



## Puppy Program Trainer

### Background

Freedom Service Dogs of America is a nonprofit organization located in Englewood, CO that unleashes the potential of dogs by transforming them into custom-trained, life-changing assistance dogs for people in need. Clients include children, veterans and active duty military, and other adults. Their disabilities include autism, traumatic brain injury, cerebral palsy, spinal cord injuries, muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, and post-traumatic stress disorder.

### Position Summary

<b>Position Title:</b>	Puppy Program Trainer
<b>Position Type:</b>	Full time, non-exempt
<b>Compensation:</b>	Commensurate with experience
<b>Benefits:</b>	Medical, dental, and vision insurance covered in part by employer; 401k plan with company match.

Under the direction and guidance of the Dog Training Manager, this position will provide direct supervision, training, and on-going development to community volunteer puppy raisers using approved methods consistent with Freedom Service Dogs and Assistance Dogs International standards. Includes but not limited to matching and placing puppies with qualified volunteer puppy raisers, teaching weekly dog training classes, individual dog training support as needed, and considerable administrative responsibilities.

### Essential Functions

The essential functions listed below are intended only as illustrations of the various types of work that may be performed; the omission of specific statements of duties does not exclude them from the position if the work is similar, related or a logical assignment to be completed by the position:

#### **Training of Puppies and Volunteer Puppy Raisers/Fosters**

- Provide one-on-one instruction and teach small group classes on service dog training to volunteer puppy parents and puppy sitters; handle other tasks related to puppy parent instruction, such as regular communication, trouble-shooting canine behavior issues, teaching proper care and handling, etc.
- Work with Puppy Program Coordinator in the implementation of training, tracking of puppies in the program timeline, and matching of puppies to raisers.
- Address puppy raiser concerns, questions, emails, and requests for one-on-one training as reported by the raiser, or the Puppy Program Coordinator in a timely manner.
- Recruit potential puppy raisers in the community.
- Coordinate and host puppy raiser seminars and workshops to educate puppy raising volunteers on puppy training, socialization, health care and overall management of FSD puppy.
- Compile monthly reports on each puppy's progress and present a complete report on each puppy's obedience and behavior to the Dog Training Manager.
- Enter animal health reports using google docs as reported by puppy raisers to keep the Animal Health Manager up to date on any puppy illness or medical concerns.
- Provide effective, supportive, constructive, and consistent monthly feedback and evaluation data to puppy raisers.
- Coordinate, perform, and score all Behavior Checklist (BCL) assessments on each puppy at 6 months of age prior to placement with puppy raiser. Enter data collected into Organization's software program.

- Coordinate, perform, and score all Behavior Checklist (BCL) assessments on each puppy with their puppy raiser at 10 months of age. Enter data collected into Organization's software program.
- Support Puppy Program Coordinator in the onboarding of new puppy raisers.
- Document all training hours, public outings, and evaluations for each dog in organization's database.

### **Other**

- Assist training team with playgroups for dogs in training as needed.
- Mentor new training team hires during the first 90 days of employment as needed.
- Provide feedback to Dog Training Manager on the effectiveness of training methods, programs, and evaluations
- Assist with other FSD programs as needed
- Support weekly volunteer handler puppy outings as needed from prison.
- Assist in puppy transportation as needed
- Participate in continuing education related to your position
- Assist with kennel care and cleaning as needed.
- Drive company vehicle to transport dogs or other needs of the Organization.
- Other duties that may be assigned.

### **Supervisory Responsibility**

Responsible for training, mentoring, assigning tasks to, and monitoring approved volunteers.

### **Work Environment**

This job operates in dog kennels, surrounding areas and a professional office environment. The noise level in the work environment can often be loud. Employees will work in close proximity with all types and breeds of dogs. The location is a non-smoking environment.

### **Physical Demands**

The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job.

While performing the duties of this job, which primarily includes training and taking care of dogs and their kennels, the employee is regularly required to be very physically active. The employee is frequently required to stand, bend, stoop, kneel, crouch, crawl and perform a variety of physical motions with his or her hands, arms, shoulders and legs in order to properly clean kennels, care for and train dogs. The employee is often on her or his feet, and is often required to walk; escort visitors or volunteers in or around the kennel areas; and climb or balance. The employee is to communicate regularly with others, though it is also possible that the employee will often have to work alone for long stretches of time.

The employee must be able to manipulate and use all equipment and tools necessary to care for dogs, including leashes, medicines, locking mechanisms, and dog toys. Employee must be able to open packages, measure, and use hands to finger, handle, or feel objects, tools, or controls; reach with hands and arms; and talk or hear. Employee must be able to use a writing instrument to record information related to dog care and must be able to use a computer keyboard.

The employee must regularly lift and move up to 50 pounds and frequently lift and/or move up to 25 pounds. This includes the ability to retrieve and distribute dog food and other supplies and ability to retrieve and replace objects from shelves of up to 7 feet high. This job requires handling multiple dogs in training every day of up to 100 pounds on and off leash. The employee will work in proximity to cleaning agents and disinfectants and must be able to follow instructions for the use and storage of these chemicals.

Work occasionally requires more than 40 hours per week to perform the essential duties of the position; may require irregular hours to accommodate unforeseen dog care demands outside of regular hours. During work, the employee is expected to be physically present at the kennels when not on an outing with a dog in training or with a client/dog team in training. On occasion, employee must be able to drive a company vehicle.

### **Position Type and Expected Hours of Work**

This is a full-time, non-exempt position consisting of approximately 40 hours of work per week. Regular days and hours of work are Monday- Friday from 7:30am - 4:30pm, but these hours may be adjusted depending on the needs of the Organization. This position will require working weekends, holidays, and being open to working additional shifts on an as needed basis.

