

# Our Dog Programs

## Guide Dogs

Guide dogs provide increased independence and enhanced mobility to people who are blind or visually impaired. A guide dog is able to find and follow a clear path, maneuver around obstacles, and stop at curbs.

## Service Dogs

Service dogs for veterans and first responders are trained to help people who have disabilities other than blindness. These dogs can be trained to perform tasks such as providing counterbalance for vestibular issues, retrieving specific items such as a phone or medication, tugging interior and commercial doors, pressing a "Get Help" button or handicap buttons, tugging clothing, or responding to seizures.

## PTSD Service Dogs

PTSD service dogs are for veterans with combat-related post-traumatic stress and first responders who have experienced workplace trauma and are currently engaged in ongoing therapy addressing their disability. The tasks these dogs are trained to do are rest, shake, nightmare interruption, extension of personal space, and "get help."

## Hearing Dogs

This limited hearing dog program is for veterans and first responders. The dog is trained to respond to sounds such as alarms, door knocks or doorbells, telephones, smoke alarms, name recognition, and alert their hearing-impaired partners that these sounds have occurred.

## Specialized Facility Dogs

These dogs are trained to provide animal-assisted therapy at military or VA hospitals, or military installations. Combat operational stress control dogs are deployed to combat zones to offer emotional support for active-duty servicemen and women dealing with combat stress and home-front issues.

# How You Can Help

It costs more than \$50,000 to breed, raise, train, and place one assistance dog, but all of VetDogs' services are provided at no charge to the individual. America's VetDogs relies on voluntary public contributions to fund its efforts. With your help, VetDogs can continue to answer the call for our disabled heroes.

## Here's What You Can Do

- Spread the word about our services.
- Make a financial contribution and/or encourage your employer, club, or congregation to contribute or raise funds.
- Sponsor a puppy, a class, or a team.
- Invite a VetDogs speaker to your meeting or event.
- Include VetDogs in your bequests, legacies, and planned gifts. We are happy to help guide you.
- Make a donation in memory or honor of your fallen comrades, friends, or loved ones.
- Become a VetDogs Patriot and make a recurring or monthly gift.
- Follow us on our social media platforms.

CFC #81344



America's VetDogs was founded by the Guide Dog Foundation for the Blind. Since 1946, the Guide Dog Foundation has provided guide dogs and training free of charge to people who are blind or visually impaired, including blind veterans of all eras.

**GuideDog.org • 1-800-548-4337**

### America's VetDogs® – the Veteran's K-9 Corps, Inc.®

is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation, and our programs consistently receive top ratings from charity watchdog organizations. We are proud of our reputation as conscientious stewards of donor dollars. We provide assistance dogs free of charge to veterans and first responders with disabilities and who now seek the enhanced mobility and independence of an assistance dog. Your contributions are tax deductible to the extent provided by law. For a copy of the annual reports of America's VetDogs or the Guide Dog Foundation, registration in your state, or other financial information, please visit VetDogs.org or call 1-866-838-3647.



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**VetDogs.org ★ 1-866-VETDOGS**



06/2022

# Committed to Serve



**VetDogs.org**



# Our Commitment

Since 2003, America's VetDogs® has trained and placed specially trained guide and service dogs for disabled veterans and active-duty service members. In 2015, we expanded our service dog program to include first-responders with work-related disabilities and those who had otherwise honorably served our country and communities.

Our mission is to team each individual with a dog that will allow them to regain their pride and self-reliance and live without boundaries.

In 2013, VetDogs was accredited by both the International Guide Dog Federation and Assistance Dogs International. This international recognition demonstrates that we consistently follow the highest standards for the humane and ethical treatment of our dogs, maintain educational benchmarks for our staff, and address consumers' concerns as they arise.

## Building a Team

A guide or service dog provides assistance with daily life activities and is a constant companion to their handler. Partnering with a dog can provide an individual with enhanced mobility and greater independence in an individual's everyday life.

We breed Labrador and Golden Retrievers, and Lab/Golden crosses to ensure they possess excellent health, intelligence, and temperament. We use the latest positive reinforcement training techniques throughout the training process, from puppyhood



to advanced training; our dogs thrive on praise and rewards. All dogs must meet our health, safety, and training standards before they can become an assistance dog for a person with disabilities.

We work with select correctional institutions to place puppies with inmates who then train the pups on the fundamentals of service dog work. Weekend puppy raisers socialize the dogs to experiences they can't get in prison. The prison puppy program helps us reduce training costs and increases capacity while allowing inmates to give back to society.

Most individuals train at our headquarters in Smithtown, New York. Our instructors provide personalized attention, which gives students and their dogs time to bond and learn how to work together as a team. Depending on the circumstances, instruction is also available at locations across the U.S., including

a student's home community, and certain military hospitals and VA medical centers.

We offer a lifetime of aftercare through our graduate support team, and our regionally based field representatives can provide in-person and virtual training support, annual team recertification, and refresher training if needed.

Veterans with working assistance dogs can qualify for the VA service dog veterinary health insurance benefit. We provide each veteran with documentation that they can use to apply directly to the VA for this benefit, but as we do not have any input with the VA, it is up to each veteran to apply for themselves.