



Providing Assistance Dogs Since 1977

10175 Wheeler Road
Central Point, Oregon 97502
Phone: 541-826-9220 Voice/TDE
Fax: 541-826-6696
www.dogsforbetterlives.org

HEARING DOG DESCRIPTION AND REQUIREMENTS

Please read before completing application

We are glad that you are thinking about applying for a Hearing Dog from Dogs for Better Lives. Before you begin the application process, it is important that you read this information and give it serious thought.

Our Dogs

- We rescue most of our dogs from animal shelters
- Hearing Dogs typically weigh 10 or more pounds and are between 1 and 3 years of age
- We evaluate dogs based on temperament and age; not looks, sex, breed mix, or size
- The dogs are young and active and will require exercise

Please Carefully Consider the Following Points:

A Hearing Dog Requires:

- Typically, Dogs for Better Lives requires a fenced yard attached to the home, a common area or dog park is not appropriate
- At least one full Training Year for dog and handler to become a well-formed team
- Total commitment to practice sound work daily
- Practicing obedience commands and house manners daily
- Taking the time to play with and reward your Hearing Dog for a job well done
- Providing exercise for your young, active Hearing Dog
- Taking sole responsibility for the care of the Hearing Dog so that (s)he will bond with you
- Other family members to refrain from giving the Hearing Dog attention until the Hearing Dog has completely bonded with you
- You to spend time and money for vet, food, grooming, obedience classes and/or a private trainer

Minimum Physical Requirements to have a Hearing Dog

Please note - we will select the dog best suited to you from the dogs that are available to us based on the information on your Physician's Assessment along with your lifestyle, activity level, home environment, and previous experience with dogs. Personal preference to size, breed, gender or type of coat is not considered in the selection process.

- Ability to walk a dog on leash (minimum 1 mile)
- Ability to handle a dog making physical contact (front paws or nose) multiple times per day
- Ability to promptly follow a dog to a sound multiple times per day

Other Pets in the Home

- Hearing Dogs are not placed in a home with another dog, except possibly one of our retired Hearing Dogs.
- If you have a cat(s), we can place a dog that works well with cats. If the cat does not do well with the Hearing Dog, the cat must be placed in another home.
- Other animals will be discussed during the application process.

Types of Hearing Dogs We Train

Dogs for Better Lives trains two types of dogs: Home Hearing Dogs and Certified Hearing Dogs. Both types of Hearing Dogs have the same sound work training.

- Home Hearing Dogs are for clients who need a trained dog to alert to sounds in their home environment but do not require a dog to accompany them into the work place or travel frequently.
- Certified Hearing Dogs are for clients that have sound work needs in their work environment in addition to their home environment and tend to travel more.
 - A Certified Hearing Dog will naturally provide greater environmental awareness by their reactions to the world around them.
 - A Certified Hearing Dog requires a minimum of 3 training trips into public every week.
 - o Public includes, but is not limited to, department stores, grocery stores, and restaurants
 - o Certified Hearing Dogs also require obedience practice in environments where there are other dogs such as pet stores and parks. Dogs for Better Lives' does not advocate the use of off leash dog parks.

The difference between a Home Hearing Dog and a Certified Hearing Dog is the level of confidence the dog has in new environments, new situations, and meeting new people.

Do you need a Hearing Dog certified for public access?

- Do you travel alone frequently and need a dog to work sounds for you in a hotel?
- Do you need a dog to work sounds for you in your workplace?
- Do you require environmental sound awareness?

Typical Sounds We Train Our Dogs to Perform

- Phone, door knock/bell, smoke alarm, name call, oven timer, alarm clock
- Baby cry- we can train for this, but it can be challenging for parents to do the work necessary in order to maintain the dog's consistency in working the sound

Sounds/Tasks Our Dogs do not Perform

- Sirens, honking horns, running water, boiling water, toilets running, etc.
- Dogs are not trained to pick up and retrieve dropped items

Sound work

- An alert is how the dog physically lets you know that a sound is happening.
- A dog will alert you by making physical contact.
- When the dog alerts, you must immediately stop what you are doing and follow the dog as it leads you to the sound. This means that if you are cooking, or watching a movie, you must stop and follow the dog to the sound. If the dog has worked well, take time to reward the dog. If the dog was confused and did not work well, you need to set the sound up again immediately to help the dog learn. You cannot wait until later; the dog will not learn if you wait.
- The dog must work sounds every time they occur, not just when it is convenient. To work the phone, no one else can answer the phone; others must wait for the dog to alert you and lead you to the phone. If the dog did not work well, you must hang up and have the person call you back to practice it again.
- The more “distractions” you have in your environment (children, pets, visitors), the more difficult it is for a dog to work. More distractions mean more practice in order to achieve consistent results.
- Sound work needs to be practiced daily. Practice sessions need to be set up. You cannot just wait for sounds to occur naturally. Many sounds require the help of another person.

