



HOW TO APPLY FOR A DOG TAGS® SERVICE DOG AND WHAT TO EXPECT

As a boutique service dog provider specializing in service dogs for OIF/OEF veterans with PTSD, TBI, and other physical injuries, we only have a maximum of fifteen dogs to donate annually. Please note that your completed application does not guarantee you will receive a service dog. Careful consideration is made of both your ability to benefit from, and care for, one of these specially trained four-legged companions.

To qualify for a Dog Tags ® companion

- You must be an OIF/OEF veteran having served in Iraq or Afghanistan and no longer on active duty, or about to be discharged.
- You must live in a permanent residence (out of the hospital or off base) for at least eight months prior to submitting your application.
- You must be able to provide a stable, safe environment for our dog which includes love, exercise, medical care and food.
- You must be willing to become more independent and work with a highly-trained four-legged companion.
- You must be willing to tell the public, by way of having a working service dog with you, that you have a disability.

Puppies Behind Bars prohibits the discrimination of applicants on the basis of race, sex, creed, religion, sexual orientation, marital status, or other criteria protected by law.

Application Process

1. Please read the pre-application carefully; sign and remit the signature pages.
2. Please fill out and submit the application.
3. Please have your health care provider (psychiatrist, psychologist, counselor, or therapist) and two personal references fill out and submit the reference forms included at the end of the application. At least one of the personal references should be from a friend or someone not related to you. These references are required to complete your application, but you do not need to include them immediately with the application questionnaire if you need more time to get them together.
4. We will notify you when your application is received, and we will begin reviewing it. We get back to everyone who has submitted an application to us within two weeks. At that time, we may tell you that we feel we do not have a dog that will fit your needs, or we may tell you that we are going to start the process of interviewing you and your references.
5. We will contact your health care provider to obtain his or her professional medical opinion of how you would benefit from having a service dog. This discussion is completely confidential. Your

health care provider may require that you sign a waiver in order for him or her to speak with us. Please be sure to speak with your provider about this at the time you request a written reference.

6. We conduct an interview with you over the phone, and a separate interview via Zoom so that we can clarify any information on your application that we may need; so we can answer any questions you may have; and so we can get a better sense of who you are. In some cases, if we are near you, or have a staff person who is near you, we may do an in-person interview as well as a phone interview.
7. Although the application process usually takes 4-6 weeks to complete, depending on the number of applications currently being processed and the number of dogs we have available, we may decide to place the application process on hold until we have openings in an upcoming training. At that time, we will inform you of the expected wait time until we reactivate your application.
8. After verifying your medical and personal references, we will tell you if we think a Dog Tags® service dog is the right fit or not.

All client information and documents shared with Puppies Behind Bars staff through the application process, selection, training and follow up are kept completely confidential and not shared with any third party.

Declined Applicants

Each year, we decline applicant whose lifestyle we feel is not suitable for one of our service dogs. This does not mean that another service dog agency does not have a dog for you; it just means that we do not. If we decline your application, we will refer you to other schools.

Accepted Applicants

You can expect there to be a waiting period between the time we inform you that your application has been approved and your training and placement with the service dog specially chosen for you.

Training Schedule/ Travel Arrangements

We will contact you to let you know the dates of the next available fourteen-day training class. During this class you will be paired and trained with a service dog specifically chosen for you. If the dates we offer do not work for you, we will give you priority for the next training class. If you cannot make two classes in a row, we will work with you to see if we can accommodate you in a future class. You must demonstrate a desire to fit the training schedule into your life, though we understand there may be long-standing commitments, such as a medical evaluation board, around which you must schedule your training.

Once we establish the training dates for you and the service dog we have picked for you, we will contact you regarding travel logistics. PBB will make, and pay for, the flight and hotel arrangements for you to travel for the training. We will contact you a week before your scheduled travel to check in and make sure you have all the information you need. You should plan to bring your military attire for the graduation ceremony that culminates the fourteen days of training.

Recertification Requirement

You must agree to monthly check ins via text and Zoom for the first six months, a home visit with a PBB instructor approximately four months after you train with your dog, and yearly recertification thereafter.

Ongoing Feedback

PBB also requires that you maintain contact with us throughout the year. We will email you at least twice a year to check in to see how well you and your dog are faring and to get updates on your dog's veterinary care. If you do not want this kind of ongoing relationship, then PBB is not the right agency for you. There are many other excellent service dog agencies that have different ongoing levels of commitment.

I have read and carefully considered this document.

