



PAWtected CIC

**Membership
Application
Handbook**

April 2022

Welcome

Thank you for taking the time to look at our Assistance Dog Membership. We hope that this handbook will help you understand what is involved with our membership so that you can make the best decision for you and your dog.

Please read all of this handbook before applying. If you have any questions or need any help understanding this handbook, please get in touch with our team.

We can be contacted by email to membership@pawtected.co.uk at any time.

Thank you,

Abigail and Christine

(PAWtected CIC management)

General information

What is an assistance dog?

Assistance dogs are lifesaving and life changing medical equipment. These dogs are specifically trained to mitigate their handlers' disabilities and are a vital part of their independence. It takes a lot of training and dedication to train a dog to assistance dog status.

Disabled people are entitled to reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010 and Disability Discrimination Act 1995. This may include being accompanied by an assistance dog. In order for it to be reasonable to allow a dog on the premises, they must be able to mitigate the disabled persons disability and behave appropriately to be reasonably allowed.

All assistance dogs, regardless of method of training, are allowed to accompany their handler wherever it is reasonable, so long as they are able to mitigate disability and behave appropriately.

For more information about what an assistance dog is, please see our assistance dog awareness course which will walk you through all of the information that you need to know.

What is PAWtected CIC?

PAWtected CIC is an organisation who help owners train their own dogs to become assistance dogs. We can provide support with training, advocacy, and working.

As an organisation, we value the following:

- Quality
- Inclusion and community
- Achievement
- Encouragement to fulfil potential
- Ethical training and high standards of care.

What is the Assistance Dog Membership

The PAWtected CIC membership is the most in-depth assistance dog opportunity that we offer. Our members represent us.

Benefits

PreMember benefits

- Specialist preparation for our membership.
- Structured training progression with certificates.
- Adaptions to the training progression to suit the individual's circumstances and need, whilst ensuring we maintain the high standards we pride ourselves upon.
- 1:1 virtual training with an assigned trainer.
- Individual learning profiles to help us work with you effectively.
- 1:1 support from our team throughout your journey.
- Being part of an organisation actively working to increase awareness of assistance dogs.
- Private, admin monitored, Facebook community group.
- Online Moodle system allowing you to progress at your own pace.
- 50% off courses.
- Weekly live group education sessions.

Member benefits

In addition to the benefits listed for PreMembers, members also get the following benefits:

- Up to date advice and advocacy regarding assistance dog law.
- Gear and resources.
 - Blue Passport
 - Access refusal forms
 - Vests
 - Communication cards
 - And more!
- 1:1 support with self-advocacy.

Application process

After reading through this handbook, please complete the application form found on our website. Please be as detailed as possible in this form as it will help us determine if our membership is right for you.

The team will respond to your application within 3 working days. If you have not already completed the sample course, we will request that you complete this.

We ask for the sample course to be completed so that we can ensure that you understand how our system works and to assess if your dog is suitable for our program. We will only refuse applications in exceptional cases, such as where we believe the dog is showing aggression, or if we feel we cannot support you sufficiently.

If your application was successful, you will be invited to make the first purchase on our store and will be sent your welcome pack. Please ensure that you read this through as it contains vital information.

Progression

PreMember

This is where most members will enter. PreMember is designed to ensure that all of the foundations are in place regarding your dog's training. This step is vital as many of the more challenging assistance dog skills will build upon this learning.

Here you will submit weekly logs of your training. In response to these, your assigned trainer will provide you feedback and advice on how to work on any problems.

Assistance Dog Prospect Member

After completing the foundations, you will move up to becoming an Assistance Dog Prospect Member. Here you will get your first blue gear! This stage focuses on establishing correct behaviours in public locations.

Your weekly logs will continue here.

Assistance Dog in Training Member

Once your dog has learnt how to behave appropriately, we start looking at finessing these skills and working on disability mitigation tasks. You will upgrade your gear here.

Your weekly logs will continue here.

