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How much does it cost to get a dog certified as a service dog

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Some of the largest organizations have numbers on their websites showing how much a service dog costs.Here are some numbers from my research:Canine Companions for Independence: \$50,000This is from the CCI "Other Ways To Give" page detailing what specific donation amounts covers. The \$50K "Sponsor A Team" donation level covers the entire cost of a service dog team.\$50,000 - This Team Sponsor level fully covers a graduate team cost, from breeding, training, and graduation to follow-up servicesTender Loving Canine Assistance Dogs: \$20,000 - \$30,000A visit to TLCAD's Frequently Asked Questions page reveals the cost for one of their service dogs...it costs our organization anywhere from \$10,000-\$28,000 per dog (depending on the length of time the dog spent in training).Freedom Service Dogs of America: \$25,000 - \$30,000Again from their FAQ page:It costs us between \$25,000 and \$30,000 to train and place a service dog.KSDS Assistance Dogs: \$25,000On the KSDS about page you'll find information about how much a service dog costs:The estimated cost of each dog placement is in excess of \$25,000.Summit Assistance Dogs: \$25,000On the Summit Assistance Dogs application overview page you'll find their cost for raising and training a service dog.The cost of acquiring, training and placing an assistance dog and providing follow-up support to our clients is about \$25,000 per dog.Based on the above numbers we decided to take the median number for our quick and dirty estimate for the beginning of this article.Now you might say \$25K? \$50K? Who could afford that kind of cheddar for a service dog? The good news is most of these organizations are non profit and receive generous donations allowing them to offer these dogs at little to no cost.However, there are some that do have to charge a substantial fee to help cover costs. Not all organizations are lucky enough to be fully funded for their dogs.We've been working with smaller organizations like Cascade Service Dogs that can't always cover all the costs associated with raising and training a service dog.My Service Dog Puppy BudgetOur puppy in training, Dublin taking a nap.My PlanMake a quick and dirty estimate for how much a service dogs cost by researching ADI service dog organizations...DONE!...READ ABOVE...Make a rough estimate of how much my next service dog puppy will cost from 8 weeks old until the pup is placed with his new partner...READ BELOW...Raise and train a service dog puppy and update as the expenses start rolling in...EST. START DATE: June 27, 2019...That's the plan! That should give me a rough idea of how much my next service dog puppy will cost me.Estimated Cost For My Next Service Dog PuppyHere are the details for everything I think I will need to raise and train a service dog puppy from 8 weeks to 18 months old.Lets break it down!PUPPY: \$2,500Realistically the price for a Golden Retriever puppy varies a lot. Our Golden Retriever, Raven will have puppies in May. In the past her puppies have sold for \$1,500 - \$2,000 and if someone were to request the "pick of the litter" then the price would likely be \$2,500.QUICK TIP: Some breeders will give you a discount if you're raising a puppy to be a service dog (we got a discount when we got Archer). On the other hand we've heard other breeders not willing to sell their dogs because they don't want them working as service dogs.Our \$2,500 initial puppy cost includes several initial expenses including:Initial expenses for a puppy can vary a lot depending on where you get your puppy (rescue, shelter, breeder, etc.) and what they include in your "puppy care package".PUPPY OPTIONS: \$2,500 is definitely on the high end when choosing a puppy to be a service dog. My goal is to choose a puppy that I feel will have the best chance of becoming a service dog.In the future I'd like to work with shelter/rescue dogs to become service dogs. However, at this time I lack the skills to evaluate and choose good potential service dog candidates.To give you an example of difference in price: I paid \$37 for Linus when I adopted him from the animal shelter. He had many traits that would have made him a great service dog except he would never have passed the Public Access Test.SUPPLIES: \$2,690QUICK TIP: If you're looking for everything you'll need when you bring home a puppy check out our essential new puppy checklist.One Time Expenses: \$390Disclaimer: We linked to the products we use and recommend in this post. We may earn money or products from the companies mentioned in this post. Dollar amount are estimates and used to get a guesstimate for how much we would spend on a puppy.Recurring Expenses (16 months): \$2,300VET EXPENSES: \$780QUICK TIP: Chewy now offers pharmaceuticals so you can order items like Heartgard Plus by providing your pet and vet information. One Time Expenses: \$300Recurring Expenses: \$480BASIC TRAINING: \$1,630One Time Expenses: \$1,160Recurring Expenses: \$480ADVANCED/TEAM TRAINING: \$5,000We plan on partnering with a service dog organization to complete the advanced training and team training with our puppy.We plan on donating approximately \$5K to cover the cost for this part of the training.Now you're probably looking at these numbers, totaling them up, and wondering why the cost for my service dog puppy is only \$12,600?That's a heck of a lot less expensive then the \$25,000 we wrote in the first couple paragraphs.One small caveat I have not yet mentioned: Not all puppies become service dogs.Since starting our Project, Service Dog In Training, We've raised 5 puppies:Archer - working service dogBear - career changedBuster - working service dogBerlin - breederCharlie - career changedI'm going to remove Berlin from the equation because she had the characteristics to be a service dog, but instead she will be like Raven (mother of service dogs).That leaves us with 2 working dogs and 2 career change dogs. Therefore by these small numbers 50% of the