

CanineSidekicks Service Dogs, Inc.

Service Dog Training & Development Outline

This is an overview of the foundation training, public access development, environmental exposure, handling skills, and service dog preparation included within the CanineSidekicks Service Dog Programs.

Individualized disability-mitigating task training is developed in addition to the skills outlined below.

Foundation Skills

- Marker-based communication
- Sit
- Down
- Stand
- Place/Bed
- Recall
- Loose leash walking
- Greeting manners
- Impulse control
- Long-duration stays and waits
- Out-of-sight stays and waits
- Handler engagement
- Focus and attention exercises

Public Access Development

- Stores and retail environments
- Shopping centres and malls
- Restaurants and patios
- Medical facilities
- Elevators and automatic doors
- Vehicle travel
- Public transit environments
- Outdoor markets and community events
- Sporting events and recreational facilities
- Crowded environments
- Extended public outings
- Novel environments and surfaces

Environmental Stability

- Loud noises
- Moving objects
- Crowds and congestion
- Recreational activities

- Sudden environmental changes
- Everyday public distractions

Social Skills & Neutrality

- Appropriate interactions with people
- Appropriate interactions with other dogs
- Neutrality to people
- Neutrality to animals
- Neutrality to environmental distractions
- Public manners and impulse control

Household Skills

- Potty training
- Crate training
- Household manners
- Visitor manners
- Vehicle loading and unloading
- Travel manners

Cooperative Care & Handling

- Grooming procedures
- Bathing
- Brushing
- Nail care
- Veterinary examinations
- Eye inspections
- Ear inspections
- Oral examinations
- Handling for routine care procedures

Public Access Positioning Skills

- Heel position
- Off Side position
- Front position
- Tuck under tables and seating
- Settle in public spaces
- Loading onto and into vehicles
- Position changes in confined environments

Individualized Task Training

- Program-specific disability-mitigating tasks
- Response sequences
- Task generalization
- Real-world application

Owner-trained teams

Owner-trained teams are expected to develop the same foundation skills, public access skills, handling skills, environmental stability, and disability-mitigating task performance standards required of all CanineSidekicks Service Dogs program pathways.

Professional coaching sessions are individualized based on the team's progress, strengths, and areas requiring improvement. Rather than providing start-to-finish training for every skill, sessions are used to assess performance, troubleshoot challenges, refine techniques, and address areas where additional instruction or support is needed.

Handlers are responsible for completing the majority of day-to-day training, practice, public access exposure, skill development, and maintenance between sessions. Progression through the program is dependent upon the team's ability to demonstrate proficiency in each training area and meet established program standards.