Name (please print)

Signature

Date

Puppies Behind Bars, Inc (name)

Puppies Behind Bars, Inc. (signature)

Date



Dog Tags® Service Dogs for Those Who Serve Us Pre-Application

Being paired with a service dog is a life-changing experience and can be freeing and empowering. But it comes with myriad responsibilities and challenges. It involves ongoing hard work and commitment and can involve considerable frustration. Before you apply for a Dog Tags® service dog, we ask you to reflect carefully on the ways a dog will impact your life as you read through the following considerations.

Privacy

How public are you about your disability? While some disabilities are apparent, others are not visible to the general public. The presence of a service dog will signal immediately that you have a disability. Some strangers will ask you about it, and others will look or stare. How will you react?

Americans, by and large, love dogs. This is a great thing and will mean that you and your service dog will be welcomed by many—even treated as a celebrity by some. But on the downside, you can count on being stopped in the street, in the office, in the lobby of apartment buildings—everywhere—with comments and questions about your dog. If you are comfortable with a lot of social interaction, this may be a plus. But if not, you should consider seriously how you would respond to this level of attention.

Be Realistic

What, specifically, do you imagine a service dog doing for you? How can the dog really help in terms of the way your disability affects your life? Think carefully about how realistic these goals are.

Exercising Your Dog Every Day

PBB requires that you provide at least one hour of off-leash outdoor exercise for your dog each day, regardless of inclement weather. How physically active are you? Do you have access to a dog park or another area where you can allow the dog to play? What are your thoughts about having to go outside on days you feel tired or depressed? PBB will take back a dog that is not well-exercised. We feel very strongly that our dogs must have time to run and play off-leash and that you must provide it. We are very serious about the emotional and physical health of our dogs. How do you feel that PBB will take back a dog that is not getting enough exercise?

Responsibilities to PBB

PBB staff will come to your home four months after you graduate with your dog, or sooner if we feel there is a need. How do you feel about having someone come to your home and watch you interact with your dog? For several years thereafter, you will be expected to meet with an instructor in order to recertify you and your dog. This may mean you

have to drive to the nearest big-city airport to meet an instructor so the instructor, after the first follow-up visit, does not have to rent a car and stay overnight in a hotel. How will you be able to accommodate this? Can you drive, or be driven, to your nearest big-city airport once a year to meet us?

We also require that you maintain routine contact with PBB. We will call you twice a year for routine check-ins. We may email you periodically. If we do not hear from you, we will call you and call you until we do. PBB retains ownership of our service dogs for the life of the dog. How do you feel about the fact that PBB is going to be watching how you and the dog live and work together for the life of the dog?

Time Commitment

First of all, you'll start with an intensive fourteen-day training period as you learn to work effectively with the dog. This period can be nerve-racking and certainly fatiguing. You'll attend lectures, work one-on-one with prison inmates, take written exams, and you'll need to practice every day as you learn. In addition, every single day during "team training" we take all the dogs and clients to the woods and to a lake so, after hours of walking and training each day, our dogs can be dogs. We figure that after working for you all day, it is their time to have you provide them with fun and play. But, we do this regardless of weather—snow, rain, disgustingly hot and humid—we're out there! How do you feel about this mandatory outdoors time?

Working Dog/Working Human

Our service dogs have received thousands of hours of training from dedicated professionals and puppy raisers. The dogs are very capable and have a wide range of skills—but these skills must be maintained with diligent practice. Are you willing to work every day with your dog during "team training"?

Once you and your dog are home, you must continue to work—every day for the rest of the dog's life. You'll spend 24 hours a day with the dog and devote much of that time to fine tuning and building the working relationship. Do you have the time? Do you have the patience? You may want to consider putting off the decision to pursue a service dog if you plan to start a new job, get married, start college soon, or if you've recently taken on any overriding commitments.

Home Environment/ Community

A service dog will not only enter your life, but also the lives of your family, friends, coworkers, and neighbors. Think about those you live with or come in contact with on a daily basis. Are they "dog people?" Will they welcome your greater independence or be threatened by it? Will it affect your relationship with them? Will they help the process of adapting to, and living with a service dog, or will they be a hindrance? After you've thought about this, talk to those in your home, family, and workplace to get their feedback. Then talk with them some more.

Now look at logistics. What kind of space do you live in? How and where will you provide exercise for a dog that will likely weigh between 60 and 75 pounds? What public places do you visit frequently? Do you ride public transportation? A service dog can help you in these environments, and you have a legal right to have a service animal with you at all times, but you can expect to be challenged about that right from time to time. How will you react? Are you willing to defend and demand that right?

