PRIORITY OF USE OF RAISED PUPPIES FOR DOGS FOR BETTER LIVES

Policy: Dog Placement and Career Paths

Objective: To ensure the dogs in our programs are effectively utilized and placed in suitable roles that align with our mission. Each dog's career path will be determined based on their skills, traits, and potential for different assistance programs.

Breeding Stock

If a dog meets our breeding stock standards and possesses desirable lineage that complements our breeding colony, they will be selected for our breeding program.

Dogs for Assistance Programs

Throughout the training process, dogs will undergo continuous evaluation to assess their skills and traits for assisting individuals with disabilities. They will be assigned to the most appropriate program based on their abilities. The following assistance programs are available:

a. Hearing Dogs: Dogs are trained to alert people with hearing impairments to household sounds that are necessary for everyday safety and independence. They are trained to make physical contact and lead their person to the source of the sound. Through sound awareness and companionship, these dogs provide greatly increased freedom.

b. Autism Assistance Dogs: Dogs are trained to redirect repetitive behaviors such as flailing arms, waving hands, snapping fingers, stomping; apply deep pressure; and to provide companionship to children who experience autism spectrum disorder. Combined with their professional training, their calm and caring behavior have shown to decrease anxiety, increase calmness, reduce emotional meltdowns, and foster more manageable bedtime routines.

c. Facility Dogs: Dogs are specifically trained to assist volunteers or professionals such as physicians, teachers, counselors, and police officers who work with vulnerable populations and people with disabilities. Each dog has been extensively trained tasks designed to motivate, inspire, and enhance the lives of the clients they serve. Facility Dogs do not have public access except when accompanying the professionals and their clients.

Transfer to Cooperating Assistance Dog Program

Dogs that meet health, safety, and training standards may be transferred to a cooperating assistance dog program if they are accepted. The transfer will be conditional, with the understanding that the dog will be returned to Dogs for Better Lives for adoption if it is not successfully placed.

Transfer to Working Dog Program

Dogs that are better suited for detection, search and rescue, or as police dogs will be transferred to programs focused on performing tasks to assist human companions. Dogs that meet the standards for strategic partnerships will be transferred to programs focused on outreach, awareness, or education related to assistance animals. These partnerships will raise awareness for the organization. If a dog is not successfully placed in a working dog program, it will be returned to Dogs for Better Lives for adoption.

Adoption

Dogs not selected for breeding, assistance programs, or working dog programs will be considered for adoption. All potential adopters will undergo a thorough screening process to ensure they are a suitable match and can provide a safe and loving home. The puppy raiser of the dog will be given first choice for adoption after the dog's career change.

Retirement

The decision to retire an assistance dog, at any age, will be made collaboratively by the dog's partner, our consumer services department, and training team. Retirement is an emotional and carefully considered process. In most cases, our clients will adopt the retired dog as a pet to a friend or family member. Occasionally, the dog may be returned to the Dogs for Better Lives to find the best possible home. After retirement, the dog will be offered back to the puppy raiser or placed in an adoptive home.

Note: This policy aims to provide clear guidelines for dog placement and career paths within our organization, ensuring that each dog's skills and traits are utilized to their fullest potential while prioritizing their well-being and suitable placements.

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