

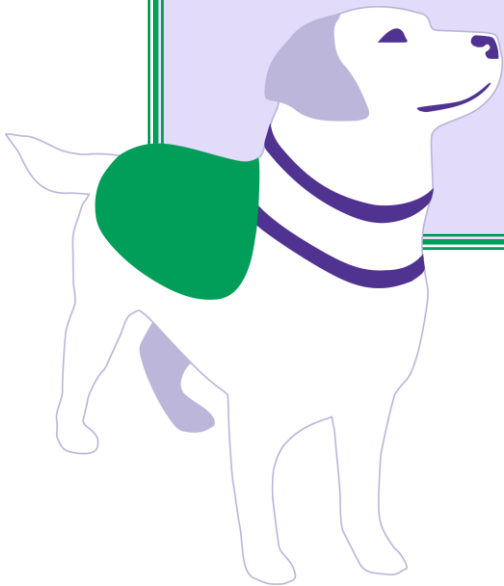


221 N. Grampian Hills Road
Columbia, SC 29223
803.788.7063

info@paals
www.paals.org

PRINTABLE REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Eligibility Requirements
Information Required
Policies & Process





CLIENT ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Note: You must meet ALL of these requirements to apply.

1. Must be 16 or older to have an independent assistance dog. PAALS will consider younger facilitated teams; however, the minimum age to be considered is 5 years old. A facilitated team placement means that a parent/guardian will be responsible for giving cues to the assistance dog.
2. **GEOGRAPHIC RESTRICTIONS** - You must live within:
Mobility, Facility and Skilled Home Companion applicants: 230 miles of PAALS.
Autism applicants: 130 miles of PAALS.
PTSD applicants and people diagnosed with PTSD: 130 miles of PAALS
PTSD applicants must be in consistent (at least once a month) therapy for a minimum of 6 months.
3. Adult applicants (and the parent/guardian facilitator of a facilitated assistance dog team) must pass a background check.
4. Must be able to provide a safe environment.
5. Must be able to provide dog with exercise daily.
6. Must be able to afford annual dog supplies and veterinary services averaging \$1,000 per year.
7. Must have no more than one additional dog living in the home with the PAALS dog.
8. Must have a stable living situation for a minimum of one year before placement.
9. Must have explored potential employment and housing conflicts.
10. Must be willing to send follow-up paperwork proving medical care and continued training to PAALS after placement of assistance dog.
11. Must be able to attend a 2-3 week team training session in Columbia, SC prior to placement at their own expense and to provide their own transportation, housing, meals and care attendant if needed.
12. Must have realistic expectations of tasks/roles a dog could perform which could assist a person with a disability and/or a teacher, counselor or therapist who work with people with disabilities (facility dog).
13. Must have back-up care arranged for assistance dog in case of an emergency.
14. Must be willing to continue the training program that PAALS begins for the team throughout the working life of the dog.
15. Must keep PAALS apprised of any changes that would affect any of the above after application is accepted.
16. Must complete all 3 steps of the application process to be eligible.
17. Must treat PAALS dog with unconditional love!

Failure to report any information or changes in your application information could adversely affect your application status.



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INFORMATION REQUIRED TO APPLY

Applicants should understand that there is extensive information (see list below) required in order to complete this application.

We recommend that you review the list of required information and gather all information before beginning the application.

If you are unable to complete the application online, contact PAALS for an alternative method.

Note: Online applications are processed quicker due to the manual entry required for paper applications.

