



WAGS PUPPY RAISER QUALIFICATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS



OBJECTIVES:

The Puppy Raiser position is extremely important to the WAGS program. As a Puppy Raiser, you establish the foundation of training and early experiences that are critical to the puppy's preparedness to enter into partnership with a WAGS client. Working with WAGS staff, you will accomplish the following:

- Early Puppy Socialization.
- Acceptance of hands-on grooming: nails, teeth, ears, fur.
- Teach basic manners and self-control: sit and down in a variety of places, stay and wait, leave it, polite greeting, and gentle leash walking. WAGS believes in early puppy education and you will have the opportunity to teach your puppy skills most pet dogs will never learn!
- Teach your WAGS puppy Service Dog skills.
- All of these skills lead to successful completion of Canine Good Citizen certification (CGC).
- HAVE FUN and enjoy your WAGS puppy's enthusiasm for life – allowing him/her to be curious, explore - to smell the roses. Perhaps you will learn as much from your puppy as he/she will learn from you.

QUALIFICATIONS:

- Maintain a smoke-free home environment at all times. No smokers may reside in the home.
- Prepared to have a WAGS puppy in training live in the home for 8–12 months.
- Existing pet animals (only one dog) in the house must be safe behaviorally & medically. WAGS puppy should be the only young puppy (12 months and under) in the household.
 - Must provide proof that pets are current on vaccinations and free of parasites.
 - If the existing pet dog has ever been in a fight with or had any issue with another dog, bitten/snapped or growled/snarled at a person, chased or killed a cat or other small animal, or gotten defensive over food/toys/sleeping area (resource guarding), this would not be an environment for a WAGS puppy in training. If existing pets are in the home, WAGS staff will determine if the pets are safe behaviorally and medically. Prior to placement of a WAGS dog, current dog must come to the WAGS facility to interact with a WAGS dog. If successful, a WAGS dog will be brought to the home to interact with dog and/or other pets.
- Ability to attend weekly training sessions (at WAGS facility or one-on-one in your home or on a field trip).
- Time to take puppy in public venues several times a week for training purposes.
 - Puppy Raisers should not take puppies out if they are not going to be able to give attention to training otherwise bad habits will begin to form (pulling on the leash, grabbing at food on the floor, inappropriate greetings, barking at an unanticipated dog, etc).
 - Part of any Service Dog's training is learning to stay at home. Therefore, the WAGS puppy in training should not go everywhere you go. Crate training, learning to stay home alone and remain calm, are all parts of a WAGS puppy's training.
- Daily training of WAGS puppy at home.
- Flexible schedule that allows someone in the family to come home during the day so that the puppy is not crated more than 4 continuous hours.

- Financially able to pay for dog food, dog training treats, dog toys, dog bedding and expenses incurred due to travel to and from training sessions. (These expenses are tax deductible.) Puppy Raisers also pay for vet bills for their WAGS puppy in training and are reimbursed. Most vets have donated or given a discount for services.

REQUIREMENTS prior to puppy placement in your home:

- Print out and complete volunteer application (found on-line or call to have one mailed to you) and return to WAGS for review by WAGS staff.
- References called.
- Home visit by WAGS staff.
- If pets in the home, interactions with WAGS dog as stated above.
- Attend a minimum of one training class at WAGS facility. This is an opportunity to talk with Puppy Raisers.
- Attend a minimum of one field trip.
- When schedule permits, be a “Sitter” for a WAGS dog in training.

REQUIREMENTS after puppy placement in your home:

- Work with your WAGS puppy in training in public under the supervision of WAGS Program Director prior to going out on your own with puppy.
- Complete Quarterly Progress Report, provided by WAGS.
- Talk with WAGS staff about ANY medical, behavioral or training issue.
- Take WAGS puppy in training to the vet for routine visits as well as emergencies.
- Have puppy available to WAGS staff once a month (or as requested) for one-on-one evaluation at WAGS facility.
- Absolutely no dog parks, people food (unless used for training, i.e. tiny pieces of turkey, hot dogs, cheese, etc.), or dogs on furniture.
- Should boarding become necessary, contact WAGS staff a WAGS approved Sitter will be scheduled by WAGS staff to care for the WAGS puppy.