puppies we raised are service dogs.That means to get one working service dog I have to raise 2 dogs.2 dogs x \$12,600 = \$25,200WOW! That's remarkably close to our quick and dirty number mentioned in the first couple paragraphs.TOTAL COST TO TRAIN A SERVICE DOG: \$25,200MORE INFORMATION: Have you ever wondered how much does a guide dog cost? (dogs specifically trained for the blind). We answered that question several years ago on the blog and the answer is different then what you'd think after reading this post about how much a service dog costs.Sponsor A PuppyWhy am I writing a post asking how much does a service dog cost? My mission is to provide service dogs to individuals FREE of charge. Unfortunately, I'm not backed by a huge conglomerate to sponsor the puppies I raise, I don't have deep pockets to fully fund this venture on my own, and I haven't won the lottery...yet...I want YOU to be a part of this journey that I started over 10+ years ago.If you haven't already join our email list to get the most up to date news on our upcoming puppy.We will also be setting up a platform that will allow you to contribute to our service dog project...stay tuned...The money you contribute will be used to pay all of our service puppy's expenses.We will detail how much money we receive and how much we spend here on the blog.Our goal has been set: \$25,200If we exceed our goals and generate more money then the cost of our service dog puppy then we will donate the remaining amount to one or more of our favorite service dog organizations.Disclaimer: Not every puppy is meant to be a service dog. In fact many dogs are career changed before they start working. If this is the case with our puppy then we will donate the money from our "Sponsor A Puppy" fund to one or more of our favorite service dog organizations.Join our journey!Be a part of our next service dog puppy in training.Thank you for your support!What are your thoughts?Was this approximately how much you thought a service dog would cost?Are you ready to be a bigger part of our next service dog puppy in training?Tell us your thoughts, questions, and answers in our comment section below.How Much Does A Service Dog Cost?Top Picks For Our PuppiesCheck out more of our favorites on our New Puppy Checklist. A number of recent studies have proven that assistance animals and therapy dogs provide great relief for people with different conditions, anxiety, and depression. If you're in this position, here's everything you should know about getting a service dog for anxiety or depression, including what it entails, how an assistance dog can help with these mental health conditions, and the costs involved. The Right Type of Service Dog Is a dog alleviating anxiety and depression in people considered a psychiatric service dog or an emotional support animal (ESA)? If you're unsure about the difference between these two types of service dogs, read this explanation before continuing further. When it comes to anxiety and depression, psychiatric service dogs and emotional support dogs can prove beneficial in relieving their handler/owner's symptoms, but they do have a difference. Whether you require an assistance dog and which category of an assistance dog is appropriate for you depends on the degree to which your anxiety or depression affects your day-to-day life. Psychiatric service dogs and emotional support dogs are the two types of "qualified" for people with these mental conditions. Below, I'll explain how either of these types of assistance animals can help you and everything else you need to know about both. The Psychiatric Service Dog According to the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act), "A service animal is a dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for a person with a disability... The work or task a dog has been trained to provide must be directly related to the person's disability." (1) Here's a simple example to illustrate this: Individuals suffering from extreme anxiety or depression may be unable to leave their homes to do something as simple as picking up their medication, which helps mediate their anxiety or depression symptoms. In this instance, a psychiatric service dog can "assist [their] handler in creating a safe personal space in public, serving as a physical buffer to calm [their] handler and reduce feelings of emotional distress in crowded places." (2). This allows their handler to pick up their medication. Bringing a phone to call for help or using an adapted phone device to call for help during a crisis. How to Get a Psychiatric Service Dog for Anxiety or Depression A psychiatric service dog can be obtained (1) through a service dog organization, or an individual (2) may train their own service dog themselves. However, it's important to note that training your own service dog can be tough, much more so than people initially imagine, and far more complicated than "regular" dog training. Let's look at both of these options. 1. Obtaining a Service Dog Through a Service Dog Program Dogs trained through service dog programs go through obedience training, service training, and socialization before being matched with a potential handler in need of this assistance animal. However, the training is not over yet because the dogs then undergo another set of rigorous specialized training to meet their specific handler's needs (4). Service dogs trained through service dog programs may be from a reputable breeder owned by that service dog program, from other third-party reputable breeders, or, in some rare instances, from shelters or rescues. To qualify for a service dog from a psychiatric service dog training program, they will subject you to certain "rules" or "requirements." These rules or requirements vary depending on the program you apply to. A good example of some common requirements can be found on the Canine Partners for Life eligibility policy and include: Physical ability to control, manage and care for a large dog weighing 50 - 100 pounds and the ability to create an effective support system. Ability to communicate effectively and appropriately with