What sounds are realistic for a Hearing Dog to work for you?

- Having a Hearing Dog work all the sounds we train for may not be realistic in your situation.
- If your spouse or children always answer the phone, and/or you do not talk and/or hear on the phone, then having a Hearing Dog work the phone for you may not be necessary. If the dog works the phone, you must be the one to answer it every time it rings.
- You need to set and use the alarm clock every day if you want the dog to work that sound. If you want to use an alarm clock once a month, having the Hearing Dog work it for you is unrealistic.

Additional Sounds

- Once a Hearing Dog is settled in the new environment and has bonded with you, it is relatively easy to teach the dog to work additional sounds, if they are realistic sounds.
- Examples include: Carbon monoxide detectors, cell phones, teakettle whistle, and fax machines

Placement

- The placement process for a Certified Hearing Dog is 5 days in length and 3 days for a Home Hearing Dog. Please be aware that you will need to make yourself available to work with the dog and the trainer during the entire placement.

- You will be required to take time off from work or school, and arrange for childcare outside of the home.
- You will be required to spend additional funds for treats and toys during placement.
- A veterinary trip at the client's expense is planned during placement to introduce your Hearing Dog to its veterinarian and purchase necessary supplies (heartworm, flea and tick medications).
- After placement, you will be required to attend training classes, or hire a private obedience trainer if classes are unavailable. This will help form a stronger bond between you and your dog as well as teach the dog to listen and to obey you.

Acknowledgement of Description and Requirements

By initialing below, I acknowledge that I have read and understand the following:

___ Currently, the expected wait time to receive a Hearing Dog is 18 to 24 months.

___ I understand that the first year is a training year and will be challenging, and that I am responsible for keeping up the training with the help of the Dogs for Better Lives Training Staff.

___ I understand that I will not be able to choose the size, breed, or gender of my Hearing Assistance Dog.

How did you first hear about Dogs for Better Lives?

If you have questions or concerns about the application process, please feel free to contact us at (800) 990-3647 Voice/TDD or e-mail us at info@dogsforbetterlives.org. Our office hours are 8:00 am to 4:30 pm Pacific Time, Monday through Friday.

We will be glad to assist you.



Hearing Dog Application

For DBL use only

Event: _____

Initials: _____

Date: _____

10175 Wheeler Road
 Central Point, Oregon 97502
 Phone: 541-826-9220 Voice/TDD
 Fax: 541-826-6696
 www.dogsforbetterlives.org

Name: _____ Date: _____

Home Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____

Mailing Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____
 (If not the same as above)

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Work Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Emergency Contact: _____ Phone: _____
 (Someone who does not live with you)

Preferred form of communication:

Hear on Phone Email Text Use Voice Carry Over (VCO) Captel

How do you communicate in person? I learn best by: (Rate 1 to 3 in order of preference)

Lip Reading? Reading:

Use Sign Language? Watching:

Use Voice? Doing:

Your age (optional): _____
 MUST be 18 or older to apply

Your Personal History

Please help us get to know you by sharing some of your personal history. Why do you want a Hearing Dog? What do you want us to understand about you and your life? How long have you been deaf or hard of hearing? What was the cause?

Sound Awareness

Hearing Dogs are trained to alert you to sounds in your home and workplace; they are not trained to work sounds for you in public.

I need a Hearing Dog to help me with the following sounds:

| | | | | | |
|---------------------|-----|----|-------------|-----|----|
| Fire/Smoke Alarm | Yes | No | Alarm Clock | Yes | No |
| Telephone | Yes | No | Name Call | Yes | No |
| Oven Timer | Yes | No | Baby Cry | Yes | No |
| Doorbell/Door Knock | Yes | No | | | |

Please list other sounds that you may want the dog to work for you:

I understand there are some sounds which the dog may not be able to learn because they are too hard to set up for practice, they are not repetitive, or are too hard to train a dog to do. This includes alerting to me water boiling on the stove, running water, or a child leaving the house.

Yes No

If no, please explain:

What assistive devices do you have?

Do you wear hearing aids?

Yes No

Do you have a cochlear implant?

Yes No

Are you scheduled to receive a cochlear implant?

Yes No

If yes, please give date for surgery _____

What sounds can you hear in your home or office with your hearing aids or cochlear implant in?

Please choose one:

I do not need to take a dog with me into public places.

I do need to take a dog with me into public places.

If so, why?

Home Environment

I live in a (choose one):

House

Duplex

Apartment

Retirement Facility

Mobile Home

Other: _____

If you rent, is your property owner aware that you are applying for an assistance dog?

Yes

No

Describe the home environment. (Size, number of rooms, upstairs, ground floor, noise levels, etc.)

Typically, we require a fenced yard attached to the home. A common use area or dog park will not qualify.

