



# SERVICE DOGS FOR AMERICA (SDA) PRELIMINARY APPLICATION

**920 Short Street  
Jud, ND 58454**

APPLICANT INFORMATION			
Date:		Title:    Mr.    Mrs.    Ms.    Miss	
First Name:	Middle Initial:	Last Name:	
Name of parent or guardian if applicant is a minor:			
Age of applicant:	Sex:    male    female	Date of birth:	
Address:			
City:		State:	Zip:
Home Phone:		Cell Phone:	
Email:			
Work Phone:		Occupation:	
Have you ever served in the US Military? Yes      No		Branch of Military Service:	
Date of discharge:		Nature of discharge:	

DESCRIBE PERSONAL OR FACILITY NEEDS	
Please describe your disability or facility needs, including information about its onset and prognosis. Specifically, what are your limitations?	
What type of service dog would meet your needs?	
Mobility Assist Dog	<i>Emergency Medical Response Dog - Seizure Response</i> <input type="checkbox"/>
Facility Dog <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Emergency Medical Response Dog - Diabetic Alert</i> <input type="checkbox"/>
	<i>Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) Dog</i> <input type="checkbox"/>

**Please explain why you want a service dog?**

**What needs or services do feel a service dog will provide for you?**

Caring for a service dog		
	Monthly Cost	Yearly Cost
How much do you think it costs for care for a service dog?		
Can you afford to pay these costs?    Yes    No		
Ability to attend to daily training, attention and care		
<i>A service dog needs daily training, attention, love and care.</i>	Yes	No
Do you have time to spend with the dog?		
Are you able to exercise the dog?		
Are you able to take the dog to the veterinarian?		
Are you able to groom the dog?		
Are you able to clean up after the dog goes to the bathroom?		
Will your service dog accompany you to work?		
Will your service dog accompany you on vacations?		
How many hours a day will your service dog be alone? _____ hours/day		

*All applicants will be considered regardless of race, sex, religion, creed, sexual orientation and ethnic origin.*

**PLEASE MAIL, EMAIL OR FAX THE COMPLETED PRE-APPLICATION FORM TO:**

Service Dogs for America ♦ 920 Short Street ♦ Jud, ND 58454

Phone: 701-685-2242 ♦ Fax: 877-783-6953

Email: [info@servicedogsforamerica.org](mailto:info@servicedogsforamerica.org) ♦ Website: [www.servicedogsforamerica.org](http://www.servicedogsforamerica.org)



## ND Veteran ELIBILITY REQUIREMENTS & DISCLAIMERS FOR A TRAINED PTSD SERVICE DOG

Before continuing with the preliminary application process, please understand that Service Dogs for America (SDA) is only able to serve individuals who fulfill the following requirements:

- Applicant must be a resident of North Dakota in order to be eligible for this grant program
- Applicant must have a diagnosis of post-traumatic stress disorder.
- Applicant must be engaged in counseling/therapy.
- Applicant must provide a letter of support or prescription for a service dog from their mental health provider.
- Applicant is able to provide a copy of their DD214 or PCS Orders and other official documentation from the VA verifying their Summary of Benefits or service connected disability.
- Applicant must be able to handle a service dog independently.
- Applicant must **fully** complete the SDA Service Dog application package, including a financial worksheet and all necessary releases and signatures as outlined in "Procedure of Application for a PTSD service dog.
- Applicant must participate in at least one interview with an SDA representative.
- Applicant must demonstrate proficiency in handling a service dog at campus and in a variety of public environments while managing the dog's safety, behavior and working skills.
- Applicant must demonstrate a genuine need for a PTSD service dog.
- Applicant must give proof of the financial resources required to meet the feeding and veterinary care of the dog.
- Applicant must have a sponsor "a person outside the home" who will watch out for the best interests of the service dog.
- Applicant must allow SDA ongoing contact with their mental health provider for the purpose of evaluating any physical, emotional and social improvements.

