Service Dog Application Process Overview

Eligibility

Canines for Service partners service dogs with Veterans nationwide with service-connected PTSD, traumatic brain injury, military sexual trauma, and/or mobility limitations. We provide service dogs to our Veterans at no cost or fundraising obligation.

Veteran Status

- CFS only serves Honorable, General under Honorable Condition Veterans. Transitioning service members will not be eligible until a DD214 is received.

Home Environment

- Applicant must have safe and stable housing for over six consecutive months. Proof of stable housing may be required.
- No other dogs, cats or free roaming animals are permitted to be in the home at any time throughout the application process and post-approval/placement.

Background Check & Criminal History

- All applicants must consent to a criminal background check.
- Any criminal history in a civilian or military jurisdiction involving crimes again animals, violent crimes or felony convictions are not permitted.
- Misdemeanor charges will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Substance Abuse

- History of substance abuse is considered on a case-by-case basis. Treatment plans and consultation from care team members will be requested.

Service-Connected Disabilites

- Applicants with PTSD must have consistent treatment with a licensed mental health provider.
- History of suicidal ideation and/or attempts are reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Treatment plans and consultation from care team members will be requested.
- CFS service dogs are trained to assist with service-connected diagnosis of PTSD, TBI, MST and/or mobility limitations. Applicants with other disabilities may still be considered, but CFS would not be able to train the service dog on task work such as medical alerting.

Please reach out to Veteran Services at (910) 226-7849 or veteranservices@caninesforservice.org with any questions.

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Pre-Screening Questionnaire	Answer a few questions on our website to see if our program is right for you. If you are eligible based on your pre-screening questionnaire, we will send you the full application. The application requires the following documents to be submitted:
Application	• DD214 • Proof of Service-Connected Diagnosis (VA Rating & Benefit breakdown, or other medical documentation) • Medical and Mental Health History Forms (completed by providers) • Proof of Residency and Adult Household Member Form (as applicable) • Video Home Tour • Three personal references
Interview	Once we have your completed application, we will schedule a virtual interview with you to go over your application, talk about what you are looking for in a service dog, better understand your needs, and give you a chance to get to know us.
Client Review Committee	Our client review committee meets quarterly. At this meeting, they will review your application and interview, and decide if our organization is able to meet your needs.
Wait List	Our Veteran Services Coordinator will reach out to let you know the status of your application. If you have been approved, you will be added to our waitlist. On average, our wait time is up to 2 years. During this time, our trainers will be actively working with our dogs in training to see which one is the best fit for you based on your individual needs, lifestyle, and personality.
Team Training	Once your service dog match has been finalized, we will reach out to schedule your Team Training. This is a 10-day period where you will receive hands-on training, learning how to handle and bond with your service dog.
Partnership	At the end of your Team Training, you will be officially partnered with your service dog. Our team will be available for support and follow-up training. Each year, your service dog is required to complete a Public Access Test to ensure they are continuing to meet our accreditation standards.

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