1. **Complete list of your healthcare professionals:** (Including primary care doctor, specialists and therapists). You will need their addresses and phone numbers. For each therapist, you will need to list the type of therapy, frequency of the therapy, and your goals.
2. **Complete list of your medications:** (Including prescription name, prescriber name, dosage and reason for the medication.
3. **Medical History and Release forms:** Part of the form is to be completed by the applicant and part of the form must be completed by the specified doctor. You must have one form completed for EACH of your physicians and therapists.
4. **Emergency Care Contacts:** Names and addresses of people that can take care of your dog in case of emergencies
5. **Resident/Visitor Information:** Names and pertinent information of people in your home.
6. **Background Information Release Authorization:** Adult applicants (or the adult parent/guardian facilitator for a facilitated assistance dog team) must complete this form.
7. **References/Letter of Recommendation** (You'll need to list 3 references, and have 1 formal letter of recommendation sent directly to PAALS. (Letter can be from 1 of your 3 references.)
8. **Employment/School/Community Volunteer Information**
9. **Lifestyle Information:** Information regarding your home, family, pets, and lifestyle.
10. **FACILITATED DOG TEAMS:**
If you are applying for a facilitated assistance dog team then you must get Medical History & Release forms completed for both the applicant with a disability as well as the facilitator who will be responsible for the dog's care.
11. **VETERANS:** Discharged military veterans must provide a copy of their **DD214**.

IMPORTANT NOTES:

You must notify PAALS at any time during the application review process if the applicant or any household member has or is planning any life changes such as moving, pregnancies, marriage, divorce, adding or removing members of the household, adding or removing animals from the household, leaving or changing jobs/school, stopping or starting any therapies, etc.

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POLICIES AND PROCESS

FEES & COSTS

As a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization, we are fortunate to provide service dogs to our clients at no cost for the dog. There are 2 expenses involved which are listed below. *(Both the fee/tuition is waived for Rob's Best Friend Fund applicants.)*

APPLICATION FEE

There is a \$50 non-refundable application fee to apply for a service dog. This covers administrative costs to review and process your application. The application is not considered complete, and the review process will not begin, until all required documents/information have been received.

TEAM TRAINING TUITION **(Waived for Rob's Best Friend Applicants)*

There is a \$5,000 Team Training tuition fee associated with training you and your Assistance Dog prior to placement. This tuition can be paid directly or fundraised. No client is required to fundraise or participate in public relations at any time. Participation in fundraising/PR has no impact on the timeline or placement of an assistance dog.

**This tuition should not prohibit you from applying for an assistance dog. Please do not begin fundraising before you receive notice of acceptance into the PAALS program.*

APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS

Your application review process will not begin until all required documents have been received, including all Applicant (and Facilitator when necessary) Medical Information from your healthcare providers, the Background Information Release Authorization and a DD214 form (discharged veterans only) and any additional requested information. If your application is not complete within six months, you will be required to submit a new completed package to be considered for an interview.

1. The Applicant Committee (AC) will review your application, Applicant/(Facilitator) Medical Information, and all supporting documents.
 - a. If the AC feels that PAALS is unable to provide an assistance dog for your particular case, PAALS will send you a letter of notification.
 - b. If the AC feels that PAALS may be able to provide an assistance dog for your particular case, PAALS will move to Step #2.
2. The AC will call or email you to set up an Initial Interview to be held in Columbia, SC. This interview usually lasts 1 to 2 hours. Two or more PAALS representatives will ask you, your family and other household member's additional questions to better understand your needs. You will be able to ask any questions you may have at this time. PAALS may take pictures or video strictly for the confidential viewing of the AC. A PAALS assistance dog will also be present.
3. You must contact, in writing, PAALS within 1 week after the Initial interview if you would like to move forward with your application.
 - a. If you do not want to move forward or if you have not contacted PAALS within 1 week we will consider your application closed.
 - b. If you do want to move forward with your application then PAALS will submit your initial interview information to the AC.
4. The AC will review your application along with additional information from the Initial Interview.
 - a. If the AC feels that PAALS is unable to provide an assistance dog for your particular case, PAALS will send you a letter of notification.
 - b. If the AC feels that PAALS may be able to provide an assistance dog for your particular case, PAALS will move to Step #4.1 for applicants for a dog for a person for mobility, PTSD, or autism or to Step #5 for other applicants



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4.1 If you have applied for a dog for a person for mobility, PTSD, or autism, the AC will call or email you to set up a Second Interview to be held in Columbia, SC. Because a member of the AC will be contacting some of your medical providers prior to this interview, it could take three to four months before an interview can be scheduled. This interview will take place in a public location and usually lasts 1 to 2 hours. Two or more PAALS representatives will be present along with a PAALS assistance dog

4.2 You must contact, in writing, PAALS within 1 week after the Second Interview if you would like to move forward with your application.

