



ADI Minimum Standards and Ethics

Assistance Dogs International has developed minimum standards and ethics which all member and candidate programs must follow. This is agreed upon when organizations join ADI. These standards and ethics form the basis of the ADI Accreditation program.

ADI MINIMUM STANDARDS AND ETHICS:

Ethics for Dogs

ADI believes that any dog the member organizations trains to become an Assistance Dog has a right to a quality life. Therefore, the ethical use of an Assistance Dog must incorporate the following criteria:

1. An Assistance Dog must be temperamentally screened for emotional soundness and working ability.
2. An Assistance Dog must be physically screened for the highest degree of good health and physical soundness.
3. An Assistance Dog must be technically and analytically trained for maximum control and for the specialized tasks he/she is asked to perform.
4. An Assistance Dog must be trained using humane training methods providing for the physical and emotional safety of the dog.
5. An Assistance Dog must be permitted to learn at his/her own individual pace and not be placed in service before reaching adequate physical and emotional maturity.
6. An Assistance Dog must be matched to best suit the client's needs, abilities and lifestyle.
7. An Assistance Dog must be placed with a client able to interact with him/her.
8. An Assistance Dog must be placed with a client able to provide for the dog's emotional, physical and financial needs.
9. An Assistance Dog must be placed with a client able to provide a stable and secure living environment.
10. An Assistance Dog must be placed with a client who expresses a desire for increased independence and/or an improvement in the quality of his/her life through the use of an Assistance Dog.
11. An ADI member organization will accept responsibility for its dogs in the event of a graduate's death or incapacity to provide proper care.
12. An ADI member organization will not train, place, or certify dogs with any aggressive behavior. An Assistance Dog may not be trained in any way for guard or protection duty. Non-aggressive barking as a trained behavior will be acceptable in appropriate situations.

Assistance Dogs in Public

There are guidelines on the public appropriateness, behavior and training expected of a dog working in public places.

These are intended to be minimum standards for all Assistance Dog programs that are members or candidates of ADI. All programs are encouraged to work at levels above the minimums.

1. Public appropriateness

- Dog is clean, well-groomed and does not have an offensive odor.
- Dog does not urinate or defecate in inappropriate locations.

2. Behavior

- Dog does not solicit attention, visit or annoy any member of the general public.
- Dog does not disrupt the normal course of business.
- Dog does not vocalize unnecessarily, i.e. barking, growling or whining.
- Dog shows no aggression towards people or other animals.
- Dog does not solicit or steal food or other items from the general public.

3. Training

- Dog is specifically trained to perform 3 or more tasks to mitigate aspects of the client's disability.
- Dog works calmly and quietly in harness, on leash or other tether.
- Dog is able to perform its tasks in public.
- Dog must be able to lie quietly beside the handler without blocking aisles, doorways, etc.
- Dog is trained to urinate and defecate on command.
- Dog stays within 24 (60 cm) of its handler at all times unless the nature of a trained task requires it to be working at a greater distance.

Guide Dogs

Training Standards

These are intended to be minimum standards for all Assistance Dog programs that are members or candidates of ADI. All programs are encouraged to work at levels above the minimums.

1. The guide dog must respond to commands (basic obedience and skilled tasks) from the client 90% of the time on the first ask in all public and home environments.
2. The guide dog should demonstrate basic obedience skills by responding to voice and/or hand signals for sitting, staying in place, lying down, walking in a controlled position near the client and coming to the client when called.
3. The guide dog must meet all of the standards as laid out in the minimum standards for ADI Assistance Dogs in Public. Dogs should be equally well behaved in the home environment.
4. The guide dog will be trained to negotiate obstacles, overhangs, barriers, street crossings, city and country work and public transportation. Trainer-under-blindfold work must be included for each guide dog.
5. The client must be provided with enough instruction to be able to meet the minimum standards for guide dogs and Assistance Dogs in public. Clients must be able to demonstrate:
 - Negotiating obstacles, overhangs, barriers, street crossings, city and country work and public transportation.
 - Knowledge of acceptable training techniques.
 - An understanding of canine care and health.
 - The ability to continue to train, problem solve, and add new skills with their guide dog.
 - Knowledge of local access laws and appropriate public behavior.
6. The Assistance Dog program must document monthly follow ups with clients for the first 6 months following placement. Personal contact will be done by qualified staff or program volunteers within 12 months of graduation and annually thereafter.
7. Virtual training is an acceptable supplement to the training that is mandated by the ADI Minimum Standards & Ethics and Accreditation Standards. These require training be done directly and in person by a qualified program trainer. This applies to all candidate and accredited member programs.
8. The program will provide a laminated ID card with a photo of the client and dog and names of both. In public the guide dog will wear the program's appropriate guide harness.

