

NSD Service Standards

Each and every National Service Dogs (NSD) Staff, Volunteer, Applicant or Graduate can expect:

Courtesy and respect: Your views and needs are important to us, and, in return, you can expect professional treatment and confidentiality. You will be assisted by a polite, responsive, and knowledgeable staff person.

Fairness: Our services will be fair regardless of your race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, and marital or familial status.

Clarity: We will clearly explain to you what we do, how our programs work, and who to contact for further assistance. If our information is unclear, tell us and we will try to make it clearer.

Accessibility: We are available to you and to talk to individuals and organizations about our programs.

Timeliness: A National Service Dogs team member will respond quickly to your question or concern.

Responsiveness: We will continue to seek your views, listen to your needs, and take actions based on them. If you are not satisfied with any aspect of our programs, please speak to our Executive Director, Danielle Forbes with your concerns. dani@nsd.on.ca 519-623-4188 ex 112

Program Standards:

Application Process

Requests: For NSD programs actively accepting application requests:

A response to a request for an application to receive a Service Dog will receive a response within 14 business days and, upon successful completion of the initial phone interview, the Application will be sent within 14 days. Applications must be returned to National Service Dogs within 6 months of receipt. If the application is not returned within 6 months the applicant must start the process from the beginning.

Receiving Completed Application: A email indicating that we have received the completed application and an outline of next steps; including your application status will be sent within 30 days of receipt of application.

Interview process: An in-home/in-person interview will be scheduled within 6 months whenever possible.

Approval/Decline letter: A letter will be sent to the family within 30 days from the date of the in-home interview stating the status of the application.

Waitlist Management: Clients will receive an update on the status of their placement every 6 months. Emails will be sent out last week of May and November each year.

Volunteer & Puppy Program

Application: Individuals use an online submission form to apply to be a Volunteer. Once the completed application is received the volunteer receives an information email; including a link to the New Volunteer Orientation Video. Phone or In-Home Interviews (for raiser and sitters) will be completed on a mutually agreed upon schedule. Approved volunteers will complete their training modules based on their area of volunteerism.

Placement of puppy/dogs:

Puppy Starters: a puppy will be placed with the family from approximately 8 weeks until 20 weeks.

Puppy Raisers: a puppy will be placed with the family from approximately 8 weeks until 15-18 months or 5 months to 18 months.

Adult Raisers: a dog will be placed with the family from approximately 15-18 months of age until final placement of the dog between 18 and 24 months of age.

On-going care: Routine animal health visits at the NSD Kennel or at the office of our approved Veterinary Teams are a mandatory part of the process. Similarly, obedience classes will be held during the puppy's stay with your family and are a mandatory part of the process. Virtual and in person class schedules will vary depending on the age of the puppy.

Return of dog: Dogs will be returned to the NSD facility upon request. This may occur at any point during the Puppy Program processes.

Graduates

Team Training:

Autism: Once a dog has been found suitable for a family, the family will be contacted at least 6-8 weeks prior to receiving their new Service Dog. Families are required to attend virtual training sessions prior to attending a one week training session at the NSD training facility in Ontario, without their children, as well as having an NSD Trainer and/or Client Service Social Worker visit in the home for an additional 1-2 days of training. NSD will touch base a minimum of once a month throughout the first 6 months after placement via progress reports and/or virtual classrooms. Post in person team training, graduates must attend 1 hour virtual classrooms weekly until the in-home placement sessions are completed. Then 1 hour virtual class monthly for the first 6 months. Annual follow ups will include client feedback surveys as well as a virtual classroom session. Recertification testing to occur in years 1,2,3,6,9. If at any time the dog needs to be removed from the client's care, NSD client service staff will ensure that the client's circle of support is engaged and present throughout the process. NSD offers virtual support groups every 2 months for graduates

PTSD: Once a dog has been found suitable for a client, the client will be contacted 6-8 weeks prior to arrange for team training. Clients are required to attend virtual training sessions prior to attending a one week training session at our facility in Ontario as well as having an NSD Trainer and/or Client Service Social Worker visit in the home for an additional 1-2 days of training. NSD will

touch base a minimum of once a month throughout the first 6 months after placement via progress reports and/or virtual classrooms. Post in person team training, graduates must attend 1 hour virtual classrooms weekly until the in-home placement sessions are completed. Then 1 hour virtual class monthly for the first 6 months and then once every three months to the end of the first year. Annual follow ups will include client feedback surveys as well as a virtual classroom session. Recertification testing to occur in years 1,2,3,6,9. If at any time the dog needs to be removed from the client's care, NSD client service staff will ensure that the client's circle of support, including treatment professional, is engaged and/or present throughout the process. NSD offers virtual support groups every 2 months for graduates

In Line with ADI's standards for the placement of Military based PTSD Service Dogs, NSD will:

- ensure all dogs will continue to be "socially" acceptable breeds
- dog will exhibit; tolerance to high stress, sensitivity without anxiety, ability to perceive environmental and interpersonal cues, ability to complete tasks in emotional situations, no reactivity, possessiveness, guarding behaviours or increased anxiety
- ensure the dogs must meet all existing ADI standards and perform 3 tasks to mitigate the disability
- not train behaviours that encourage guarding, protecting or search for a threat
- provide clients with a training program that supports their successful movement through team training and does not require the use of excessive corrections on the dog

CAI: Once a dog has been found suitable for a client, the client will be contacted 6-8 weeks prior to arrange for team training. Clients are required to attend virtual training sessions prior to attending a one week training session at our facility in Ontario as well as having an NSD Trainer and/or Client Service Social Worker visit in the facility for an additional 1-2 days of training. During this time all facility staff involved with the dog will be in serviced and the primary handler will receive in-home follow ups as well. NSD will touch base a minimum of once a month throughout the first 6 months after placement via progress reports and/or virtual classrooms. Post in person team training, graduates must attend 1 hour virtual classrooms weekly until the in-facility placement sessions are completed. Then 1 hour virtual class monthly for the first 6 months and then once every three months to the end of the first year. Annual follow ups will include client feedback surveys as well as a virtual classroom session. Recertification testing to occur in years 1,2,3,6,9. If at any time the dog needs to be removed from the client's care, NSD client service staff will ensure that the handler's leadership team is engaged and/or present throughout the process.

Annual Follow-Up: Ongoing contact will be made with each graduate over the period the dog is in the care of the graduate via virtual calls, emails, annual surveys, google classrooms and in-home/in-facility follow ups. An NSD staff member will touch base a minimum of once per year throughout the working life of the dog, with certification testing being done in years 1, 2, 3, 6, 9.

An NSD Client Service - Social Worker is available to assist any graduate on an as needed basis. We are just a phone call away.

Retirement: Generally a Service Dog will retire around the age of 10 years. Retirement options will be discussed on an individual basis at the appropriate time. A successor dog questionnaire will be sent to the client as part of the retirement discussion.