Is your yard fenced? Yes No

If yes, what size is it? Length _____ Width _____ Height _____

If no, when you fence the yard, how large will your fence be?

 Length _____ Width _____ Height _____

Please choose the appropriate answer for each of the following choices that describe your living situation:

Enclosed outside play area: Yes No Neighborhood dogs running loose: Yes No

Park or nearby walking trails: Yes No Busy streets nearby: Yes No

Neighbors in close proximity: Yes No

Please list other people living in your home.

| Name | Age (if minor child) | Relationship to you (Optional) | Does this person have a hearing loss? If so, how severe is it? | Any other physical or emotional challenges (optional) | Work/School Hours |
|------|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|--|----------------------|
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |

Please list people who visit your home frequently.

| Name | Age (if minor child) | Relationship to you (Optional) | Visit how often? |
|------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------|
| | | | |
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| | | | |
| | | | |

Work Environment

If you want to be considered for a Hearing Dog to go to work with you, please complete the following section. The following is a description of the work environment where the dog will be with me:

Have you discussed bringing a Certified Hearing Dog to work with your employer and co-workers? Yes No
 What was their response?

I do not intend to take a Hearing Dog with me when I go to work or school. When at work or school, this is how my dog will be cared for:

Physical Ability to Handle a Dog

To have a dog work for you, you must be physically able to promptly follow a dog to a sound many times a day, and you must be able to physically handle the dog. Please note: we will choose the best dog to fit your needs based on the Physician’s Assessment and the information you provide. You will not be able to choose the size, breed, or gender of your Hearing Assistance Dog if you are accepted to receive one.

| Handling the dog includes: | <30 pound dog | | 30> pound dog | |
|--|---------------|----|---------------|----|
| I am able to maintain control and take dog on a leash. | Yes | No | Yes | No |
| I am able to lift a dog into a car. | Yes | No | Yes | No |
| Handling the dog includes: | <30 pound dog | | 30> pound dog | |
| I am able to have a dog jump up on me, paw me, or tap me with his nose many times a day to alert me to | Yes | No | Yes | No |
| I am able to play interactively with a dog (throw a ball, kick a ball, and play with toys). | Yes | No | Yes | No |

Please choose the number that best describes your level of activity.

HIGH ACTIVITY -1- -2- -3- -4- -5- -6- LOW ACTIVITY

Other Requirements for Handling a Dog

If the dog alerts me to a sound, I am able to **visually** follow the dog back to the sound.

Yes

No

For a Hearing Dog to work well for you, you must be the person to feed, exercise, and care for the dog. You need to set up daily practice with the dog for each sound the dog works for you at a time when you can work patiently with your dog.

Generally, I am able to deal with frustration. If no, please explain:

Yes

No

I am willing, and able, to patiently teach a trained Hearing Dog to listen to and respond to me.

Yes

No

Please describe your daily routine:

Training Support System

For a Hearing Dog to work well for you, everyone living in your home must like dogs and be willing to have a Hearing Dog work for you. They must be willing to support you getting a dog and let the dog work the sounds for you consistently.

I have talked with everyone I live with about getting a Hearing Dog. They support my decision to apply for a Hearing Dog, and have no fear of dogs or dog related allergies. If Yes No no, please explain:

Type of Dog

Dogs for Better Lives' rescues mixed breed dogs from shelters based on temperament, not appearance. Our dogs come in a wide variety of sizes, shapes, looks, colors, and coat types. They are wonderful dogs that will provide sound awareness and special companionship for our clients.

Once a Hearing Dog is ready for placement, we select the applicant who is the best match for the dog, the place where the dog's skills and personality will enable it to be the most successful in helping the client. We do not place dogs based on an applicant's request for a specific look or coat type.

We do not place Hearing Dogs in homes with other dogs, except our retired Hearing Dogs.

If you have a cat(s), we can place a dog with you that does well with cats. There may be a significant period of adjustment. If your cat does not do well and/or adapt, you must find another home for your cat.

Other animals, such as rabbits, ferrets, iguanas, birds, etc., are more challenging for a Hearing Dog to work around. If you have animals other than cats and are not willing to re-home them, it may be very difficult to find a dog to meet your needs. This will be reviewed by our Screening Committee and will be determined at that time.

Have you ever had a dog before? Yes No If yes, what kind? _____

Describe your previous experiences with dogs:

If you have a dog now, you must be willing to rehome your dog if you are approved for a Hearing Dog.

Do you have any other pets? Yes No If yes, what kind? _____

Are you willing to re-home animals that are too distracting for a Hearing Dog to work around or do not adapt well to a Hearing Dog? Yes No

Anticipating problems: People who think about how they would deal with problems before they happen are better equipped to deal with them. Please list the types of things that could get in your way of working with and caring for your dog daily (for example: illness, taking care of children, work schedule, etc.).