9. The program staff must demonstrate the knowledge of blindness and working with the visually impaired and/or blind clients. The program shall make available to staff and volunteers educational material on different disabilities.
10. The client must abide by the ADI Minimum Standards of Assistance Dog Partners.
11. Prior to placement every guide dog must meet the ADI Standards and Ethics Regarding Dogs, be spayed/neutered and have current vaccination certificates as determined by their veterinarian and applicable laws. It is the program's responsibility to inform the client of any special health or maintenance care requirements for each dog.

Hearing Dogs

Training Standards

These are intended to be minimum standards for all Assistance Dog programs that are members or candidates of ADI. All programs are encouraged to work at levels above the minimums.

1. The hearing dog must respond to basic obedience commands from the handler 90% of the time on the first ask in all public and home environments. The dog must respond to the trained sound with an alerting behavior within 15 seconds from the beginning of the sound.
2. The hearing dog should demonstrate basic obedience skills by responding to voice and/or hand signals for sitting, staying in place, lying down, walking in a controlled position near the client and coming to the client when called.
3. The hearing dog must meet all of the standards as laid out in the ADI Minimum Standards for Dogs in Public and should be equally well behaved in the home environment.
4. Sound Awareness Skills. Upon hearing a sound, the hearing dog should alert the client by making physical contact or by some other behavior, so the client is aware when a trained sound occurs. The dog should then specifically indicate or lead the person to the source of the sound. All dogs must be trained to alert the handler to at least three (3) sounds.
5. The client must be provided with enough instruction to be able to meet the ADI Minimum Standards for Assistance Dogs in Public. Clients must be able to demonstrate:
 - That their dog can alert to three (3) different sounds.
 - Knowledge of acceptable training techniques.
 - An understanding of canine care and health.
 - The ability to continue to train, problem solve, and add new skills with their hearing dog.
 - Knowledge of local access laws and appropriate public behavior.
6. The program must document monthly follow ups with clients for the first 6 months following placement. Personal contact will be done by qualified staff or program volunteers within 12 months of graduation and annually thereafter.
7. Virtual training is an acceptable supplement to the training that is mandated by the ADI Minimum Standards & Ethics and Accreditation Standards. These require training be done directly and in person by a qualified program trainer. This applies to all candidate and accredited member programs.
8. Identification of the hearing dog will be accomplished with the laminated ID card with a photo and names of the dog and partner. In public the dog must wear a cape, harness, backpack,

or other similar piece of equipment or clothing with a logo that is clear and easy to read and identifiable as an Assistance Dog.

9. The program staff must demonstrate the knowledge of deafness, deaf culture and hearing impairment. A staff member or agent must know basic sign language. The program shall make available to staff and volunteers educational material on deafness, deaf culture and hearing impairment.
10. The client must abide by the ADI Minimum Standards of Assistance Dog Partners.
11. Prior to placement the hearing dog must meet the ADI Standards and Ethics Regarding Dogs, be spayed/neutered and have current vaccination certificates as determined by their veterinarian and applicable laws. It is the program's responsibility to inform the client of any special health or maintenance care requirements for each dog.

Service Dogs

Training Standards

These are intended to be minimum standards for all Assistance Dog programs that are members or candidates of ADI. All programs are encouraged to work at levels above the minimums.

