant's immediate family who will agree to periodically check on the status of the Team and who will also agree to look after the dog should something happen to the applicant.
- The sponsor is not asked to intervene or take action unless an emergency exists or concerns arise that may include:
 - the dog is not being cared for properly, including veterinary care and vaccinations
 - the dog is not being used as per the contract, including established safekeeping practices
 - the applicant is not following training protocols
 - the applicant is experiencing additional medical/mental issues that place the dog at risk
 - the applicant talks of surrendering or abandoning the dog



Placement Interruption Procedure

- SDA is involved with the Team for the life of the dog, therefore SDA reserves the right to deny an applicant or terminate a placement at any time before, during or after Team Training and graduation. Grounds for termination include, but are not limited to:
 - applicant fails to handle the service dog according to SDA requirements
 - applicant fails the Public Access Test required for the Team's graduation
 - applicant handles his or her service dog in an abusive or negligent manner
 - applicant becomes unable to care for the service dog
 - applicant is not using the service dog as intended
 - placement will jeopardize the dog's health, safety, or well-being
 - SDA has grounds to believe the dog will not be able to meet the applicant's needs

Post-Placement Procedure

- After graduation, applicants will be expected to provide on-going information regarding the dog's work habits and public behavior. Applicants will be expected to make themselves available for aftercare calls and are required to meet SDA's criteria for Team certification renewal.
- Applicants will be expected to sign a release for their health provider(s), giving SDA access to contact them quarterly for the purpose of follow-up and to document any improvements in physical, emotional, and social interactions as a result of a service dog.
- Teams are required to return to campus at regular intervals post-graduation for public access recertification and additional training (if necessary). The guest cabins are available to the Team at no charge, however all travel expenses are the responsibility of the applicant. The recertification schedule is as follows:
 - within 12 months following graduation
 - every 24 months after the first year

Failure to be compliant with required follow-up could result in repossession of the service dog or being declined for a successor dog placement.

Disclaimers

- All applicants will be considered regardless of race, gender, religion, creed, sexual orientation, and ethnic origin.
- Approved successor dog applicants have priority over first-time applicants.
- Wait time for training and placement will vary depending on specific needs of applicant and dog availability.
- **SDA reserves the right to stop the application process, training and placement process at any time.**