Assistance Dog Member

Congratulations on completing all of your training! You will get your Assistance Dog gear and be on your way. But, the support doesn't stop. You will now complete a monthly summary report of how you and your dog have been getting on and your assigned trainer will continue to support you with any problems.

In order to ensure that our assistance dogs maintain their high standards of training, you are required to complete an annual reassessment. This is very simple and you will get support from the team where required.

Fast track

Those with experienced assistance dogs are welcomed to fast track through this process. You will complete a shortened course which, upon completion, will allow you to move directly to becoming an Assistance Dog Member. Some weekly logs will be required.

Costs

There are two types of costs involved with our membership: course and progression. Course costs are purchased as and when you require the next course. Progression costs are purchased as you move into each new level.

Course costs are subject to change, please see our store for the most up to date information. 50% discount is included.

Items marked with a * remain the property of PAWtected CIC.

PreMember

Enrolment fee: £35.00

- 1:1 training support through your journal
- Training or assessment bandanna

Course fee 1: £12.50

- Foundation Canine Skills
- Basic Socialisation

Course fee 2: £12.50

- Basic Canine Skills
- Basic Assistance Dog Awareness

Course fee 3: £16.25

- Basic Assistance Dog
- Intermediate Assistance Dog Awareness
- Advanced Assistance Dog Awareness

Assistance Dog Prospect Member

Progression fee 1: £40.00

- Blue Passport*
- ADP Bandanna* (optional upgrade to vest/cape for additional costs)
- Journal

Course fee 4: £22.50

- Intermediate Canine Skills
- Intermediate Assistance Dog
- Intermediate Socialisation

Assistance Dog in Training Member

Progression fee 2: £40.00

- Blue Passport* stamping
- ADiT Bandanna* (optional upgrade to vest/cape for additional costs)
- Journal

Course fee 5: £25.00

- Advanced Canine Skills
- Advanced Assistance Dog
- Advanced Socialisation

Assistance Dog Member

Qualification fee: £50.00

- Blue Passport* stamping
- AD vest or cape without pockets* (optional upgrades for additional costs)
- Journal

Annual reassessment fee: £20.00

- Assistance Dog Skills Assessment
- Blue Passport* Stamping
- Journal

Optional gear

We have a range of optional gear available including lead slips, settle mats and more from £20. These all remain the property of PAWtected CIC.

Fast track

Enrolment fee: £35.00

- Journal
- Training or assessment bandanna

Course fee: From £30.00

- Assistance Dog Skills Assessment

Qualification and reassessment fees as mentioned in Assistance Dog Member.

What's involved

Courses

Our membership is set up with various courses. These courses look at different skills and will guide you from the foundations all the way through to working as an established team.

All of our courses contain written instructions on how to train the skills needed. If at any point you are struggling to understand the instructions, the instructions aren't working or something is going wrong, let us know in your journal and your trainer will help out (information on journal below).

We advise that training and assessment of all courses/levels will take around two years, however this massively varies and there is no rush to complete.

Here is a quick guide to the courses you will complete.

Canine Skills is a course that looks at general behaviour and ability. This course covers everything from walking on lead, manners, tricks, handling, and more. It is There are four levels to this course and it is assessed through video and written submissions.

Assistance Dog is a course that looks at assistance dog specific behaviours and skills. The lower levels start off teaching these skills in pet friendly locations (such as the local dog park or streets) and the higher levels combine these skills and take them into working environments. There are three levels to this course and it is assessed through video and written submissions.

Socialisation is a course that ensures that your dog is comfortable and confident with a range of situations and environments. This is course has three levels and is assessed through quizzes and written submissions.

Assistance Dog Awareness is a course that covers all the theory that you need to know when working your assistance dog. This course is really important so that you understand the community that you are entering. This course has three levels and is assessed through quizzes and written submissions.

Once you have completed all of the courses and qualified, you will transition to becoming an Assistance Dog Member. Part of this means that you will need to complete annual reassessments in July. You will take the Assistance Dog Skills Assessment which covers essential skills from all of the courses. This is the course that our fast track entrances will take.