Shedding, Drooling, Licking, Chewing

While dogs are not a significant disease vector to humans, they are indeed prone to drool, shed copiously, and to occasionally vomit or “have an accident” in the house. Service dogs are well-trained and mannered, and with proper grooming, diet, and exercise these problems can be kept to a minimum. But these are basic facts of dog companionship. The best-groomed dog will still leave traces of their hair on a favorite dress or suit. A valuable shoe or household object could be torn up or eaten. Use of “poop-bags” on city streets will need to become second nature. If you are particularly fastidious and uncomfortable with mess, a dog may not be the best partner for you.

Final Assessment

Weigh carefully the advantages provided by a service dog against the challenges, time commitment and potential problems a dog might bring into your life. Keep in mind that there are financial responsibilities connected with the dog as well. You will be responsible for your dog’s food and veterinary care. PBB demands that you use the high-quality dog food we use, which can cost \$80 for a 35-pound bag. Much like children, even the healthiest dog can become sick or injured and you will be responsible for paying for its care. We estimate that normal vet visits for inoculations, toys, and food will cost you around \$2,000.00 per year. You’ll want to think carefully about whether or not you are able to take on that level of financial responsibility. The benefits from a service dog partnership can be spectacular—but only if you’re the right person to maximize them.

I have read and carefully considered this document:

Signature

Date



APPLICATION FOR A SERVICE DOG FROM PUPPIES BEHIND BARS

Dog Tags® is a Puppies Behind Bars (PBB) initiative which honors wounded OIF/OEF veterans. Our dogs, raised in prison, are trained to perform over 90 service dog commands. Since we specialize in dogs for veterans with PTSD and TBI, we also teach our dogs special commands for wounded war veterans with these conditions.

The costs associated with getting the right dog and being trained to care for and work with that dog will be paid for by PBB. These include the costs of lodging and transportation for the veteran or soldier/sailor/airman to attend a fourteen-day training session in New York. As a boutique service dog school, PBB can donate a maximum of fifteen of these special dogs per year. Applicants must be out of the hospital for at least eight months in order to understand what it's like to live outside of the hospital and whether or not a dog can be incorporated into their lives.

This application will help us understand more about you, your needs, your lifestyle, and therefore which type of dog, and which of our dogs in particular, might be the best fit. If there is anything we've left out, please feel free to add it at the end. **Please mail the completed application to Ms. Nora Moran, Puppies Behind Bars, 263 West 38th Street, 4th floor, New York, NY 10018.**

Date:

Name:

Address:

City/ State/ Zip Code:

Home/ Cell Phone Number:

Email Address:

Date of Birth:

Occupation:

Are you: Married Single Divorced Separated Widowed

War in which you fought: Operation Iraqi Freedom Operation Enduring Freedom

Branch of Armed Services: **Current Status of Service:** Active Reserve Retired

Rank:

1. How did you hear about Puppies Behind Bars?

2. What was your year, or years of deployment? Where were you deployed? (Please list each deployment, and years, separately and please include a copy of your DD214. We cannot start looking at your application without a copy of your DD214. Please do not include any years in which you were a private contractor in Iraq or Afghanistan.)

3. Did you spend time in a hospital?

4. If so, where was the hospital and when were you discharged?

5. Have you ever been tested for seizures or traumatic brain injury? If so, what were the results?

6. Do you use any assistive devices such as a cane, wheelchair, hearing aids, or prosthetic limbs? If so, please describe below.

7. Do you take prescription or non-prescription drugs on a daily basis? If so, please indicate each medication you are taking and what each is for.

8. How much alcohol do you drink?
Each day? _____
Each week? _____
Each month? _____
Do you drink: Beer _____ Wine _____ Hard Alcohol (gin, vodka, scotch, rum, etc.) _____

9. Have you been arrested since you've been home? (If no, please skip to question #14)

10. If yes, when, for what, and where?
11. What was the outcome?
12. Were you incarcerated in jail or prison? If yes, where and for how long?
13. Are you currently on parole or probation? Where and for how long? What restrictions does your parole or probation carry?
14. Do you have any pending court cases?
15. Have there been any lawsuits within the last 5 years?
16. If so, what was the outcome?
17. Do you live alone?
18. If you do not live alone, with whom do you live? Do you have children in your home? If so, what ages? We will speak with your spouse, partner, or other adult with whom you live to talk about how a dog would be incorporated into your household. Please provide his or her name and contact information.
19. How close is your nearest relative? What is your relationship with your closest relative(s)?
20. Please describe the contact your immediate family (spouse, children, live-in parents) will have with the service dog.
21. Please describe the contact your extended family members (siblings, parents, in-laws, children who do not live at home, grandchildren) will have with the service dog.