Please give details:

To keep a dog working sounds for you, you must set up daily practice sessions with the dog for each sound. For many sounds you will need someone to assist you. This means you will need to set up daily practice for sound work and obedience with your dog.

Name two people who can help practice sound work: _____

When do you have time in your daily schedule to practice sounds with a dog? Please list the days and times.

Understanding what a Hearing Dog does

I understand that Hearing Dogs are trained to alert me to household sounds such as the doorbell, telephone, or my name being called. If other persons in my home answer the door, telephone, etc., rather than allowing my Hearing Dog to alert me and take me to the sound, the dog will stop alerting me. Yes No

If no, please explain:

I understand that Hearing Dogs are chosen for their people-friendly manner; they are not trained as guard dogs. Yes No

If no, please explain:

If I qualify for a Hearing Dog certified for public access to accompany me into public places, I understand that a Hearing Dog is not trained to alert me to sounds in public places such as restaurants, doctor's offices, or stores. Yes No

If no, please explain:

I understand a Hearing Dog is not trained to pull me out of the way of traffic or to alert me to sirens. Yes No

If no, please explain:

I understand that if I am paying attention, the Hearing Dog's awareness and reaction to the environment will help me be more aware of what is happening around me. Yes No

If no, please explain:

After carefully reviewing the information you have provided, the Screening Committee will decide as to which type of Hearing Dog would be most appropriate for your needs and lifestyle. A Certified Hearing Dog will be placed out of necessity. Please carefully consider your needs.

Training Trips: Three times a week.

- Going to public places specifically to practice obedience with your dog. Examples: Department stores, grocery stores, mall.
- Going to places, you are likely to encounter other dogs, such as parks or pet stores so you can practice obedience with dog distractions. Hearing Dogs must ignore other dogs when in public, this is difficult for them so ongoing practice is essential to keep up their training.

Financial

Our trained Hearing Dogs are provided to you free of charge, but you are solely responsible for all ongoing costs of keeping your Hearing Dog fed, healthy, and working for you.

Ongoing costs for a Hearing Dog include:

- High quality dog food
- Toys and treats for training rewards
- Regular veterinary check-ups
- Emergency veterinary treatment
- Grooming

We estimate the yearly cost of having a Hearing Dog to be more than \$750.
Emergency veterinary trips can significantly increase this amount.

We do not recommend you apply for a Hearing Dog if it will be a financial hardship.

| | | |
|---|-----|----|
| I understand I am fully responsible for the care of the dog after it comes to live with me. | Yes | No |
| I expect, and am able, to pay for yearly veterinary expenses and unexpected veterinary expenses. | Yes | No |
| I understand to keep a Hearing Dog working, I will need to buy new toys and treats on an ongoing basis. | Yes | No |
| I understand I need to feed my Hearing Dog a high quality dog food that will cost significantly more than “grocery store” dog food that is less nutritious. | Yes | No |
| I understand that Dogs for Better Lives does NOT require applicants for our dogs to do any fundraising or public relations activities either before or after receiving their dog. Any participation in these kinds of activities will be the choice of the client and will not affect whether or not they receive a dog from Dogs for Better Lives. | Yes | No |
| In the event of extreme emergency veterinary expenses: | | |
| I will be able to take care of the bill myself. | Yes | No |
| I will be able to get help from friends or relatives. | Yes | No |
| I would need special financial assistance. | Yes | No |
| Are there any questions or comments about the costs for caring for a Hearing Dog? | | |

Additional Information

| | | |
|--|-------|----|
| Have you ever received or applied for a Hearing Dog before? | Yes | No |
| If yes, when and from whom? | _____ | |
| Did you receive a dog? | Yes | No |
| If yes, when? | _____ | |
| If you have had a Hearing Dog from another organization, why are you applying for a Hearing Dog from Dogs for Better Lives, instead of the other organization? | | |

| | | |
|---|-----|----|
| Have you, or anyone living with you, ever been convicted of a felony? | Yes | No |
| If yes, please explain: | | |

Dogs for Better Lives does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, age, veteran status, disability or any other legally protected status. It is our intention that all qualified applicants be given equal opportunity and that selection decisions are based on dog placement needs for both you and the dog, and any related factors.

Dogs for Better Lives controls access to applicant/client files, holds all applicant/client information strictly confidential, and agrees that such information shall be used only for the designated purpose, and shall not be used for any other purpose or disclosed to any third party.

Please include at least one letter of personal character recommendation to be submitted by a non-family member with this application. Please note: after initial application review, you will be required to submit a copy of your medically based audiogram, an information release form, and a physician's assessment.

Please E-Mail completed application to: info@dogsforbetterlives.org

If unable to E-Mail, please mail to: Dogs for Better Lives
10175 Wheeler Road
Central Point, OR 97502