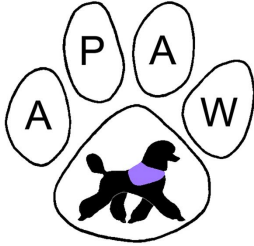


American Poodles At Work, Inc.

Info Packet



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Mission

American Poodles At Work, Inc. is a tax-exempt non-profit organization primarily dedicated to the training and placement of Service Dogs (for mobility assistance) with their human partners.

About Us

APAW is a young program, started in 2010 when our founder, Jillian Gartner, realized that the nation-wide need for Poodle assistance dogs was much greater than the supply of available dogs. APAW was founded to help provide working Poodles primarily for the people who cannot have another breed as their canine partner.

While our program is small, we are focusing on placing our Poodles locally, within the North-Eastern states. As APAW develops and expands we intend to broaden our range until we are able to provide dogs nationally.

As of this writing [early 2014] APAW is entirely volunteer-operated by our founder and a handful of part-time volunteers. Our facility is small and our resources are very limited. We currently are funded entirely by the placement of our dogs, pet training classes, small-scale fundraisers, and individual donations.

Working Roles

Our primary focus is on placing fully-trained mobility Service Dogs. Our secondary focuses are placing fully-trained mental health Assistance Dogs, and Social/Therapy Dogs who make visits to help a variety of people.

We sometimes provide young adult dogs as Working Candidates for clients who will complete the training themselves and just need a really nice dog that has been raised right from the start.

We place Pups from our litters between 8-12 weeks old – these dogs are available to working homes first, performance homes second. We only place pups in homes which intend to provide a lot of training and mental stimulation, as our dogs are bred and raised to be active working dogs and companions, not ‘just a pet.’

Under certain circumstances, APAW will provide private training (boarding at our facility) for a Poodle whose owner needs help with part of the dog’s training. Typically, the owner either needs help getting through the puppy stage and getting the dog to the point of being reliable with their basic obedience in public, or the owner has taught all of the basics and needs some help teaching the advanced tasks. These dogs are owned by the client, and APAW provides no guarantee of health or ideal personality match. The dog is not considered an APAW assistance dog, it is considered a privately trained dog. If the dog is deemed unsuitable for public access the owner is informed right away, and may choose to bring their dog home or continue training knowing the dog will only help them at home.

CLIENTS

Qualifications

Potential clients:

- live within the North-Eastern United States, AND
- have allergies or otherwise have a very strong preference for a Poodle over other breeds, AND
- have a prescription for an assistance dog from their doctor, AND
- have an independence-affecting disability
 - mobility impairment, OR
 - have a controlled mental health condition
- have the finances to cover the ongoing costs of caring for the assistance dog, AND
- are willing to commit to raising the funds to cover the cost of receiving an APAW assistance Poodle

Estimated Wait

For a mobility Service Dog the average wait is about 2-3 years from acceptance onto our waiting list. For a mental health Assistance Dog the average wait is 6-18 months. The wait for a Working Candidate or Pup is typically 6-12 months, unless there are very specific needs.

Team Training

Team Training is when the client and dog learn to work with each other and start their new lives together. This training typically is 10-14 days, and the client stays at a hotel near our facility if they live outside of driving range. This is the most crucial part of turning the client and dog into a true working team. In some cases, the second week of training is provided at the client's home [at the client's expense] to help them adapt what they have learned at APAW into their own life.

Application Process

There are many stages to the application process, from pre-application through our website, to a more detailed overview of a potential client's needs and living situation, to an in-person interview, doctor's assessment/prescription, a home visit (or video tour provided by clients located further away), detailed personality analysis to help find just the right dog, etc.

Cost

We are a small organization and need to charge all clients a fee in order to place a dog with them. By the time a person receives their dog, that dog's expenses have already been covered by the funds that a previous client provided... likewise, the amount a new client pays is funding our program to get the next dog/s ready for their partner/s. In this sense, each client 'pays it forward' to help another person get their canine companion.

Amount Requested [as of early 2014]:

Mobility Service Dogs	\$10,000
Mental Health Assistance Dog	\$7,500
Social/Therapy Dog	\$5,000
Working Candidate	\$4-5,000
Pup	\$1,500

In addition to the cost of the dog, there is a \$500 charge for Team Training.
All payments to APAW are considered tax-deductible donations.

DOGS

Acquisition

APAW breeds our own litters to raise pups as assistance dogs right from the start. These dogs typically are in-training for 1.5-2 years. We also accept some dogs into training from other breeders, and on rare occasions from shelters or rescue groups. These dogs range from 8 weeks up to about 2 years old, and typically are in-training until they are 1.5-2 year old, or have received 6-9 months of training.

Health Testing

As a minimum, all APAW dogs have their eyes and hearts evaluated, and all Standards have hip and elbow x-rays to rule out dysplasia. The smaller Poodles typically receive the same testing. Any dog in-training may receive additional testing if warranted by their pedigree or if symptoms are apparent. All working dogs are spayed/neutered before placement, unless specifically arranged for the dog to remain intact for use in our breeding program [very rare, except in the case of Social/Therapy Dogs].

Training Methods

APAW uses primarily positive reinforcement training methods, including a mixture of clicker training, luring, and gentle modeling. Initially food is used, but it is replaced by verbal praise and petting, and allowing the dog to perform favorite cues. Dogs are cued with a soft voice, and corrections are limited to a verbal 'nope'/'uh-oh!', and physical corrections – when needed – are typically mild leash checks. We use martingale collars for most of our dogs, and Easy Walk harnesses or Gentle Leaders when more control is needed at any stage of training or based on the dog's personality.

Our Poodles enjoy working, especially when other people are able to see the assistance they are providing. Our dogs understand when they need to be serious, but they also have a sense of humor which we allow them to use with discretion. Each dog has their own unique personality, and we don't attempt to make a dog change through training – we just match the dog to the client who will benefit from that personality.

Ownership

At the end of Team Training, all responsibility for the dog is transferred to the client. Actual ownership of the dog is maintained by APAW for 6 months, and is signed-over to the client after a working examination at that time, to verify that the team has a strong partnership. *All payments must be completed before ownership is signed over.*