



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 16, 2020

**Contact:** Harvey Potts, [harvey@dogsforbetterlives.org](mailto:harvey@dogsforbetterlives.org), (541) 826-9220

### Dogs for Better Lives' Addresses Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)

**CENTRAL POINT, OR** – Dogs for Better Lives (DBL) is fully committed to supporting our national community, including staff, clients, volunteers, and community partners.

In these uncertain times with the [Coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\)](#), DBL has been monitoring and discussing the situation locally and across the country. This virus is very serious especially to the most vulnerable population.

Now that Coronavirus (COVID-19) has been declared a global pandemic, social distancing and practicing proper hygiene is the recommended course of action by the [Center for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC) and the [World Health Organization](#). DBL encourages its larger community to follow their guidance and local officials as well as information provided by reputable sources from medical and veterinary professionals.

“The safety of our staff and dogs is paramount,” stated President and CEO Bryan Williams. “Obviously, this is a fluid situation and we’re taking proper precautions to create an environment where both remain healthy and we are able to move our mission forward.”

In these challenging times, it is so important to support each other by sharing best practices and reliable information. DBL has initiated several steps that the organization is following, including:

- **Listening to the Experts;** DBL cares about everyone’s safety and are closely monitoring the situation with guidance from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), [American Veterinary Medical Association](#) (AVMA), and [Assistance Dog International](#) (ADI)
- **Ensuring Healthy Assistance Dogs;** There is currently no evidence that companion animals can spread COVID-19, and further, it does not appear that our companion animals will become ill due to this virus. DBL encourages all to read and bookmark the FAQ’s posted on the AVMA website which will help to better understand the impact to [Assistance Dogs](#) as it’s updated regularly with the most current information.

- **Supporting Our Team;** We take the safety and well-being of our staff very seriously and will be flexible during this challenging time. We have implemented several steps internally to ensure that all are supported, should staff need assistance and/or additional support. Flex schedules, remote workplans for many, good health care for all, and transparency are just a few examples of how DBL is supporting its team.

DBL is committed to the health and well-being of our staff, clients, volunteers, and visiting public. With that in mind, we are implementing initial safety precautions regarding the Coronavirus (COVID-19) and are limiting non-essential visitors to our national campus in Central Point, OR.

At this time, we have cancelled all public tours and have put the program on temporary hold. Only those individual guests with a prearranged invite from a staff person, will be admitted on campus.

Further, we have significantly curtailed our work-related travel locally and nationally, though knowing this is a very fluid situation, we are re-evaluating this daily and weekly in the months ahead, and will make appropriate changes accordingly.

DBL is continuing to monitor the need for this restriction and appreciates the public's understanding. Ultimately this is bigger than Dogs for Better Lives and we recognize that. Please continue to check back on our website and social media for the latest developments.



*Dogs for Better Lives is a nationally recognized 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization focusing on the professional training and placement of Hearing Assistance Dogs, Autism Assistance Dogs, and Facility Dogs. Accredited by [Assistance Dogs International \(ADI\)](#) and recognized by [Charity Navigator](#) as a top 4-star nonprofit, Dogs for Better Lives has been rescuing dogs, bettering lives, and providing Assistance Dogs since 1977.*

10175 Wheeler Road, Central Point, Oregon 97502 ◆ (541) 826-9220 ◆ [www.dogsforbetterlives.org](http://www.dogsforbetterlives.org)