1. The service dog must respond to commands (basic obedience and skilled tasks) from the client 90% of the time on the first ask in all public and home environments.
2. The service dog should demonstrate basic obedience skills by responding to voice and/or hand signals for sitting, staying in place, lying down, walking in a controlled position near the client and coming to the client when called.
3. The service dog must meet all of the standards as laid out in the minimum standards for Assistance Dogs in Public and should be equally well behaved in the home.
4. The service dog must be trained to perform at least 3 tasks* to mitigate the client's disability.
 - The task must be visibly identifiable.
 - The task must directly mitigate the client's disability.
 - The client's records must show that the tasks are directly connected to (and mitigate) the client's disability.
5. The client must be provided with enough instruction to be able to meet the ADI Minimum Standards for Assistance Dogs in Public. The client must be able to demonstrate:
 - That their dog can perform at least 3 tasks.
 - Knowledge of acceptable training techniques.
 - An understanding of canine care and health.
 - The ability to maintain training, problem solve, and continue to train/add new skills (as required) with their service dog.
 - Knowledge of local access laws and appropriate public behavior.
6. The Assistance Dog program must document monthly follow ups with clients for the first 6 months following placement. Personal contact will be done by qualified staff or program volunteer within 12 months of graduation and annually thereafter.
7. Virtual training is an acceptable supplement to the training that is mandated by the ADI Minimum Standards & Ethics and Accreditation Standards. These require training be done directly and in person by a qualified program trainer. This applies to all candidate and accredited member programs.

8. Identification of the service dog will be accomplished with the laminated ID card with a photo(s) and names of the dog and partner. In public the dog must wear a cape, harness, backpack, or other similar piece of equipment or clothing with a logo that is clear and easy to read and identifiable as an Assistance Dog.
9. The program staff must demonstrate knowledge of the client's disabilities in relation to the services they provide. The program shall make available to staff and volunteers educational material on different disabilities.
10. The client must abide by the ADI Minimum Standards of Assistance Dog Partners.
11. Prior to placement every service dog must meet the ADI Standards and Ethics Regarding Dogs, be spayed/neutered and have current vaccination certificates as determined by their veterinarian and applicable laws. It is the program's responsibility to inform the client of any special health or maintenance care requirements for each dog.

*From ADI Glossary of Terms:

Task: This is a trained behavior that the dog does on cue (or command) to mitigate its partner's disability. The cue can be verbal, a hand signal, something in the environment and/or some behavior exhibited by the partner or another person. Examples of a verbal cue could be "take it" and a hand signal could be pointing at an object to indicate to the dog to retrieve it. A cue in the environment might be a strap on a door, a car in the road or an alarm clock ringing. The behavior of a person could be falling to the ground, hand shaking, or emitting odor of low blood sugar.

Facility Dogs

Training Standards

The facility dog must respond to commands (basic obedience and skilled tasks) from the facilitator 90% of the time on the first ask in all public and home environments.

1. The facility dog should demonstrate basic obedience skills by responding to voice and/or hand signals for sitting, staying in place, lying down, walking in a controlled position near the facilitator and coming to the facilitator when called.
2. The facility dog must meet all of the standards as laid out in the minimum standards for Assistance Dogs in Public and should be equally well behaved in the home.
3. The facility dog must be partnered with a working professional facilitator and skilled at maintaining a calm manner and good social behavior in a variety of environments. They must also be accustomed to interacting with different types of people including those with physical and/or developmental disabilities.
4. The facilitator must be provided with enough instruction to be able to meet the ADI Minimum Standards for Assistance Dogs in Public. The facilitator must be able to demonstrate:
 - That their dog can remain calm and display good social behavior while interacting with a variety of people in different environments.
 - Knowledge of acceptable training techniques.
 - An understanding of canine care and health.
 - The ability to maintain training, problem solve, and continue to train/add new skills (as required) with their facility dog.
 - An understanding of how to use the dog in canine assisted interventions.
 - Knowledge of local access laws and appropriate public behavior.
6. The Assistance Dog program must document monthly follow ups with facilitators for the first 6 months following placement. Personal contact will be done by qualified staff or program volunteer within 12 months of graduation and annually thereafter.
7. Virtual training is an acceptable supplement to the training that is mandated by the ADI Minimum Standards & Ethics and Accreditation Standards. These require training be done directly and in person by a qualified program trainer. This applies to all candidate and accredited member programs.

