



## HELPING PAWS DOG SITTING PROGRAM

Are you looking for a volunteer opportunity that involves caring for a dog? Helping Paws is looking for volunteers to help care for our dogs in training when their foster home trainers travel. Following are some guidelines to help you determine if this is the right volunteer opportunity for you.

**How long would I care for a dog?** Service dogs in training would stay with you anywhere from overnight to up to 3 weeks.

**Can I have other pets in my home?** Sure you can, as long as your pets are not reactive to new dogs in the household and are spayed or neutered. Helping Paws spays or neuters dogs in training when they are between 14–18 months of age.

**Do I need a fenced yard?** Your yard does not need to be fenced, but we require that Helping Paws dogs are never allowed off leash in unfenced areas. We don't want to risk a dog wandering away, especially in an unfamiliar environment.

**Can I take a Helping Paws dog to a dog park or day care for exercise?** Sorry, but for temporary care homes this is too risky.

**What are the ages of the dogs?** The dogs are puppies and adolescent Golden Retrievers and Labrador Retrievers, ages 3 months–2 ½ years.

**What is provided with a Helping Paws dog when it comes to my home?** Each dog will arrive with an information sheet with background, basic care instructions and emergency contact information, dog food, crate, Gentle Leader, buckle collar, leash, seat belt harness, and maybe a few familiar toys. At the end of each visit, you will complete a short form to let us know about the dog's visit and acclimation to your home.

**What if a dog needs veterinary care during its stay with me?** In case of a veterinary emergency, you need to immediately contact a Helping Paws staff member and bring the dog to a veterinary clinic. Dog sitters may request reimbursement for veterinary expenses.

**Can I take Helping Paws service dogs in training to stores, restaurants and other public places?** No, a service dog in training is "on vacation" when you are caring for it. We take the privilege of public access very seriously and this privilege is given only to the foster home trainers.

**What do I need to do to become a dog sitter for Helping Paws dogs in training?** Please complete the dog sitter application. We will review your application, schedule an in-home interview with you and contact your references. Once your application is accepted, we will ask you visit two "dogs in training" classes, at Helping Paws, prior to actually caring for a dog. We want to make sure that you feel comfortable caring for a dog in training and that you have some background regarding the training of a service dog.

Thank you for your interest. Please contact us for more information or if you have additional questions. Phone: 952-988-9359 ext. 67 or email [jsorensen@helpingpaws.org](mailto:jsorensen@helpingpaws.org).