Journals

During training, you will be required to complete a weekly written log of your activities. We advise that this should take around an hour each week to complete.

These logs are due by 8pm each Monday, though they may be uploaded on a Sunday if you find this easier.

To achieve your certificates, you must have completed a certain number of weekly logs. These amounts are:

PreMember and Assistance Dog Prospect certificate – 10 consecutive weekly logs minimum.

Assistance Dog in Training certificate – 20 consecutive weekly logs minimum.

Assistance Dog certificate – 30 consecutive weekly logs minimum.

Those on the fast track option will be required to complete a minimum of 6 consecutive weekly logs covering their training and preparation for their assessment.

In response to each journal submission, your assigned trainer will make a comment. This comment will highlight anything in the log that we need more information about, give training advice and be your predominant contact with your trainer. Usually this feedback is given on a Tuesday, however please allow 2 working days. A notice is put in the private group when all journals have been checked. Please ensure that you respond to the comment so that we know that you've seen it.

When you have completed all of your courses and become an Assistance Dog Member (qualified) you will then move to monthly reports. These reports should take around 45 minutes per month and are a summary of how everything has gone. These are really important to ensure that your training standards are maintained and that we can support you with any issues which arise.

In your journal, there is also space to upload any supporting documentation like vet reports (required annually and at each vet visit), vaccination records, insurance documents, or anything else.

Workshops

We offer a range of workshops especially for members and associates. You are invited to join these! When you are enrolled, you will be added to the relevant Moodle courses for these workshops. Here you can find information about the times and topics being covered.

Please ensure that you complete the attendance button prior to joining the live call.

Community

Our Facebook community group is a safe space for you to share concerns, successes or simply communicate with others going through the same journey as you. We often have challenges to join in with here. We can't wait for you to join our incredible community.

Frequently Asked Questions

I have an older or qualified dog that I would like to join the membership, can I do this?

YES! We have a special fast track option for dogs that are experienced with working as an assistance dog.

If your dog is older than the recommended age brackets, but does not have any training or working experience, then they can also apply for our full comprehensive training program. However, we will ask you to complete additional assessments prior to considering application to establish the current level of training. This is done on a case by case basis.

Does my dog have to wear your vests?

Yes, as a member you are representing us. Should you wish your dog to wear its own gear, please look into our independent or associate assistance dog options. Here is some information about what your dog will wear at each level:

PreMember – Training or Assessment bandanna

Assistance Dog Prospect – ADP bandanna (optional vest upgrade)

Assistance Dog in Training – ADiT bandanna (optional vest upgrade advised).

Assistance Dog – AD vest/cape

I don't think I can afford it, are there any funding options?

Do not panic, we offer a range of funding options for those who are struggling financially. Information on these can be found on our website.

What breeds do you accept?

We accept any legal breeds onto our program.

Can I join the membership if I am training the dog for my child?

Yes, we have special provisions for children and young people. Please contact us for details.

Requirements

Disability requirements

To become a PreMember or Fast track member, you must meet the criteria below:

1. The individual has a confirmed disability which is eligible for reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010.
2. The individual has a way of proving that they meet criteria 1. Any of the following are acceptable:
 - a. PIP/DLA allowance statement
 - b. ESA support group allowance statement
 - c. Diagnosis letter
 - d. PAWtected doctor letter (please contact us for a copy)

Dog requirements

To become a PreMember, you must meet the criteria below:

1. The dog is aged between 2 months and 3 years. Any dog outside of this age bracket will be considered on a case by case basis.
2. The dog is not one of the 4 named banned dogs on the DDA.
3. The dog was not purchased for the sole intent for training with PAWtected CIC.
4. The dog is insured for both veterinary and public liability claims (these may be from different companies).
5. Any bitch will be spayed prior to qualification.
6. The dog is microchipped and tagged with up to date information at all times.
7. The dog is on a suitable balanced diet. If the dog is fed raw, please contact us prior to application as there are some limits on accessing certain places.
8. The dog is up to date on all vaccinations recommended by the dogs veterinarian and is able to provide a record of this.
9. The dog is of good health and has a report dated within the last 12 months stating this.
10. The dog is to be trained without the use of fear or pain.