8. Identification of the facility dog will be accomplished with the laminated ID card with a photo(s) and names of the dog and partner. In public the dog must wear a cape, harness, backpack, or other similar piece of equipment or clothing with a logo that is clear and easy to read and identifiable as an Assistance Dog.
9. The program staff must demonstrate knowledge of the clients needs in the facility in relation to the services they provide. The program shall make available to staff and volunteers educational material on the needs of the clients in the facility.
10. The facilitator must abide by the ADI Minimum Standards of Assistance Dog Partners.
11. Prior to placement every facility dog must meet the ADI Standards and Ethics Regarding Dogs, be spayed/neutered and have current vaccination certificates as determined by their veterinarian and applicable laws. It is the program's responsibility to inform the facilitator of any special health or maintenance care requirements for each dog.

Program Staff and trained professional program volunteers can use program dogs in facilities to participate in canine assisted interventions. These dogs may be dogs in advanced training, breeding dogs (when not in estrous) and younger pups.

Ethics for Clients

In keeping with our purpose of helping people with disabilities achieve greater independence and improve the quality of their lives, the member organizations of ADI believe the following ethical criteria are essential to ensure that this mandate is reasonably and responsibly met.

1. Clients have a right to be considered to receive an Assistance Dog regardless of race, sex, religion or creed.
2. Clients have the right to be treated with respect and dignity at all times in their dealings with the member organization's personnel and representatives.
3. The client has a right to receive a sound educational program to learn how to use his or her Assistance Dog most effectively at home and/or in public.
4. The client has a right to receive appropriate education on his or her role as a user of an Assistance Dog in the community.
5. The client has the right to receive regularly scheduled team evaluation and follow-up support.
6. The client has a right to receive information on or ask for assistance in the following matters:
 - Additional training for the dog that is needed due to a change in the client's functional level.
 - A behavioral management problem with the dog.
 - A major veterinary problem.
 - Legal problems pertaining to the use and access of the Assistance Dog as allowed by law.
7. The client has the right to expect that personal files will remain confidential and will not be disclosed unless he or she has given express prior permission.
8. The community has a right to expect an Assistance Dog to be under control at all times and to exhibit no intrusive behavior in public, therefore the client has the right be partnered with an appropriate dog and taught appropriate handling techniques.
9. The community has a right to receive information concerning ADI Program Standards and Ethics.
10. The community has a right to receive education on the benefits received by a person with a disability through the use of an Assistance Dog.
11. No client shall be required to participate in fund raising or public relations activities without their expressed and voluntary permission.

Standards for Assistance Dogs Partners

The Assistance Dog partners will agree to the following partner responsibilities:

1. Treat the dog with appreciation and respect.
2. Practice obedience regularly.
3. Practice the dog's skills regularly.
4. Maintain the dog's proper behavior in public and at home.
5. Carry proper identification and be aware of all applicable laws pertaining to Assistance Dogs.
6. Keep the dog well groomed and well cared for.
7. Practice preventative health care for the dog.
8. Obtain annual health checks and vaccinations for the dog.
9. Abide by all leash and license laws.
10. Follow the training program's requirements for progress reports and medical evaluations.
11. Arrange for the prompt clean-up of dog's waste.

Standards for Programs

Member organizations of ADI believe that the following tenets are necessary to ensure that the member organizations will continue to produce a quality product and to protect applicants, students and graduates from feeling exploited or demeaned.

1. Any individual staff member or program volunteer working with dogs and/or clients that requires specialized people/canine skills must have:
 - An affinity for people and excellent communication skills.
 - Canine knowledge and training experience that ensures established training and client standards can be met by the member organization.
2. Policies and procedures are followed to ensure that the member organization will be able to maintain established standards of service to people with disabilities through their application/student/graduate selection, training and team matching methods.
3. All Board members of ADI member organizations must receive orientation and be provided with appropriate educational materials about their respective programs. The materials should include but not be limited to the following:
 - History of Assistance Dogs and the history of their respective programs.
 - ADI's established Standards and Ethics.
 - Board of Director responsibilities such as financial management, resource identification, solicitation and fund-raising.
 - Ongoing Programs and Services and long range planning.
4. Member organizations recognize the community has a right to receive information concerning ADI program Standards and Ethics.
5. Member organizations recognize the community has a right to receive education on the benefits received by a person with a disability through the use of an Assistance Dog.