30. If the answers to #'s 28 and 29 were "no," where will our dog get to run and play off-leash. Please provide name of park (or whatever), address, and link (if possible).
31. Have you ever had an experience with a dog before? If so, what kind and when? What happened to that dog/dogs?
32. Do you own or rent your house or apartment?
33. We specialize in training dogs for clients with PTSD. Our dogs are taught special commands such as "Got My Back" to help you in check-out lines at supermarkets; they are taught to awaken you from nightmares; and various commands to provide tactile grounding if you experience a panic attack or flashback. What, ideally, would you like a dog to do for you?
34. If your application is accepted, you will attend a fourteen-day training during which you will be paired and trained with a service dog specifically chosen for you. This training takes place at a conference center on four hundred-plus acres of wooded land, which we traverse several times a day, up and down significant hills, in order to get from point A to point B. We also spend nearly two hours exercising the dogs on hiking trails on the property every day. This enables class members to enjoy daily recreation together and allows our service dogs a chance to run off-lead and play. Will hiking on this property or in a similar state park present too much difficulty for you?

Please be as thorough and complete as possible when answering the following questions. PBB is here to help OIF/OEF veterans, not to pass judgement.

35. Thinking back throughout your life, what is the best experience you can remember with a dog? What was the worst?

36. How do you feel your past experience with dogs have shaped your opinions of animals?
37. How has your combat experience changed those opinions?
38. A prerequisite for getting a dog is a desire, on your part, to become more independent. How would you get across to us that you do, indeed, want to become more independent? (Use a separate piece of paper if necessary.)
39. Please list at least two people who may care for your service dog the event of an emergency such as an unforeseen hospitalization or sickness. Please provide names and contact information for each and your relationship to them. At least one of these contacts should live outside your home.
40. Please include a photo of yourself that has been taken within the last two weeks.

I give my consent to Puppies Behind Bars staff, including their mental health consultant, to speak with my personal references, my health care provider, and my significant other as a part of this application process. I understand that any information my references share with PBB staff is confidential and that Puppies Behind Bars will not share those details with me or any third party.

Print Name:

Sign Name:

Date:



Dog Tags and Backup Buddy Service Dog Agreement

Puppies Behind Bars (PBB) pays the costs associated with training the dog and matching the dog with veterans and first responders. PBB will pay for travel and lodging expenses for the veteran or first responder to travel to the fourteen-day training where the participant and dog are trained to work together. PBB will also provide most of the meals, but on the nights when we do not go out to dinner together as well as nights you choose to either eat in your hotel room or go out with other participants, those costs will be yours. Please save and remit all receipts for gas if you choose to drive to "Team Training". Thirty days after receiving the receipts, PBB will reimburse gas and toll expenses. PBB will not reimburse incidentals such as food or beverages consumed in transit or cultural or entertainment expenses incurred during the fourteen days of training with the dog.

I understand that I may contact Puppies Behind Bars at any time when I'm in need of advice related to my service dog, including medical, behavioral, financial, or public access issues. I may be asked to participate in additional training, either virtually or in person if refresher training is deemed necessary.

If, at any time and for any reason, I find that it is impossible to keep the dog I have received from PBB, I will contact PBB and will return the dog to the organization. I will neither sell nor give the dog to anyone, including a family member. PBB will make all arrangements to pick up the dog and no questions will be asked. PBB feels that the dog's happiness and health are of prime importance and will take back any dog whose quality of life is not of the highest standards, which includes that the dog maintains a healthy weight, receives proper veterinary care including monthly doses of Heartgard, Nextgard, and Frontline, one hour of off-leash outdoor exercise each day, and lives in the house and is not tied up outside or in a kennel. We will also take back the dog if you do not stay in touch with us, meaning that you do not return our calls, emails, texts, etc.

PBB will retain ownership of the dog for the life of the dog to ensure that you are working well with the dog and the above standards are met. While we have no intention, or desire, to take a dog back, past experience has shown us, unfortunately, that sometimes it is unavoidable. If PBB decides to remove a dog from my care, PBB will notify my emergency contact as well as my last known treating health care provider. PBB reserves the right to remove the dog from its placement at any time if one or more of the following situations exist:

1. The recipient is unable to properly care for the dog, as determined by PBB, including but not limited to the dog maintaining his or her placement weight.
2. The dog is being neglected or abused, or not exercised.
3. The dog is found wandering on its own.
4. The dog is no longer being used as a service dog.
5. I do not stay in touch with PBB as agreed upon.
6. The dog does not go everywhere with me but instead I leave him/her home with my family and he/she is more or less a family pet.

