



FRANKLIN COUNTY OFFICE OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Operation Save-A-Vet, Save-A-Pet



If you are a Franklin County Veteran who is in need and interested in applying for a service dog, please read the following information carefully to determine if you meet our eligibility requirements.

Franklin County Veterans Affairs provides service dogs to Veterans who:

- have active duty service in any branch of the U.S. Armed Forces during any era; and
- have received an honorable or a general (under honorable conditions) discharge; and
- have a service-connected disability; and
- have been released from **all** active service and reserve obligations; and
- have met all Franklin County Veteran Affairs requirements for application into the program, applied, and have been accepted into the program

There is no cost to a Veteran for the service dogs we raise, train, and place, or for the training we provide.

Requirements for service dog applications to the Operation Save-A-Vet, Save-A-Pet Program:

Applicants shall be considered for partnership with an Operation Save-A-Vet, Save-A-Pet Dog regardless of race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, age, national origin (ancestry), marital status, sexual orientation, or other categories protected by law. As a potential recipient and candidate for our training (pairing) program, you must:

- live in Franklin County, Pennsylvania;
- provide your own transportation to and from training sessions;
- meet the physical, mental, and emotional needs of a service dog, and have an adequate support system in place to do so when you are unable to yourself;
- for applicants requesting assistance with any mental health condition, be current and remain in treatment with a mental health practitioner;
- have the full support of your family (including any caregivers) and your landlord (where applicable) in your quest to receive a service dog;
- commit to the training program and schedule;
- provide financial support for the service dog after ownership has been signed over.

****PLEASE NOTE:** We currently only serve Veterans who reside in the Franklin County, PA.

To obtain an application and apply please contact the Franklin County Veteran Affairs Office at 717-263-4326 or stop by our office at 425 Franklin Farm Lane, Chambersburg, PA 17202.



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Training and Certification Requirements

Veterans accepted into our program and matched with a service dog must commit to the requirements of the training program.

- Initial training and matching with a service dog lasts 11 weeks (at a minimum), one day a week for an hour.
- For the first 12-month period, the Veteran/SAV-SAP Dog team must meet with our dog trainer as assigned for training in a variety of public and private settings.
- Veterans must agree to adhere to **all** Operation Save-A-Vet, Save-A-Pet rules and regulations concerning the health, care, and training of the service dog, including daily exercise, training, and grooming requirements, as well as a smoke-free living environment.

The Veteran will agree to adhere to the following responsibilities with their SAV-SAP service dog:

- Treat the dog with appreciation and respect.
- Practice obedience regularly.
- Practice the dog's skills regularly.
- Maintain the dog's proper behavior in public and at home.
- Carry proper identification and be aware of all applicable laws pertaining to assistance dogs.
- Keep the dog well-groomed and well cared for.
- Practice preventative health care for the dog.
- Obtain annual health checks and vaccinations for the dog.
- Abide by all leash and license laws.
- Follow the training program's requirements for progress reports and medical evaluations.
- Arrange for the prompt cleanup of dog's waste.
- Following the minimum training commitment, the Veteran/SAV-SAP Dog team must successfully pass a certification examination, including:
 - a practical test of basic obedience and public access behavior conducted in a public location, and
 - a specialized skills test, which tests the team on performance of the specific skills the dog has been taught to perform for the Veteran.
- After certification, the team remains on probation for an additional six months before ownership of the dog is turned over to the Veteran. During this probationary period, the Veteran is required to continue to adhere to all SAV-SAP rules and regulations concerning the dog, and to check in with the Franklin County Veteran Affairs staff at least twice a month.
- After ownership of the dog is turned over to the Veteran, the Veteran and service dog team will have a yearly evaluation with SAV-SAP dog trainer that will continue throughout the life of the Veteran and service dog team.