Standards for Trainers

These are intended to be minimum standards for all Assistance Dog programs that want to be affiliated with ADI. All Trainers are encouraged to work at levels above the minimum.

1. Trainers must understand and adhere to all ADI Minimum Standards and Ethics.
2. Trainers must be able to produce effective working teams that meet ADI Standards (i.e. Public Access Test, demonstration of tasks) as reviewed at the 1 year anniversary of the team.
3. Trainers must have up to date knowledge of best practices in many areas including:
 - learning theory
 - canine behavior
 - canine care and safety
 - a variety of training techniques, equipment and methods

Trainers must demonstrate effective:

- communication skills
- instruction of groups and individuals
- assessment and problem solving skills
- self-assessment and improvement of performance

Trainers must demonstrate:

- an understanding of the matching process of client with dog
- knowledge of the environment a team will encounter, specifically concerning family, community, school and workplace and the impact these may have on each working team.
- knowledge of and ability to determine when a training process, placement, or certification needs to be discontinued.

Trainers have a responsibility to the public, therefore they must:

- have knowledge of pertinent canine laws (i.e. leash laws and public access laws)
- build rapport and establish effective working relationships with co-workers, clients, volunteers, and the community
- use appropriate behavior in public when working with each dog and or client (i.e. train one

dog at a time, be polite, show respect and consideration to people and property, and maintain good personal and canine hygiene), be willing to educate the public about Assistance Dogs and access rights.

Standards for Certification of Owner/Private Trainer Trained Assistance Dog Teams

These are intended to be minimum standards for all Assistance Dog programs that are Members or Candidates of ADI. All programs are encouraged to work at levels above the minimums.

1. The owner must go through all the program requirements for an Assistance Dog applicant which includes the programs application process and team training. The owner must sign all consent and release of liability forms provided by the program.
2. The dog must meet all ADI Minimum Standards for dogs and must meet the same program standards as the dogs trained and placed by the program staff.
3. The program should have a minimum of a 6 month period working with the owner and their dog. The owner and dog will be observed in a variety of settings and situations during this time. This will also include any training necessary to complete the program and meet the ADI Minimum Standards. At least 50% of the observations and training with the client and dog must be done face to face and the remaining may be done through various forms of digital media; e.g. skype, video or other online media options. Team certification testing must be done face to face.
4. The program will inform the owner prior to acceptance into the program of all financial commitments/fees required by the program. The program will also inform the owner that at any time throughout the process or after certification testing, the program can decide to discharge the dog because of temperament, health or training issues.
5. The program will decide when the team is ready to go through the team training process.
6. After successfully completing the team training process and the program requirements the team will be given program certification. This certification will include a program identification card and harness or other identification used by the program.
7. The team becomes a program team for the working life of the dog. The program will include the team in all requirements and activities in place for teams made up of program trained dogs, including but not limited to follow-up, retesting, and continuity of dog's health care and veterinary requirements.
8. The service, hearing, or guide dogs must meet the minimum standards for training each type of Assistance Dog. A facility dog must meet the minimum standards for facility dogs.
9. The Assistance Dog team must meet all of the standards as laid out in the minimum standards for Assistance Dogs in Public and the dog should be equally well behaved in the home.
10. The Assistance Dog must be trained to perform at least 3 tasks to mitigate the client's disability.

11. The client must be provided with enough instruction to be able to meet the ADI Minimum Standards for Assistance Dogs in Public. The client must be able to demonstrate:
 - a. that their dog can perform at least 3 tasks
 - b. knowledge of acceptable training techniques
 - c. an understanding of canine care and health
 - d. the ability to maintain training, problem solve, and continue to train/ add new skills (as required) with their Assistance Dog.
 - e. knowledge of local access laws and appropriate public behavior
12. The Assistance Dog program must document monthly follow ups with these teams for the first 6 months following placement. Personal contact will be done by qualified staff or program volunteer within 12 months of graduation and annually thereafter.
13. Identification of the Assistance Dog will be accomplished with the laminated ID card with a photo(s) and names of the dog and partner. In public the dog must wear a cape, harness, backpack, or other similar piece of equipment or clothing with a logo that is clear and easy to read and identifiable as an Assistance Dog.
14. The program staff must demonstrate knowledge of the owner's disabilities in relation to the services they provide. The program shall make available to staff and volunteers educational material on different disabilities.
15. The owner/partner must abide by the ADI Minimum Standards of Assistance Dog Partners.
16. Prior to the completion of training and certification testing, the Assistance Dog must meet the ADI Standards and Ethics Regarding Dogs, be spayed/neutered and have current vaccination certificates as determined by their veterinarian and applicable laws.