Also, please note that completion of the full Application/Interview process **does not** guarantee that an applicant will be placed on the active waiting list; it **MUST** go before SDA's review team to be tentatively approved.

SDA reserves the right to deny an applicant acceptance based on:

- Applicant's unrealistic expectations of a service dog's capabilities.
- Approved successor dog clients have priority over first time applicants.
- Current numbers of applicants already on waiting list.
- Current resources available to SDA to manage waiting list in a timely fashion.
- Current number and types of dogs available for training and placement.
- A candidate fails to handle an assistance dog according to SDA requirements.
- A candidate fails the command/task demonstration and public access test.
- A candidate handles his or her dog in an abusive or negligent manner.
- SDA has grounds to believe the dog will not be able to meet the candidate's needs.
- The placement would jeopardize the dogs' health, safety or well-being.

*All applicants will be considered regardless of race, sex, religion, creed, sexual orientation and ethnic origin.*



# ***Veterans with PTSD ONLY***

## **PROCEDURE OF APPLICATION**

### **NORTH DAKOTA VETERAN APPLICANTS**

#### **Pre-Application Procedure**

- The first step in acquiring a Service Dog for America (SDA) Service Dog is for the applicant to download and print out a pre-application form from the SDA website at [www.servicedogsforamerica.org](http://www.servicedogsforamerica.org).
- Pre-application forms are reviewed monthly, and if it meets SDA criteria, a letter will be sent with a full application for placement consideration.

#### **Full Application & Review Procedure**

- The **completed** full application package, including all necessary signatures, is then returned to SDA, along with a non-refundable \$50.00 application fee.
- The veteran identifies an individual or service organization to act as a sponsor for the team.
- SDA's review team will meet and review full PTSD applications four times a year. SDA will share the full application with the review team, which includes the following volunteer professionals:
  - Psychologist
  - Medical doctor
  - Veteran MSW
  - US Veteran
  - Veterinary doctor
  - ND Commissioner of Veteran Affairs
  - SDA trainer
  - SDA executive director

#### **Role of Team Sponsor**

Each team is required to have a sponsor. This is not a financial sponsor, but rather a mentor who will look after the best interest of the dog and report back to SDA. The sponsor may be an individual or a service organization outside the handler's immediate family that agrees to periodically check on the status of the team.

The sponsor is not asked to intervene or take action unless an emergency exists or has concerns that may include:

- Dog is not being cared for properly, including veterinary care and vaccinations;
- Dog is not being used as per the contract, including established safekeeping practices;
- Handler is not following training protocols;
- Handler is experiencing additional medical/mental issues that place the dog at risk;
- Handler talks of surrendering or otherwise giving up the dog.

#### **Interview & Wait List Procedure**

- Following the review team's receipt of and review of the application, the applicant will be notified by mail that the documentation is complete and that she/he should contact SDA's client coordinator and make an appointment for a personal interview.

- SDA's client coordinator will conduct interviews either at the SDA Training Center or in the candidate's home. If deemed an appropriate candidate for a service dog, the individual will be placed on the SDA waiting list. The candidate will remain on the waiting list, until such time as a suitable dog has been chosen for him/her. SDA's client coordinator will then contact the candidate about attending an upcoming Team Training Class.

### **Pre-Placement Procedure**

- Prior to arrival at the SDA Campus, the following documents will be mailed must be signed and returned prior to arrival:
  - Sponsor Contract
  - SDA Candidate Bill of Rights
  - SDA Confidentiality Policy
  - SDA Voluntary Photo and Audio Release Form
  - SDA Voluntary Release to be interviewed by Assistance Dogs International Accrediting Team
  - Release of Liability Form
  - EMT – Medical Release Form
  - SDA Service Dog Agreement
  - SDA Financial Agreement

