

**For additional information  
on Service Dogs**

**Illinois Attorney General**

<https://illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/rights/servanimals.html>

**Americans with Disabilities Act**

[https://www.ada.gov/service\\_animals\\_2010.htm](https://www.ada.gov/service_animals_2010.htm)

**Visit us**

<https://veterans.illinois.gov>

**Facebook**

<https://www.facebook.com/IllinoisDepartmentOfVeteransAffairs/>



*For more information about the Department's programs  
and services, visit our website:  
<https://veterans.illinois.gov> or contact:*

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State of Illinois  
Department of Veterans' Affairs

# Service Animals





## Service Dogs/Guide Dogs

A service dog is a veteran's companion and the bond created promotes independence and well-being. The canine is individually trained to perform tasks for persons with disabilities, either physical or emotional. For example, guiding a person who is sight-impaired, alerting a person with hearing loss, pulling a wheelchair, alerting and protecting a person who is having a seizure, reminding a person with mental illness to take prescribed medications, and calming a person with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) during an anxiety attack. For a veteran, a service dog can be integral to the healing and the management of PTSD and other challenges related to military service. A service dog enhances the life of a veteran so that they may lead productive, gratifying, and meaningful lives.



## Where do I find a dog?

To receive benefits and ensure veterans are receiving dogs with the highest level of training, a dog must be received from either:

### Assistance Dogs International (ADI)

<https://assistancedogsinternational.org/>

### International Guide Dog Federation (IGDF)

<https://www.igdf.org.uk/>

## What benefit will the VA provide?

The VA provides veterinary health care and other benefits to maximize the life and utility of these specialized dogs if the dog originated with either ADO or IGDF. The VA will pay for equipment (e.g. harness and/or backpack), veterinary care including prescribed medications, office visits for medical procedures, and dental procedures requiring sedation. Vaccinations should be current when the dog is provided to the veteran and subsequent vaccinations will be covered by VA. Prescribed food will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Veterinary care does not include over-the-counter medications, food, treats, non-sedated dental care, grooming, boarding, and other routine expenses.

<https://www.prosthetics.va.gov/factsheet/PSAS-FactSheet-ServiceDogs.pdf>



## Eligibility for a Service Dog

To receive any type of medical service through the VA, register at the Health Administration enrollment section of a VA medical facility or online at <https://www.va.gov/healthbenefits/apply/>. Once registered, a referral to a specialist may be requested through the assigned VA primary care provider. The specialist will complete an evaluation and make a clinical determination on the need for assistive devices, including a service dog. Each Veteran's case is reviewed and evaluated by a prescribing clinician for the following:

- Means to care for the dog currently and in the future.
- Goals that are accomplished through the use of the dog.
- Goals that are to be accomplished through other assistive technology or therapy.

