

## **SEIZURE ALERT DOG® APPLICATION INFORMATION PACK**

This pack includes information on procedures and guidelines for applying to Support Dogs Seizure Alert Dog® training programme.

### **APPLICATION GUIDELINES**

The following guidelines are considered important for all applicants:

1. You should have a confirmed diagnosis of epilepsy.
2. You should have at least **10 major seizures** per month. Major seizures are defined as tonic clonic/atonic or complex partials-not including sleep seizures.
3. You should keep accurate seizure diaries.
4. You must be over the age of 16.
5. You should have a carer available.
6. You should have adequate daily support at home to ensure the dog's needs can be met at all times.
7. You should be financially able to provide for the dog's food, medical care and pet insurance
8. You should not have any changes to drug therapy or medication 6 months prior to applying and throughout the assessment training period.
9. It is not always possible to place a Seizure Alert Dog® in a home where there is already a pet dog.
10. All applicants will be considered regardless of race, sex, religion, creed, age or any other categories protected by law.
11. **YOU CANNOT HAVE YOUR OWN PET DOG TRAINED**
12. You should genuinely enjoy the close companionship of a dog and want to form a working relationship with one and able to care for a dog adequately.
13. It is not always possible to train a Seizure Alert Dog® to alert if the applicant has a vagel nerve stimulator.
14. It is not possible to train a Seizure Alert Dog® to alert if the applicant has non-epileptic/pseudo seizures.
15. A medical report will be obtained from your GP/hospital consultant.  
NB: Support Dogs will not cover the cost if any charge is incurred for obtaining these reports.

## FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS

All applicants must consider the financial commitments of having a Disability Assistance Dog. The following outlines the commitment of each party:

### Commitment of applicant:

- Dog food
- Dog treats
- Dog toys
- Travel expenses to Training Centre including all training and aftercare visits.
- Vet bills up to excess
- Dog insurance

NB Direct payments may be available to fund part or all of the above costs. Please ask for further information if required.

### Commitment of Support Dogs

- Accommodation during training visits
- Instructor training costs
- Training jacket & qualified jacket (unless lost, a charge may be made to cover replacement).
- Worming tablets will be reimbursed once qualified.
- Vaccines will be reimbursed once qualified.

## APPLICATION PROCEDURE

1. The applicant requests a full Application Pack.
2. The application pack is sent to the applicant including:
  - a. Information about the application procedure
  - b. Application Form
  - c. Medical Declaration Consent Form.
3. **Successful applicants must not have any changes to drug therapy or medication during the SIX months prior to and throughout the assessment training period.**
4. The application form, medical declaration consent form and a recent passport sized photo of the applicant need to be returned to Support Dogs. From this point onwards the applicant should keep an accurate record regarding **ALL** their seizures.
5. A letter of confirmation of receipt will be sent to the applicant.
6. The application form is initially assessed as the first part of the procedure. A medical report will be obtained from both the applicant's general practitioner and from the applicant's hospital consultant. Further reports may be obtained from any other professional person with the knowledge of the

applicant's condition. These reports will be assessed by a specially appointed panel.  
**NB** Any request for payment for these reports will be the applicants' responsibility.

7. If successful following the receipt of medical reports, the applicants will attend a preliminary interview at the training centre. It is essential that all members of the immediate family and regular carers are present, to enable us to explain fully the commitment and responsibilities required when owning a Seizure Alert Dog®. At this stage applicants will be required to bring up to date seizure diaries.
8. If successful following the preliminary interview applicants will then attend the training centre for assessment and evaluation of their dog handling ability. This is to enable us to select a suitable dog and establish whether the applicant has a natural rapport with dogs and have the potential to handle a dog at the standards required for public access.
9. If successful following the dog handling assessment a home visit will be carried out to assess the suitability of the home environment. It is essential that all members of the immediate family and regular carers are present to enable us to discuss fully the implications of a Seizure Alert Dog® in the home.
10. Successful applicants will be offered a place on a training course, however due to the high demand for places they may be put on a waiting list. **NB** Any significant changes in personal circumstances, including any changes to drug therapy or medication, may affect their application.
11. Provided there has been no significant change of personal circumstances of the applicant, including changes in medication, when a potential dog has been identified applicants will be invited to attend the training centre for up to three days to establish their suitability for the dog. Applicants must be accompanied by a carer.
12. Successful applicants attend an initial three week residential training course arranged by Support Dogs. You **must** be accompanied by a carer during this period. During this time the client will learn individual handling techniques for their dog and the dog will be taught specific responses associated with the client's seizures.
13. The Support Dog instructor must feel the Seizure Alert Dog® has seen sufficient number of seizures at the training centre prior to allowing the dog to return home with the applicant. This is to ensure the Seizure Alert Dog® has created a positive association around the seizures.
14. Prior to returning home applicants must insure/take over the insurance cover for the dog.
15. The charity only has limited funds but recognises the need to meet the cost of hotel accommodation during periods of residential training.
16. On successful completion of residential training the client and dog will return home. A Support Dog instructor will then carry out a 3-5 day placement with the client and dog in their own home.
17. Depending upon seizure frequency the client may be required to attend a further period of residential training at a later stage. This will be decided by the Training Manager.
18. Each dog must be 12 months of age or over before they can qualify.

19. Applicants who complete the full process to partnership complete a Licence Agreement and undertake to return a progress report each month for the first year.
20. Regular visits will be made to qualified partnerships by training centre staff, including extra training carried out at the training centre.
21. Qualified partnerships will also be required to attend the training centre once per year to assess social and training standards are being maintained.