



Veteran Inquiry letter

Thank you for your interest in JLAD (The Joys of Living Assistance Dogs). Our mission:

Provide skilled, devoted companions to support and assist persons living with disabilities – creating cohesive teams focused on building a life of greater freedom and independence.

All of our dogs are trained in basic obedience commands, house manners, and how to behave in public. Our dogs are also trained in technical skills such as: retrieving, opening doors, turning lights on and off, balance assistance, bracing, social interaction, and PTSD. In regard to this training, our dogs:

1. must facilitate friendly public interaction
2. meet all existing Assistance Dogs International (ADI) standards regarding temperament and behavior, as well as exhibit:
 - tolerance to a high level of stress
 - sensitivity without anxiety
 - the ability to perceive environmental and interpersonal cues
 - the ability to complete tasks in very difficult and emotional situations
 - no reactivity, possessiveness, guarding behaviors or increased anxiety.
3. meet all existing ADI obedience, accessibility and training standards including training with visual, verbal, or environmental cues to do three visually identifiable tasks that directly mitigate the Veteran's PTSD.

Special skills are trained on an individual basis. **JLAD will NOT train behaviors that encourage guarding, protecting, or searching for a threat.** In addition, our dogs are not trained for emotional support or medical alert. Dog availability may take approximately 3 years.

Here is how our program works:

To be considered for our program, you must fill out an application. JLAD requires a non-refundable \$150.00 application fee. Upon acceptance of the application JLAD will schedule an in-home visit, Skype, or Facetime, depending on your distance from our headquarters. The purpose of this visit is to meet with you, as many family members as possible, any others living in your home, and family pets. This meeting helps JLAD understand all elements that will influence the working environment of a service dog. Upon acceptance into our program, we will start the process of looking for a suitable match. This decision is based solely upon need, regardless of age, race, sex, religion, or creed. Timing and placement of your assistance dog depends on the availability of a suitable dog.

Once a dog that JLAD deems a potentially suitable match becomes available, you will be notified and \$500.00 refundable deposit will be required, refunded at time of transfer of ownership. We will provide you more information about the dog and when the next Team Training Camp will be held. You **MUST** attend a Team Training Camp and pass a Public

Access Test before JLAD will allow you to take your assistance dog home. If the training camp is not completed due to no fault of JLAD, the dog remains the property of JLAD and the deposit is no longer refundable. Training camps vary depending on the program and will be explained further during the first visit. Although it costs between \$25,000-\$30,000 to raise and train a service dog, a veteran can receive a service dog free of charge! The waiting period for a free of charge dog is considerably longer as we can only give away service dogs as our budget allows. Therefore, a veteran can choose to purchase a dog from us at the regular rate of \$9875, which will considerably shorten the waiting period. Prices are subject to change each calendar year, however, prices will be honored for the year the application was received.

Three months following service dog placement, JLAD will follow up with the client to evaluate their dog's behavior, and as needed the client will participate in training lessons and evaluations given in their home. According to Assistance Dogs International (ADI) policy, veterans must live within a 150-mile radius from our center in order for us to make this in-home visit. Should a client live further away, JLAD requires that the client cover our cost for the extended distance, overnight stay in a hotel of the client's recommendation, and all meals. Arrangements and payment for this visit must be received before the commencement of team training. After 6 months of the client's partnership with a dog, the partnership will be reevaluated, and if appropriate, full ownership of the dog will be transferred to the client.

JLAD's policy ensures that, if a dog must be removed from its partnership, someone who is part of the Veteran's support system will be notified and preferably be present at the time of the dog's surrender to our program. The Veteran's last known mental health provider will also be notified.

If you are ready to move forward and submit an application, or if you have further questions, please contact us at: 503-551-4572 or info@joydogs.org. Applications can also be downloaded from our website at <https://www.joydogs.org>