### **Candidate Travel Team Training & Procedure**

- Service Dog Team Training Course: The course, equipment and team manual for the Team Training course.
- ND Veterans are expected to report to the Jud campus at least 2-3 times each week, or on an agreed upon schedule and be available for public access outings and training.
- All candidates travelling to the Jud, ND area, will be responsible for arranging their own transportation.
- Each candidate must be prepared to meet his/her own financial needs during training, including outings, meals and unique equipment need or modifications. We recommend no less than \$100 be set aside for this purpose.
- Individual needs, such as other individuals in the supportive role are the veteran's responsibility

### **Team Training Procedure**

- All ND Veteran candidates will be required to **successfully complete** a sixty-four hour Team Training Course, as specified by SDA.
- Candidates are required to attend all training sessions, classes, lectures and field trips. Absences may result in transfer of a candidate to another class, or required make-up training time.
- Family members and friends, are encouraged accompany the candidate and may be invited from time to time to participate and observe some of the training sessions.

### **Placement Interruption Procedure**

- SDA reserves the right to deny an applicant or terminate a placement at any time before, during the Team Training or after graduation, and grounds for termination include:
  - A candidate fails to handle an assistance dog according to SDA requirements;
  - A candidate fails the public access test;
  - A candidate handles his or her dog in an abusive or negligent manner;
  - SDA has grounds to believe the dog will not be able to meet the candidate's needs;
  - The placement would jeopardize the dogs' health, safety or well being.
- Completing the Team Training course does not guarantee you will leave SDA's campus with a service dog.

**Public Access Test & Certification Procedure**

- A passing score on the public access test is required in order for the candidate/dog team to be certified and for the candidate to take possession of the dog.
- 80% accuracy is required on the public access test. Absences and scores below 80% will require a make-up test.

**Post Placement Procedure**

- After graduation, graduates will be expected to provide on-going information regarding the dogs' work habits and public behavior. Graduates will be expected to make themselves available for aftercare calls, and are required to meet SDA's criteria for team certification renewal.

*All applicants will be considered regardless of race, sex, religion, creed, sexual orientation and ethnic origin.*



## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### Frequently Asked Questions PTSD Service Dogs

#### Service Dogs for America History

Service Dogs for America (SDA) trained its first service dog in 1989 and placed it with SDA's first client in 1990.

In 1992, SDA was officially designated as a 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization. SDA is an accredited service dog school member of Assistance Dogs International.

SDA trains and places service dogs to assist with mobility issues, diabetic and seizure disorders, and PTSD. We do not train or place dogs that would assist with any type of visual or hearing impairment.

The mission of SDA is to: *"train and certify service dogs for individuals with disabilities"*

#### PTSD Service Dog Trained Tasks

Training service dogs for individuals living with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) requires very specialized knowledge and skills - in both the trainer and the dog. These service dogs must possess a perceptive nature, a courteous, compliant temperament and an intuitive spirit in order to perform their duties independently when the individual is facing a crisis. SDA's training team works to identify and evaluate these unique dogs, and then train them to recognize and interrupt the behaviors associated with anxiety, panic attacks and nightmares. SDA's trainers evaluate both dogs and applicants in order to effectively pair a successful team.

Each dog is trained to a standard, and additional training is customized to the individual needs of the applicant. SDA is committed to working together with the applicant and their service dog as they learn to work as a team to increase physical, emotional and social self-sufficiency. The dogs are trained to perform many services including, but not limited to:

- Alleviate anxiety/distress and provide psycho-emotional grounding by nudging, pawing, and leaning.
- Assist a person in waking from night terrors and nightmares.
- Distract a person from an event or specific maladaptive behavior by nudging, pawing, and licking.
- Bring medication to a person on command or when alerted to do so by a timer/alarm.
- Stand in front of or circle an individual in crowded areas in order to create personal space in a non-aggressive manner.
- Lead an individual safely to a building exit when experiencing an anxiety or panic attack.
- Get help by alerting another person or activate an emergency button or alert system.

**They are not trained to be guard dogs or act aggressive**

A trained PTSD service dog is a tool and is not intended to substitute or replace current therapeutic or medication treatment plan. The dog is trained to mitigate and distract from possible stressors related to an individual's PTSD and contribute to their physical, emotional and social well-being.