the canine. Financial ability to provide for his/her canine partner's daily care, routine, and emergency veterinary needs. A lifestyle that the increased independence would significantly enhance that a canine would provide. The willingness to seek assistance and advice from the graduate network. A realistic view of his/her disability and appraisal of his/her abilities. The motivation to achieve as much independence as is realistically possible. The ability to learn new information in a group setting, usually consisting of 12 - 16 students. An applicant medical information form. All graduates must attend "team training" classes to receive their service dog. All graduates must agree to attend graduate support classes as required. The Cost of Getting a Psychiatric Service Dog Through a Professional Training Program A psychiatric service dog's cost will vary based on which service dog organization you contact. The average cost for a psychiatric service dog adopted for anxiety or depression runs between \$20,000 to \$30,000, which is obviously very expensive. This high price reflects the time, effort, resources, and amount of work that goes into raising and specialty training an assistance dog that will be specialized for you specifically and is essential "custom-tailored" for your condition and lifestyle (5). This may seem like a lot of money, but programs actually often spend much more than this to devote 600+ hours to training a dog, providing boarding for a dog, and providing vet care (6). 2. Training Your Own Service Dog It is possible to save money by training your own service dog; however, this is a challenging task to undertake and requires dedication and many of the criteria required by the professional training programs noted above. It would be best if you also kept in mind that training your own service dog will require a lot of discipline, time, and dedication. Another benefit to training your own service dog (in addition to possibly saving money) is that there is no waiting list - many professional service dog organizations have lists of applicants for years into the future. On the other hand, individuals with depression and/or anxiety may not be able to partake in hundreds of hours of training a service dog. What Type of Dog Can Be a Psychiatric Service Dog? Certain characteristics make a dog a good candidate for service dog work for people with depression or anxiety. While many canines can possess these characteristics, a few breeds tend to display them more regularly, so they favor service dog work. When assessing an animal's suitability for service dog work, it's important to consider the following questions: Are they capable of carrying out the tasks that are required of them to help their owner? Are they trainable? Do they have a high frustration threshold? Do they have a desire to please? Is this dog free from signs of personality flaws that may impact their ability to perform their job? Are they free from signs of genetic or physical illness that would impact their ability to perform their job? Is the dog people-centered? Are they distracted by excessive drive or energy? Do they get easily distracted? Are they loud, reactive, or timid when faced with unfamiliar or overwhelming situations? Are they in their senior years? (senior dogs often experience the physical toll of age that can influence their ability to perform tasks. A reputable training program will not invest the money into training a dog that will only provide service for a short period.) The key is to assess individual dogs rather than target specific breeds as capable or incapable of providing service. Although there should be some common sense in play, a chihuahua would not make a good mobility service dog. The Cost of Training Your Own Psychiatric Service Dog Training your own psychiatric service dog can still be expensive, depending on your approach and how much help you need. Generally, it can cost anywhere from a few thousand dollars to \$20,000 (7). This figure depends on the type of dog you select. Dogs that have already served as pet dogs are generally not well suited for service dog work, so you will more than likely want to select and adopt a new pup with the express purpose of service dog training in mind. Just like service dog programs do, you will want to ensure that you choose a physically healthy and psychologically sound dog to begin working with. The best place for that is likely to be a legitimate breeder. From here, you will need to invest in training, beginning with the basics of obedience and working your way up to teaching specialized skills that are tailored to your needs. Outfitting a Service Dog There is a common misconception that a service dog must somehow be "marked" as a service dog either with a harness, a vest, or some other type of identification. This is untrue, and there is no official requirement to outfit your service animal: "The ADA does not require service animals to wear a vest, ID tag, or specific harness." (9) That said, you may still choose to pick up a service dog vest (better visibility, warning signs that you feel may be needed for others to see, etc.) or other supplies with a few features that allow you for better control of the dog or for the dog to assist you better. Service Dog Licensing or Prescription Requirements To have a psychiatric service dog, you do not have to have a doctor's prescription. However, if you obtain your service dog through a service dog organization, they may ask how a service dog would improve your life. This information will help them to match you up with the right canine for your special needs. There is no requirement for a service dog to be licensed or registered with any special agency. In fact, it's discouraged to use "licensing services," not only because they are a scam to make money off service dog owners, but because they are widely used by people posing with fake "service animals." And because of that, they make it much harder for legitimate service dog handlers by teaching business owners to expect service animals to be certified. The U.S. Department of Justice even