### **Travel**

Local travel, such as travel to puppy outings, prison facilities, and puppy raiser homes is expected. Occasional out of state or in-state travel may be required due to organization needs.

### **Required Education and Experience**

- Associates degree in animal behavior, psychology, zoology, biology or related experience
- Minimum of four (4) years professional experience in positive reinforcement dog training, and marker training
- Ability to make presentations comfortably to small and large groups
- Advanced understanding of canine behavior and learning theory by completion of an FSD administered evaluation at the time of interview

### **Preferred Education, Experience and Competencies**

- Bachelor's Degree in animal behavior, psychology, zoology, biology or related experience
- Certificate or degree from Animal Behavior College, Bergin University of Canine Studies, Karen Pryor Academy or other positive reinforcement and clicker training dog training program
- Experience supervising a puppy raising program at an Assistance Dogs International affiliate school
- Experience with basic animal husbandry procedures
- Experience with disability awareness and sensitivity
- Experience teaching adult learners
- Experience in public speaking
- Nonprofit work/volunteer experience

### **Required Skills and Competencies**

#### **Dog Interaction and Training Skills:**

- Must possess a passion and commitment to the Freedom Service Dogs mission.
- Must be willing and comfortable working around large breed dogs.
- Must be able to learn dog training techniques in accordance to FSD and Assistance Dogs International standards.
- Must be able to have the ability to positively support adults working with FSD future service dogs.
- Must have a basic understanding of dog medical needs.

**Intellectual Skills:**

- Ability to collect and analyze dog behavior and training data from database to make recommendations to management to improve graduation rates of dogs in training.
- Ability to display original thinking and creativity and meet challenges with resourcefulness.
- Ability to generate suggestions for improving work and develop innovative approaches and ideas.
- Ability to train and motivate staff and volunteers.
- Ability to communicate and maintain confidential information.
- Ability to complete necessary paperwork and meet deadlines.

**Leadership Skills:**

- Exhibit confidence in self and others; inspire and motivate others to perform well; effectively influence actions and opinions of others.
- Ability to make decisions with sound and accurate judgment; support and explain reasoning for decisions and include appropriate people in decision-making process; make timely decisions.
- Ability to develop strategies to achieve organizational goals; understand organization's strength and weaknesses and adapt strategy to changing conditions.
- Ability to manage change; develop workable implementation plans; communicate change effectively; build commitment and overcome resistance to change; and support those affected by change.
- Must be extremely well organized and self-directed with the ability to work well under pressure, handle multiple priorities and meet deadlines and have acuity with detail.
- The ability to function effectively as a member of a team, and a willingness to participate in activities and assignments that will benefit other members of the team or will contribute to the accomplishment of team objectives.

**Language and Communication Skills:**

- Must be able to establish and maintain professional, productive and courteous interactions with employees that promote positive teamwork, as well as with volunteers, donors, clients and all constituents of Freedom Service Dogs. This encompasses going beyond giving and receiving instructions and includes but is not limited to performing work activities requiring interacting or speaking with others; and responding appropriately to constructive feedback or suggestions for improvement from a supervisor.
- Approach others in a tactful manner; react well under pressure; treat others with respect and consideration regardless of their status or position; accept responsibility for own actions; follow through on commitments.
- Routinely utilize advanced English language skills to edit documents and to prepare reports and correspondence, including spelling, sentence structure, syntax, grammar, usage, and the chief aspects of style, such as punctuation, capitalization, abbreviations, plurals and possessives, and compound words.
- Ability to speak clearly and persuasively in positive and negative situations, listen and get clarification, and respond well to questions.
- Must possess excellent interpersonal skills; must have the ability to establish and maintain effective relationships with others.

**Reasoning Ability:**

- Ability to solve practical problems and deal in a variety of situations using logic and reasoning to identify the strengths and weaknesses of alternative solutions, conclusions or approaches to problems.
- Ability to interpret and to apply common sense understanding to carry out instructions furnished in written, oral, or diagram form.
- Ability to maintain a high level of mental concentration and effort when performing a high volume of analyses and decision making as well as other essential duties.
- Ability to exercise good judgment, take initiative and make recommendations in resolving problems and provide guidance to other staff.
- Must possess the ability to evaluate and interpret data, define problems, analyze business issues and develop workable solutions.
- Must possess sound business judgment, exercise professional conduct, understand and follow business ethics and standards and maintain a high level of confidentiality in all duties.

**Office Skills**

- Must be proficient in Microsoft Office suite and keyboard data entry.
- Experience with electronic calendar and database products.
- Ability to read and interpret documents such as safety rules, operating and maintenance instructions, and procedure manuals.
- Ability to extract and analyze data to inform leadership's decisions.

**Additional Eligibility Qualifications**

Must have a valid driver's license and maintain current vehicle insurance.

**Work Authorization/Security Clearance (if applicable)**

Must be authorized to work in the United States.

**Other Duties**

Please note this job description is not designed to cover or contain a comprehensive listing of activities, duties or responsibilities that are required of the employee for this job. Essential and marginal job duties, responsibilities and activities may change at any time with or without notice.

**Equal Opportunity Employment**

Freedom Service Dogs is dedicated to the principles of equal employment opportunity in any term, condition, or privilege of employment. We do not discriminate against applicants, clients, graduates or employees on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, sex, age, religion, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, veteran status, physical or mental disability, or any other status protected by state or local law.

**To Apply**

To apply, please email your resume and cover letter to [info@freedom servicedogs.org](mailto:info@freedom servicedogs.org) with the subject line "Puppy Program Trainer".

Please note – we will not respond to application status inquiries. No phone calls, please.