To join our fast track, you must also meet the criteria below:

1. The dog is aged between 18 months and 10 years. Any dog outside of this age bracket will be considered on a case by case basis.
2. The dog has had a minimum of 6 months training covering a range of general behaviour and assistance dog specific skills.
3. The dog has had a minimum of 2 months experience working as an assistance dog.

Handler requirements

To become a PreMember or fast track member, you must meet the criteria below:

1. The applicant is not involved with another organisation, charity or company which provides training or advice regarding assistance dogs at the time of application or at any time during the membership.
2. The applicant knows what tasks may mitigate their disability and they would like to train their dog to perform.
3. The applicant is aged over 18 or meets one of the following statements:
 - a. Aged 0-11: The legal guardian holds the membership for the child and an adult over the age of 21 must provide supervision at all times. The adult will complete the required qualifications alone or with the child. The child may complete our youth course alongside the training (choice of the adult).
 - b. Aged 12-15: The legal guardian must hold the membership for the child and it is the legal guardian's responsibility to ensure the child is capable of handling the dog alone or that appropriate supervision is given. If the child is unsupervised, you must submit a letter to PAWtected CIC stating that you feel they are able to handle the dog safely unsupervised and that you hold full responsibility for both the child and the dog. The adult will complete the required qualifications alone or with the child. The child must complete the youth course or handle the dog in assessments (if unable to participate, please contact us).
 - c. Aged 16-17: The child may hold the membership with the permission of their legal guardian. They may handle the dog unsupervised unless the legal guardian decides it is unsafe for them to do so. Legal guardian name, phone number and email must be provided. Where the child is not completing the qualifications, they will be required to complete the youth course (if unable to participate, please contact us).
4. The applicant is able to commit to completing regular training (minimum 5 days per week, 30 minutes per day), weekly training logs until graduation, monthly reports after graduation and reassessment of skills annually. This is in addition to the time commitments of general dog care.
5. The applicant is able to commit to the financial requirements of the membership. This is in addition to the financial commitments of general dog care.
6. The applicant understands that they are required to purchase the compulsory kit, and that parts of this must be returned up on graduation, termination of membership and/or requirement, at the members expense.
7. The applicant understands that if there are any significant changes to the above-mentioned criteria, PAWtected CIC may review the membership.

Working requirements

To work your dog, you must follow the requirements mentioned below.

1. PreMember – The dog should not be accessing non-pet friendly locations.
2. Assistance Dog Prospect Member – The dog wears a PAWtected CIC vest/cape or bandanna whilst accessing non-pet friendly locations.
3. Assistance Dog in Training Member – The dog wears a PAWtected CIC vest/cape or bandanna whilst accessing non-pet friendly locations.
4. Assistance Dog Member – The dog wears a PAWtected CIC vest/cape while accessing non-pet friendly locations. A bandanna is permitted during hot weather.
5. Fast Track Member – The dog does not wear any PAWtected CIC gear. Own gear is accepted. Once reached Assistance Dog Member, they must follow the Assistance Dog Member requirements.
6. Any unbranded gear must be authorised by PAWtected CIC if being worn in conjunction with PAWtected CIC gear.
7. Training and Assessment bandannas may be worn at any time
8. The team will not use any equipment that causes fear or pain at any time.

Blue Passport usage

You must agree to use your Blue Passport in line with our guidance.

1. The blue Passport must be kept up to date.
2. The Blue Passport must accompany the team at all times while wearing PAWtected CIC gear.
3. The Blue Passport must not be altered in any way.
4. The Blue Passport, and all PAWtected CIC gear, remains the property of PAWtected CIC and must be returned at the applicants expense.