remarked quite recently that: "There are individuals and organizations that sell service animal certification or registration documents online. These documents do not convey any rights under the ADA, and the Department of Justice does not recognize them as proof that the dog is a service animal." (8) Legal Protections of Psychiatric Service Dogs Psychiatric service dogs are protected under the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Air Carrier Access Act (ACAA), and the Fair Housing Act. You can read more about the protections afforded to Service Dogs in our article here. The Emotional Support Dog Now let's adopt emotional support dogs for anxiety or depression, which are slightly different from above mentioned psychiatric service dogs. Still, generally, many same things apply to this category of animals as well. ESAs can be viewed as a second tier of assistance dogs for these specific mental health conditions in some ways. For individuals who do not qualify for a psychiatric service dog, emotional support dogs can still provide comfort in times of distress. An emotional support dog is a "lesser" choice because they cannot perform specific functions for their disabled owner with mental health conditions. Rather, they are dogs that "provide comfort just by being with a person." (10) Qualifying for an Emotional Support Dog Unlike psychiatric service dogs, to officially adopt an ESA and for the dog to be treated like an assistance animal, you will need to have a doctor's prescription. In the words of My Assistance Dog, Inc. "To have an emotional support animal, a person must have a confirmed diagnosis (usually of a mental illness) and be given a prescription for an ESA by an overseeing doctor who believes the pet will be of benefit to the patient's mental health." (11) Getting an Emotional Support Dog for Anxiety or Depression Looking to bring home a dog that can serve as an emotional support dog. But you do not require the specific assistance that psychiatric service dogs can provide. Therefore, some rescue organizations and breeders do make a note of dogs within their programs, making good ESA's. Often, a potential ESA is marked on the dog's adoption profile or profile on their breeder's notes. But if it isn't, try contacting the rescue or breeder directly and asking if they have or can help you find a dog that suits your needs. What Makes a Good Emotional Support Animal? Obviously, the purpose of adopting an emotional support animal for anxiety or depression is primarily to provide comfort. The animal in question must be good at providing said comfort to its handler. However, there are factors to consider when deciding on a specific canine. Factors that make them a good emotional support animal, including: The size of your emotional support animal may be a concern if you are limited in your physical activity, if you live in a tiny home, or if you plan to take your ESA on flights with you. A good temperament is a necessity - both towards you and other people and animals. Overall, health should be a concern as it may limit your dog's ability to provide emotional support. How Can an Emotional Support Dog Help with Depression or Anxiety? While psychiatric service dogs are specifically trained to assist owners with mental health conditions in many ways, an emotional support animal provides comfort to their owner by simply "being" with them, which can often be all a person with depression or anxiety really needs. Some examples of how service dogs do that include: A "listening ear" for anxious individuals. Physical closeness for depressed individuals. Calming tactile sensation to detract from anxiety. Providing a reason to get out of bed, i.e., walking the dog, feeding the dog, etc., for severely depressed individuals. Emotional Support Dog Licensing or Prescription Requirements Like psychiatric service dogs, there is no official licensing of emotional support dogs by individual organizations. However, as mentioned above, a person requiring an emotional support dog and using ESA's services legally should have a prescription. An overseeing doctor that believes the pet will be of benefit to the patient's mental health." (12) Legal Protections of Emotional Support Dogs Another difference from psychiatric service dogs is that emotional support dogs. They are not provided for under the Americans with Disabilities Act. They are, however, provided for under the Air Carrier Access Act (ACAA) and the Fair Housing Act. You can read more about the protections afforded to Emotional Support Dogs in our article here. Common Questions about Emotional Support Animals and Service Animals for Anxiety If you are interested in learning more about service dogs for anxiety disorders, the following FAQ should help. How Bad Does Your Anxiety Have to Be to Get a Service Dog? Your mental health professional can help you decide if your anxiety disorder is severe enough to need a service animal. You will likely need a recommendation letter from your licensed mental health professional, and they are responsible for evaluating if you need this type of therapy dog. Can You Have a Service Dog for Anxiety and Depression? Yes, you can have a therapy dog to help with mental illnesses like anxiety, depression, and PTSD. Just remember that an official anxiety service dog has to be trained to complete tasks related to your disability. How Do I Get a Service Dog for Anxiety Australia? Getting anxiety service dogs in Australia requires a medical professional to diagnoses. You must be diagnosed with a mental disability, and they will recommend this type of therapy dog. Do You Need a Service Dog for Social Anxiety? You do not need a service dog if you have social anxiety, but it can help. Remember that your mental health professional will have to evaluate your anxiety symptoms and provide medical documentation so you can get an ADA-approved therapy dog. Emotional support dogs do not have the same legal protections. READ NEXT: How to Make Your Dog an Emotional Support Dog Pin and share with other dog owners:

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