



Great Plains Assistance Dogs Foundation dba  
Service Dogs for America  
PO Box 513  
Jud, ND 58454

Apprentice Trainer  
Job Description

**REPORTS TO:** Lead Trainer

**POSITION TYPE:** Hourly; Non-Exempt

### **ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION**

Service Dogs for America (SDA) was founded in 1989, placed its very first service dog in 1990 and earned its 501(c) 3 non-profit status in 1992. SDA's mission is to train and certify service dogs for individuals with disabilities. SDA's vision is to see a society where disabled individuals are able to fully participate in social, educational and occupational opportunities.

We do this by raising, training and certifying service dogs, and educating the public and business by demonstrating how a service dog mitigates disabilities and the legal rights of disabled individuals with service dogs in public places.

SDA is an accredited member of Assistance Dogs International (ADI) and adheres to standards and ethics that define training standards for dogs, guides how clients and dogs are treated, how programs are developed and the type of expertise and professional behavior required of trainers.

### **SKILLS AND REQUIREMENTS**

- Must be willing to learn and follow SDA's established training methods.

#### **Minimum Educational and Certification Requirements**

- High school diploma or GED. (Experience may be substituted)
- Must be or able to become Red Cross CPR/First Aid and Pet CPR/First aid certified

#### **Minimum Experience Requirements**

- One - two years of experience in the care, handling and training of dogs under the mentorship of a certified trainer is required
- Must have a working understanding of Assistance Dogs International (ADI) accreditation standards and ethics
- Must have knowledge of pertinent canine laws (i.e., leash laws and public access laws)
- Must have experience working with dogs and people and have confidence working with difficult clients and dogs
- Must have knowledge of pertinent public access laws
- Must be competent in all the tasks assigned to a Kennel Assistant

#### **Personal Requirements**

- Genuinely enjoys working with dogs
- Can work unaffected in an environment where dogs are barking
- Must be available to work weekends and holidays as needed
- Physical Effort: Have the physical strength and ability to stand for an entire shift when needed, and be able to lift dogs and objects weighing up to 40 pounds with or without assistance, handle repetitive up-and-down or back-and-forth motions, and work while bending. Must be able to work outdoors in the heat and cold
- Working conditions: may be exposed to unpleasant odors, noises and animal feces; must have proof of current tetanus vaccination; may be exposed to bites and scratches

#### **General Knowledge, Skills and Abilities**

- Must consent to and be able to pass a Criminal Background Check
- Must consent to sign and adhere to SDA's Confidentiality Agreement
- Must follow and exceed Assistance Dogs International (ADI) minimum training standards and ethics
- Must possess a valid driver's license and/or reliable transportation
- Must have ability to communicate effectively both verbally and in writing with staff, clients, and public
- Must have basic computer skills

- Must be able to work well on their own
- Must be able to work as part of a team
- Must be dependable, punctual and very responsible
- Must be able to follow oral and written instructions
- Must have good problem-solving skills
- Must have excellent time management and organizational skills
- Must know the range of services the organization provides
- Must be familiar with breeds and coat colors
- Must be willing to learn about infectious diseases, including prevention and steps to reduce or eliminate transmission and know about the most common dog diseases

### **General Tasks**

- Assists in cleaning, feeding and grooming
- Trains under the direction of the Master Trainer
- Is available to travel and promote SDA services through community events, conferences, presentations and fundraising activities under the direction of the Executive Director, Development Director and/or Master Trainer
- Places dog safety as a top priority with all interactions
- Maintain a professional appearance while at work
- Maintain an even, friendly demeanor while on the job; perform job tasks efficiently without rushing
- Handle stress and pressure respectfully
- Show respect for clients, team members, and animals at all times
- Maintain a list of tasks and engage in productive work during slow periods
- Assist other employees as needed. Avoid waiting for coworkers to ask for assistance
- Participate in your performance appraisal
- Participate in all staff and training meetings
- Maintain strict confidentiality regarding clients for whom the organization provides services
- Be prepared to handle any pet or facility emergency that may arise, including dog fights, choking or injured animals, and facility fire or weather-related emergencies and follow contingency plans
- Follow established facility closing procedures to ensure the security of dogs, boarders, and the building

### **DAILY DOG CARE TASKS**

#### **Care and Monitoring**

- Exercising, training, feeding, cleaning kennels and grooming
- Monitor kennels for toy safety and remove choke hazards
- Ensure dogs' safety and well-being at all times
- Continuously monitor and pay particular attention to signs of distress, illness, or injury
- Know the key symptoms of emergency medical problems likely to be exhibited by dogs

### **KENNEL PROCEDURES AND MAINTENANCE TASKS**

#### **Record-Keeping**

- Document training, accidents, human and/or canine injuries on a daily basis

#### **Cage-Cleaning**

- Follow procedures for cleaning and disinfecting kennels and runs
- Remove feces and place them in a separate container for disposal as directed by the organization
- Remove food and dirt from cages and runs
- Wash kennels and runs with a diluted disinfectant/bleach solution daily. (solution mixture; 8 ounces disinfectant and 24 ounces of bleach) Set ortho sprayer on "2 ounces" and pour solution into sprayer container. Leave on for 10-15 minutes, rinse with clear water and squeegee
- Remove and wash all bedding after use; empty and wash water pails, bowls, and food dishes after use

**Transporting Dogs**

(Must be cleared by Executive Director and Master Trainer)

- Be willing to transport dogs under SDA policies and procedures

**PAY SCALE**

Salary will be commensurate with training experience and education in the non-profit sector.

**CERTIFICATION**

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Employee Signature

Date

*I certify that I have read and understand the responsibilities assigned to this position.*

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Executive Director

Date

*I certify that this job description is an accurate description of the responsibilities assigned to the position.*

The above statements are intended to describe the general nature and level of work being performed by the incumbent of this job. They are not intended to be an exhaustive list of all responsibilities and activities required of the position.