7. I use the service dog in a manner that violates the standards for service dogs established by PBB and Assistance Dogs International (ADI)

PBB will be in contact with me monthly for the first six months that I am home with my dog and will test me and my dog once a year thereafter. I may have to travel to meet PBB instructors for these visits. I agree to do such travel and will comply with all these visits, as well all emails, texts and phone calls from PBB staff and instructors.

I am aware that if, at any time, I have questions or have trouble adhering to any of the above stipulations, I may contact my instructor or the PBB office. I understand that I may withdraw my application for a service dog, leave team training, or return my service dog to Puppies Behind Bars at any time.

Name (please print)

Puppies Behind Bars, Inc. (name)

Signature

Puppies Behind Bars, Inc. (signature)

Date

Date



Health Care Provider Reference Form for Dog Tags® Application

Please note that Puppies Behind Bars will contact this reference for a phone interview to glean more information on the applicant. If the applicant needs to sign a release of information waiver prior to the phone interview, please request the applicant do so upon receipt of this form.

Applicant's Name: _____

Date: _____

Name of Health Care Provider (please print): _____

Title/ Relationship to Applicant: _____

Direct Phone Number (if providing general number, include direct extension) _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

1. How long have you known the applicant in a clinical capacity?
2. Our organization specializes in training service dogs for OIF/OEF veterans with PTSD, TBI, and other physical injuries. The applicant above has applied to receive one of these special dogs. Please discuss the symptoms of the applicant's disability including the dates the applicant was diagnosed with PTSD and/or TBI. Please also describe any limitations your client may have based on the diagnosis.
3. How would a service dog benefit the applicant? In your clinical opinion, is the applicant able to care, and provide for, a service dog?

4. Do you feel the applicant would be able to handle a service dog in times of stress and in public situations where dogs are not permitted, and specifically where the presence of the service dog is challenged?

5. Does the applicant take any medications or have any conditions which may impair his/her judgment or ability to care for a service dog?

6. Has the applicant had a suicide screening? If so, when, and what were the results of the assessment?

7. In some instances, Puppies Behind Bars determines during the fourteen-day "Team Training," that the veteran is not a proper match with our dogs. While we really try to work things out, if the veteran is not bonding with any of the dogs, if the veteran is not complying 100% with PBB rules, or if there are other reasons, we will notify you. How do you feel this veteran will respond if he or she is sent home without completing "Team Training?"

Please feel free to add anything else about the applicant that substantiates his/her ability to care for, and benefit from, a service dog. For this, please use the reverse side.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Please mail, scan, or fax this form to:

Nora Moran
Puppies Behind Bars
263 West 38th Street, 4th floor, New York, NY 10018
email: nora@puppiesbehindbars.com; fax: 212 689 9330



Personal Reference Form For Dog Tags® Application

Please note that Puppies Behind Bars will contact this reference for a phone interview to glean more information on the applicant.

Applicant's Name: _____

Our organization specializes in training service dogs for OIF/OEF veterans with PTSD, TBI, and other physical injuries. The above-named applicant has applied for a service dog to help cope with his/her disability.

Your Name:

Phone Number:

Email Address:

1. What is your relationship to the applicant?
2. How long have you known the applicant?
3. How does the applicant's disability impair his/her ability to function in daily life?
4. To your knowledge, what family and/or community support systems are available to the applicant?
5. In what ways would the applicant benefit from having a service dog?
6. Have you ever observed the applicant interacting with animals?

Personal Reference Form,

December 2022

7. How do you think the applicant would handle a service dog in times of stress?

8. By law, service dogs are required entry to all public areas, but not everyone knows that. Psychiatric service dogs bring a lot of attention to the veteran. How do you think the applicant would handle the increased attention and social interaction that come with having a service dog? How would he or she handle situations in which his/her right to be accompanied by a service dog is challenged?

9. To your knowledge is the applicant able to care, and provide for, a service dog?

Please feel free to add anything else you feel we should know about the applicant. For this, please use the reverse side.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

**Please send to:
Nora Moran
Puppies Behind Bars
263 West 38th Street, 4th Floor
New York, NY 10018
nora@puppiesbehindbars.com**



Personal Reference Form For Dog Tags® Application

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Applicant's Name: _____

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9. To your knowledge is the applicant able to care, and provide for, a service dog?

Please feel free to add anything else you feel we should know about the applicant. For this, please use the reverse side.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

**Please send to:
Nora Moran
Puppies Behind Bars
263 West 38th Street, 4th Floor
New York, NY 10018
nora@puppiesbehindbars.com**