- a. If you do not want to move forward or if you have not contacted PAALS within 1 week we will consider your application closed.
- b. If you do want to move forward with your application then PAALS will submit your second interview information to the AC.

4.3 The AC will review your application along with additional information from the Second Interview.

- a. If the AC feels that PAALS is unable to provide an assistance dog for your particular case, PAALS will send you a letter of notification.
 - b. If the AC feels that PAALS may be able to provide an assistance dog for your particular case, PAALS will move to Step #5.
5. The AC will call or email you to set up a Home Interview to be held in your home. All members of the household must be present. This usually lasts 1 to 2 hours. Two or more PAALS representatives will ask you, your family and other household member's additional questions to better understand your needs and your living environment. PAALS will look at every room in the house as well as any/all yard spaces. PAALS will meet any other pets. A PAALS Assistance Dog will also be present.
6. You must contact, in writing, PAALS within 1 week after the Home Interview if you would like to move forward with your application.
- a. If you do not want to move forward or if you have not contacted PAALS within 1 week we will consider your application closed
 - b. If you do want to move forward with your application then PAALS will submit your Home interview information to the AC.
7. The AC will review your application along with additional information from the Home Interview.
- a. If the AC feels that PAALS is unable to provide an assistance dog for your particular case, PAALS will send you a letter of notification.
 - b. If the AC feels that PAALS is able to provide an assistance dog for your particular case, PAALS will call you to let you know that you have been selected as a PAALS client.

COMPLAINT RESOLUTION POLICY

If any student, client, applicant, or volunteer should have a problem with PAALS practices, policies, staff members or volunteers, they are encouraged to contact the Executive Director of PAALS. Should further recourse be sought, the individual should contact the President of the PAALS Board of Directors. The President's contact information is available through [PAALS](#)

PAALS POLICY STATEMENT FOR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

1. The goal of our staff and volunteers is to provide each applicant with a comprehensive review of their application in order make the best decision regarding the possible placement of an assistance dog with the applicant. We strive to make sure that the application process is both comprehensive and compassionate.
2. Each applicant will be treated with respect and courtesy.
3. PAALS staff and volunteer will endeavor to answer any phone calls and/or emails regarding the application process and specific applications within 48 hours.
4. The staff and volunteers will be a source of support during the application process.



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5. If the application is approved,
 - a. The applicant will be matched with a dog that will meet his/her needs as determined by PAALS.
 - b. The applicant will receive a complete educational program regarding dog ownership, using the assistance dog effectively and how to handle the assistance dog in public places under the ADA Law. The PAALS instructor will be familiar with the nature of a applicant's disability and will provide appropriate training.
 - c. The PAALS staff and volunteers will be available for follow up support once the Assistance Dog Team goes home.

PAALS Policy Statement for Applicants

1. The applicant will treat everyone (PAALS staff, volunteers and other clients) with courtesy and respect and will not physically or verbally abuse anyone.
2. The applicant assumes full responsibility for the actions of any member or personal care attendant who accompanies him/her for interviews and home visit.
3. The applicant recognizes that their application will not be fully reviewed until all required paperwork has been received.
4. The applicant recognizes that the application process can take six months or longer.
5. The applicant understands that PAALS has the right to discontinue the application process and disqualify an applicant if any of the above policies are not followed.

Please note that the Applicant Committee meets once a month and the time frame of this process varies and may take six months or longer.



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