Standards for Programs Providing Training Courses, Classes, Seminars and Internships/Apprenticeships within the Program and to the Public

These are intended to be minimum standards for all Assistance Dog programs that are members or candidates of ADI. All programs are encouraged to work at levels above the minimum standards.

People with disabilities have the right to a highly skilled dog that will be of assistance to them and enhance their lives. There is a significant problem with poorly trained dogs being passed-off as Assistance Dogs and the public has a right to be protected from individuals who misrepresent their level of Assistance Dog training expertise. These standards will aid public understanding that training Assistance Dogs is a highly professional task undertaken by skilled trainers.

1. Standards for programs charging a fee for a training course, class or seminar

When a program charges a fee for running a training course, class or seminar, it is important that the program does not give participants the impression that as a result of attending a given course, class or seminar, the attendee is a qualified Assistance Dog trainer.

Programs must include a written and easily read disclaimer when advertising any training course, class, or seminar.

The disclaimer must say the following:

Successfully attending and completing this _____ (name specific course etc.) _____ does not signify that the attendee is a service/Assistance Dog trainer or qualified to train and/or place service/Assistance Dogs.

Assistance Dogs International has specific standards that an individual must meet in order to be a certified Assistance Dog trainer – and taking part in this class does not meet these requirements.

The above wording must also be used on any Certificate of Attendance that the program offers.

In order to protect the interests of Assistance Dog clients, it is mandatory that time is spent at each training, course or class to explain the serious problems that can result from poorly trained Assistance Dogs.

In addition, the program should explain the high level of expertise that is required to be an Assistance Dog trainer who produces dogs that are a benefit to all rather than a detriment and safety hazard. This should include the necessary requirements to become an ADI certified trainer and the overall benefits of program placed dogs.

2. Standards for programs that offer short-term (less than 2 years) internships and apprenticeships

Programs may set up internships or apprenticeships arranged through schools, colleges and other programs. These internships are not intended to produce dog trainers but rather aim to explore all aspects of an Assistance Dog program and give interns an opportunity to gain broad work experience, or work on a specific short-term project. During such placements, students will benefit from gaining an understanding of the expertise that is required to be an Assistance Dog trainer in order to produce high quality dogs, and the benefits of a program placed Assistance Dog.

Paperwork relating to this type of internship or apprenticeship must include the following disclaimer:

Successfully attending and completing _____ (Describe placement) _____ does not signify that this person is a service/Assistance Dog trainer or qualified to train and/or place service/Assistance Dogs.

Assistance Dogs International has specific standards that an individual must meet in order to be a certified Assistance Dog trainer – completing this internship does not meet these requirements.

The above wording must also be used on any Certificate of Attendance that the program offers.

Programs that are providing training solely for trainers and volunteers *who come from member or candidate programs of ADI* do not need to provide the above disclaimer.

In order to protect the interests of Assistance Dog clients, it is mandatory that each program devote time during the internship to explain the seriousness of poorly trained Assistance Dogs and the problems that can happen as a result.

In addition, the program should explain the high level of expertise that is required to be an Assistance Dog trainer in order to produce dogs that are a benefit to all rather than a detriment and even a safety hazard. This should include a brief explanation of the requirements to become an ADI certified trainer and the benefits of program placed dogs.

3. Standards for programs that offer long-term internships and apprenticeships for potential Assistance Dog trainers

Where a program offers long-term (two years+) internships or apprenticeships with the aim of training someone to become an Assistance Dog trainer, it is vital that participants have a clear plan to support their training and development. At a minimum, it is vital that the following are in place:

- a. A written teaching plan covering the information needed to:
 - successfully pass the ADI trainers certification test
 - be able to train and place dogs to the ADI standard level
 - provide an educational component regarding disabilities

- work within the member programs standards and expectations

- b. Regular tests/evaluations for those participating in the internship or apprenticeship

A training period of a minimum of 2 years is required before an Assistance Dog trainer can be regarded as fully qualified.

