**Important information for clients.**

Before you decide to work with me to train your Assistance Dog or Detection Assistance Dog, there are a few things I like to make clear.

* I ***don’t*** train your dog, I coach you to train, and keep your dogs skills sharp. I ask that you ***do not*** use other training methods or go to other classes. The assistance dog training and detection methods I use have been used in Australia and internationally with great success. Having said that, I am willing to discuss any information you bring to me and adapt it to your program if it will aid in our end result. I like to work cooperatively with my clients, teaching and learning.
* I can help with the selection of your pup/dog by assessing it for its temperamental and physical suitability for the job, however the final decision and responsibility is yours. I reserve the right to refuse to train any dog for assistance work that I have assessed as being unsuitable. I can, if asked, coach you to train your dog as a Pet, using the Pet Ambassador program. As an owner/ trainer you must be aware that, even with the best of care in choice and training, some dogs do not make it through to become an assistance dog.
* There is a requirement to commit to at least one in person meeting (or video, depending on distance), and one phone or video contact per week during the training period. A monthly phone or video contact in the first year, and at least every three months after that. A yearly vet report, letter from your doctor, public access test, and a two yearly Pet Dog Ambassador recertification, is required to maintain your assistance dog certification.
* I use the ethics and standards of the International Association of Assistance Dog Partners (IAADP) and Assistance Dogs International (ADI) as the basis for my own standards. Copies of these standards can be supplied on request. (I am not currently a member of ADI, as I do not meet their charity or corporation requirements. My membership application with IAADP is pending).
* As an owner/trainer there is a large burden of proof to show your dog meets the criteria for a service dog. When getting your dog from an established breeding and training program, this burden falls on the organisation where the dog is obtained. Aside from the training itself, compiling this documentation is a very important part of my program.
* I require my clients to keep a training diary. This serves two functions. The diary forms part of the proof of training requirements. It also creates a powerful tool to track progress, and can be used to help with any trouble shooting. As the diary tracks each step in the process, should your dog have any issues, it is possible to look back and see which change may have triggered the problem. The diary is also very useful to see how far you and your dog have come in the training process. This helps to maintain motivation.
* I require my clients to complete the Pet Dog Ambassador (PDA) program [LINK]. I have integrated this into my own training. The PDA program is not only excellent for companion dogs, but also forms a great basis for assistance dog training. At each step, a Certificate is awarded, which provides an internationally recognised certification of your dogs ability. This certification is ongoing evidence, that you as an owner/trainer, are doing everything possible to ensure the good behaviour of your dog. Depending on existing proof of training, this requirement may be waived under some circumstances. This is determined on a case by case basis.
* At our first consultation, following approval of your application, together, we will identify three tasks which will best mitigate your disability. Then we will formulate a basic training plan. This plan will be fluid, and reviewed throughout your program. If required, we can look at adapting the mechanics of the program to suit your disability.
* I only use positive, scientifically proven, methods of training. I will not work with anyone who wishes to use adverse or negative methods.
* The program you will do with me is labor intensive, and the results are dependant on how much work you do.
* It is generally accepted that it takes up to two years for a dog to become a fully qualified assistance dog. It is impossible to tell how long it will take your dog to become fully qualified, as that depends on a number of variables. Some dogs pick up detection, or learn tasks, quickly and others take longer. However, your dog will have public access while in training, after some criteria are met.
* You will only be certified once you and your dog pass the public access test, and can demonstrate three tasks to help mitigate your disability. If you are doing allergen detection, you will need to meet the standards set by O.D.O.R. Assistance Dogs [LINK]. A copy of these will be supplied.
* I hold a current Senior First Aid Certificate with Anaphylaxis and Asthma Certification.

I am a member of –

* Association of Pet Dog Trainers, Australia. (Professional level)
* Pet Professionals Guild, Australia and U.S.A. (Professional level)
* Association of Professional Dog Trainers, U.S.A. (Professional level)
* Pet Dog Ambassador program (Certified Trainer and Assessor).
* International Association of Assistance Dog Partners (Partner member. Provider membership pending.)