



**Position Title: Advanced Service Dog Trainer**

Reports to: Lead Trainer

Job Location: Wilmington, NC

Position Type: Non-Exempt, Full Time, 40 hours per week

Department: Training

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**About CFS**

Established in Wilmington, NC in 1996, Canines for Service, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, and the longest operating, internationally accredited (ADI) service dog provider in the state. Our mission is to inspire veterans through life-changing canine partnerships. CFS provides highly trained service dogs, at no cost or fundraising obligation, to Veterans from all conflicts with service-connected mobility challenges, post-traumatic stress disorder, military sexual trauma, and/or traumatic brain injuries.

**Benefits**

- Medical, dental, and vision insurance covered in part by Canines for Service
- 401k plan with company match
- Life insurance
- Short-term disability
- Cell phone stipend
- PTO and paid holidays

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**Position Summary**

The Advanced Service Dog Trainer provides training and instruction through industry standard training methods (i.e. Assistance Dogs International standards, LIMA, etc.) for the service dogs, CFS staff, clients, and volunteers. The position works with dogs beyond basic obedience, focusing on advanced skills, behavioral challenges, and individual behavior modification plans tailored to each dog's temperament and learning style. Provides daily care for service dogs in training as well as assisting with kennel duties as needed. In addition, this position will participate in canine enrichment programs, advance their knowledge of service dog training, and be a key team player in the training program. Specific job duties include training dogs in the facility, training with other team members on outings, participating in Team Trainings with Veteran clients, cleaning kennels and runs, bathing, grooming, exercising, feeding, and monitoring the behavior of the dogs.

## **Essential Functions / Responsibilities**

### **Training & Behavior Development**

- Train service dogs in basic, intermediate, and advanced commands using positive reinforcement and LIMA (Least Intrusive, Minimally Aversive) methods, in accordance with CFS and ADI guidelines.
- Teach both standard and client-specific tasks, evaluating each dog's suitability for service work based on behavioral assessments and training progression.
- Develop personalized approaches to behavioral concerns, ensuring training methods suit each individual dog's temperament and learning style.
- Maintain a calm, patient, and adaptable demeanor, especially when working with challenging cases.
- Clearly communicate training progress, behavioral assessments, and recommendations to management and the training team.
- Teach both foundational and specialized tasks, including unique, client-requested tasks not covered in standard training.
- Collaborate with the team when necessary, ensuring adjustments are made for the best training outcome.
- Work alongside trainers to instruct and assist with training techniques under the guidance of the Lead Trainer.
- Provide kennel enrichment and work with dogs in the training room.
- Conduct outings with dogs in public settings, such as stores, restaurants, parks, etc. to instruct volunteers, clients and the service dogs to further their skills.
- Work with Volunteer Coordinator to help assist with the coordination of volunteer programs, such as dog walking shifts, and provide comprehensive training to ensure volunteers are well-prepared and supported in their roles.
- Work with trainers and other staff to identify disruptive behaviors and work one on one with dogs to improve behaviors.
- Instruct/Participate in Team Training, Continuing Education and Follow-Up Training for Veterans clients nationwide.
- Assist with the Puppy Program and Internship Program as needed.
- Inform Operations Manager of any health issues with the Service Dogs.
- Clean and maintain training area, workstation, and CFS Vehicles.
- Assist with Kennel Duties as needed.

### **Canines for Service Team Guidelines & Administrative Duties**

- Assist other employees, interns, and volunteers in a cheerful and respectful manner as a representative of Canines for Service.
- Must be able to work independently as well as participate as a member of the CFS Team.
- Maintain training logs, record dog progress, and enter data into Salesforce database system weekly.
- Participate in fundraising, community awareness, and outreach events as needed.
- Perform any other duties assigned by supervisor or management.
- Required Skills / Abilities
- Passion and love for animals
- Experience in behavior modification and service dog training.
- Strong problem-solving and creative thinking skills in adapting training techniques.

- Ability to communicate effectively both verbally and in writing with staff, volunteers, clients, and the public.
  - Demonstrated ability to work independently with sound judgment, while recognizing when to collaborate and seek support from the team.
  - Must be punctual, dependable, and responsible.
  - Flexibility to work a varied schedule, including some nights and weekends.
  - Ability to travel out of state as required to meet the needs of clients and CFS
  - Must be capable of lifting at least 60 pounds and handling a service dog in training that can weigh up to 90 pounds.
  - Ability to take a service dog in training in various levels of training into their home as needed.
  - Knowledge and ability to apply industry standard dog training methods that are practiced and enforced by CFS.
  - Ability to operate standard office equipment and basic computer skills to include e-mail and Microsoft Office.
  - Knowledge of Salesforce is preferred, but not required.
  - Must pass required background checks with a valid driver's license with no DUI/DWI infractions.
  - Must maintain a valid driver's license and be able to operate CFS vehicle.
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### **EEO Statement**

Canines For Service is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, age, disability, military status, or national origin, or any other characteristic protected under applicable federal, state, or local law.

This job description is provided to outline what is expected for the employee in this role during their employment with Canines for Service and is not to be constructed as an employment contract or guarantee of continued employment. This job description is not to be all inclusive of the responsibilities, duties, and activities of the position, this is subject to change.

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### **To Apply**

Interested applicants should email a resume and cover letter to the Programs Director, Lexi Dilena, at [ldilena@caninesforservice.org](mailto:ldilena@caninesforservice.org)