4. Standard for programs making written training-related materials available to the public

Where a program produces written training-related material that is available to the public (whether paid for or not), the following disclaimer must be prominently included:

Assistance Dogs International, Inc. (ADI) has not reviewed this material and does not endorse or recommend these materials. ADI accepts no liability for the content of these materials or for the consequences of any actions taken on the basis of the information provided. Any views or opinions presented in these materials are solely those of the author and do not represent those of ADI. These materials and/or class do not qualify for ADI Assistance Dog Trainer Certification.

Standards for Training and Placement of Service dogs for Veterans with Military-Related PTSD

The intent of these standards is to ensure that programs have a clear and comprehensive understanding of military-related PTSD; utilize appropriate application, screening, and matching processes for clients; provide thorough and individualized client training regarding all aspects of the assistance dog partnership; and provide a lifetime of follow-up and team support.

1. In order to help determine if the veteran is ready to partner with a service dog, the program must provide a form created in conjunction with a mental health consultant to be filled out by the veteran's mental health provider that summarizes the state of the veteran's mental health and treatment. It must also address whether the veteran is actively suicidal and how he/she copes with anger management issues.
2. The program must have access to a licensed mental health professional (Master's Level or above in North America or equivalent in other countries) who is experienced with PTSD and can provide consultation regarding all aspects of the veteran/service dog partnering.
3. The veteran must provide names and contact information for two individuals who have agreed to provide support to the service dog team. These individuals must have access to the assistance dog program 24/7 and agree to provide an immediate and temporary home for the dog should an emergency arise.
4. The veteran must sign a consent form that allows the program or its consultant to communicate directly with the veteran's mental health provider or treatment team.
5. The veteran must provide written evidence that his/her family and/or support person (s) are knowledgeable regarding the application for a service dog and that they support the process, the placement of a service dog, and the follow-up of the team.
6. A face to face interview must occur with the veteran during the application process. Video conferencing may be utilized.

7. Once the veteran is accepted by the program, the program must follow up with the veteran at least every three months until placement occurs to let the veteran know the status of his/her placement.
8. The dog must be one that facilitates friendly public interaction with the veteran, as this is one of the goals of all placements.
9. The dog must meet all existing ADI standards regarding temperament and behavior and additionally exhibit:
 - a. tolerance to a high level of stress
 - b. sensitivity without anxiety
 - c. the ability to perceive environmental and interpersonal cues
 - d. the ability to complete tasks in very difficult and emotional situations
 - e. no reactivity, possessiveness, guarding behaviors or increased anxiety.
10. The dog must 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.
11. Programs will NOT train behaviors that encourage guarding, protecting, or searching for an enemy or threat.
12. Programs must design a team training program that includes flexibility and adaptability with a step by step curriculum that is based on praise, includes positive reinforcement and positive affect, and does not include the use of excessive corrections that may involve emotions of anger when giving a command.
13. The program's staff who have any interaction with the veterans must receive training (workshops, webinars, or presentations) by a mental health professional on PTSD and its triggers. The staff working directly with the veterans must also receive suicide awareness training from a mental health professional that addresses the:
 - a. signs of suicide
 - b. questions to ask
 - c. resources to offer the veteran.
14. The program must implement a schedule of follow-up that includes the following:
 - a. contact by phone, email, video conferencing, mail, or an in-person visit within one month of placement and every three months (minimum) for the first year.

- b. an in-home/community follow-up visit three months after placement by program staff or a program-trained individual.
 - c. on-going aftercare and advice to the partnerships as necessary, and personal contact by staff or trained volunteers at least annually to ensure that the standards reached at graduation are maintained. This may be accomplished in person, by video conferencing, or phone so that two-way communication occurs.
15. The program has a policy to ensure that, if a dog must be removed from its partnership, someone who is part of the veteran's support system is notified and preferably present at the time of the dog's surrender to the program. The veteran's last known mental health provider must also be notified.