

"If Ajax was not a part of my life, I would have missed out on this beautiful sight!"



**SERVICE
DOGS UK**
for those with PTSD
who have served



Lee, our first veteran of the Army & Fire Service enjoying an amazing sunrise with his friend and assistance dog in training Ajax.



Veteran Considerations before applying

save a dog - help a veteran & improve the lives of both
for military & emergency services veterans with PTSD



Eligibility criteria who can apply?

Applications are open to members/veterans who have served or are serving in Armed Forces & Emergency Services (including MCA & RNLI & UKSAR) who ...

-  have a **clinical diagnosis** of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and
-  are based in **West Sussex, Surrey and East & North Hampshire** and ...
-  are **committed** to partaking in the PTSD Assistance Dog Programme which is around 9 months long and involves weekly training sessions.

Please note:

-  we do NOT provide PTSD Assistance Dog Training to already existing dogs or puppies.
-  we are NOT able to place an Assistance Dog (in training) with (an) already existing dog(s) in the household.
-  we do NOT provide professional mental health support/counselling.
-  If you do NOT meet our eligibility criteria please have a read of our Frequently Asked Questions on our website.



What is the PTSD Assistance Dog Programme

We provide an intensive dog training programme of 9 months where you will get partnered with a preselected dog, from rescue.

We do not select specific breeds or train, already existing, pet dogs or puppies. The dogs we use are in need of a home, love and are selected on temperament and character. You will get taught how to train the dog, look after him or her, become a responsible guardian, obtain new skills and routines with the aim to become an Assistance Dog Partnership – all under the guidance and support of our team in weekly sessions.

The dogs we train are not pets or solely companions, they get trained to be with you 24/7 as working PTSD Assistance Dogs.



What happens next...

Our process...

-  Once you have applied and we have received **your full application**, provided you are eligible, you will be contacted by email if there are any initial queries followed by a chat via telephone.
-  Upon a successful first interview we will conduct a home assessment to establish your suitability for the programme.
-  It is on the basis of the above that we will review Suitability and Programme Acceptance.
-  If you are accepted on the programme you will be invited to a training session to meet the team and after that you'd be joining the Programme which will be explained to you in full detail.
-  Applying does not automatically mean you will be accepted.



Considerations

Please consider the below carefully before applying to be considered on the Service Dogs UK assistance dog programme.

- While we know that the right partnership of human and dog can significantly help with PTSD an assistance dog isn't for everyone ...
- Dogs are friends for life, taking care of them is a lifetime commitment with 'up and downs'**, they are highly sociable beings and cannot be left daily for long periods of time, an assistance dog will be trained to be with you at all times – it 's a partnership and you will become a team, as such your dog will have different requirements to a pet dog.
- Dogs are individual sentient beings and while they would be working for you, they too, need to enjoy life to stay focussed and motivated.
- The dogs we select for you are from rescue**, we do not train pet dogs, during the programme you will be training him/her under the guidance of professional dog trainers. During this training period they are not recognised Assistance Dogs.

- If you live in sheltered housing, rented accommodation or council housing are you allowed a dog?
- For dogs to stay healthy, physically and mentally, they need to go out twice a day, come rain or shine, they need to explore the world with you and need twice daily walks – can you provide this?
- Accidents and illness do happen **can you afford basic insurance, veterinary care and good food?** Dogs cost money! While we provide everything, apart from petrol, during the course of the programme, it is essential that you are able to fund the dog over its lifetime.
- Dogs need some stability, **is your home environment stable enough to bring in another member of the family ?**
- The dogs we train are not pets, they are working assistance dogs to be with you are all times, if you are in employment you will need to talk to your employer.**
- Can you provide alternative care for the dog when you need to go into hospital for a short period of time? Do you have a support network of people around you? If not, are you prepared to seek help for this purpose?
- Have you spoken to your friends, family and health worker about your application? If you haven't please do, it's important your support network, if you have one, is fully behind your decision.
- If you already have a dog, consider how you will practically provide the one on one training for your assistance dog in training. Your assistance dog in training would need to be with you all times and needs to be trained /walked/cared for by you, at home, individually.
- Our programme is at times hard work, but very rewarding it from you requires a real commitment. It involves **2 weekly training sessions with homework, regular home visits and possibly a short residential training course over a period of 9 to 12 months are you able to commit to this?**
If you cannot then please be honest with yourself as it would impact on our ability to help others. Once you and your dog have completed the programme we will provide after-care such as home visits and you and your dog will be required to take annual assessments to ensure that you are still up to accreditation standards.



Further Info

For further information, please visit

servicedogsuk.org

Service Dogs UK trains and provides assistance dogs to support members of the Armed Forces and Emergency Services who have PTSD. We mainly use dogs from rescue centres to achieve unique partnerships that will greatly enhance the lives of both. We continue to support the partnerships as part of our ongoing commitment to 'those that serve', past or present. We raise awareness of PTSD as a significant danger to our veterans by our activities and by education. We are also committed to research and develop ways of improving the lives of our injured service people through interaction with dogs and the therapeutic benefits that they provide.

Service Dogs UK is a registered Charity in England & Wales (No.: 1165409) and a company limited by guarantee (No.: 9553131) registered in England & Wales, registered address 142 Fleminghouse Lane, Huddersfield, HD5 8UD.