

FAQs

What is Dog A.I.D.?

Dog A.I.D. is a registered charity and is accredited to Assistance Dogs UK and Assistance Dogs International.

All those involved with Dog A.I.D. are volunteers.

We provide pet dog training to people over fifteen years old with physical disabilities up to Assistance Dog standard where suitable.

We do not supply either trained dogs or puppies.

A qualified dog is on a par with a Guide Dog, a Dog for the Disabled, or a Hearing Dog,.

Who can DA help?

We help those over fifteen who have a physical disability which impairs their movement and their ability to perform tasks such as picking up dropped objects, opening and shutting doors, finding articles which have been mislaid, putting washing in the machine, taking it out, placing articles where required, fetching help and many other tasks.

The dogs also simply with their presence give reassurance, confidence and independence to their owners.

We do not at the present time, have the resources to accept those with mental impairment, autism, or those with epilepsy who require a seizure alert dog. Nor do we accept clients with hearing impairment unless they have another significant physical disability.

Where is DA based?

Our office is in Cannock, Staffordshire but we have trainers in many parts of the country.

Our Website contains contact details and more information about the localities where we do not at present have trainers available.

In what Areas do You Have Trainers?

Our Trainers' List is constantly being updated, and it very much depends on whereabouts the trainer and client are in relation to each other as to whether it is possible to match them.

Simply because a client and trainer are both in Yorkshire, for example, does not mean that they are within reach of each other.

It is best to either visit our website, www.dogaid.org.uk, or contact the Office by phone, letter or email.

Dog A.I.D. Office
CVS Building

Chadsmoor
Cannock
Staffs
WS11 5HD

01543899463

client_admin@dogaid.org.uk

Or for more general enquiries

general_admin@dogaid.org.uk

How Can I Apply?

Contact the Office (details above), with your exact location, your disability, and the type of dog you have, how much training it has had, and its age.

If we feel that we may be able to help we will send you a Register of Interest Form. This is not an application form. Once we have received the Register of Interest, our trainer will visit to have a chat and see if we can help. If the trainer decides that you are suitable, we then send out the application pack; once that is completed training can begin. There is a six month probationary period.

Do I have to Pay?

Once accepted, a small annual subscription of £20 is asked for to cover admin etc.

Our membership period is 1st August to 31st July annually. New clients who join our scheme and pay their initial membership after 31st March (in anyone year), will not need to renew until July of the following year. Reminders are sent from the office

Can I have a jacket when my Dog is in Training?

We do not supply training jackets, we have lead sleeves which we feel are an appropriate alternative to a training jacket. These can be used once level 1 has been completed.

Lead sleeves can be obtained from our Office.

How long does the Training Take?

There is no simple answer to this question as there are so many variables. Very roughly eighteen months is the average, but many dogs have achieved Assistance status in much less time.

What sort of Dog do you accept for Training and is there an Age Limit for a Dog?

We will consider any breed or cross breed generally up to five years old. The important thing is that the dog is capable of doing what is required by the owner, and at least as important is that the dog is social with people of all types, other animals including strange dogs, and confident in different situations such as heavy traffic, loud noises, crowded shopping areas etc. The dog also needs to be reliable off lead.

Where does the Training take place and what does it consist of?

Generally the training is done in and around the client's home. This is then extended into other areas where the dog is not as familiar with the environment. Sometimes the client attends the trainer's venue, either for general issues or if the trainer has several Dog A.I.D. clients, they work together.

At level 1 the training begins with basic socialisation and obedience, such as lead walking, recalls and stays, travelling in either a car or on public transport. The dog also has to be calm when left either at home or in the car.

When the trainer feels that the client is ready an Assessment Form needs to be completed and then the client can move on to the next level.

Level 2 also includes the basic exercises with more distractions but also includes food refusal, entering places under supervision from their trainer, where pet dogs are allowed such as markets, outdoor food and retail outlets, a down at a distance,

Level 3 covers all of the above but in an unfamiliar area. Three or more Assistance tasks are also required.

How long are the Dogs able to work for and what happens when an Assistance Dog becomes too old to continue working?

It very much depends on the individual dog: an annual veterinary check is carried out, and a re-assessment to ensure that the dog is able comfortably to carry out the required tasks.

Frequently it is the client who realises that their dog is slowing down, and that a life as a loved pet is most appropriate at which point they contact the Dog A.I.D. office. However, as we have no problem with clients owning more than one dog, it is quite permissible for the client to acquire a new dog and begin to train that up through our scheme. They are not required to part with the older dog in order to do this.