

# Minimum Standards for Training Hearing Dogs

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These are intended to be minimum standards for all Assistance Dog programs that are members or provisional members with ADI. All programs are encouraged to work at levels above the minimums.

1. The Hearing Dog must respond to basic obedience commands from the handler 90% of the time on the first ask in all public and home environments. The dog must respond to the trained sound with an alerting behavior within 15 seconds from the beginning of the sound.
2. The Hearing Dog should demonstrate basic obedience skills by responding to voice and/or hand signals for sitting, staying in place, lying down, walking in a controlled position near the client and coming to the client when called.
3. The Hearing Dog must meet all of the standards as laid out in the ADI Minimum Standards for Dogs in Public and should be equally well behaved in the home environment.
4. Sound Awareness Skills. Upon hearing a sound, the Hearing Dog should alert the client by making physical contact or by some other behavior, so the client is aware when a trained sound occurs. The dog should then specifically indicate or lead the person to the source of the sound. All dogs must be trained to alert the handler to at least three (3) sounds.
5. The client must be provided with enough instruction to be able to meet the ADI Minimum Standards for Assistance Dogs in Public. Clients must be able to demonstrate:
  - o That their dog can alert to three (3) different sounds.
  - o Knowledge of acceptable training techniques.
  - o An understanding of canine care and health.
  - o The ability to continue to train, problem solve, and add new skills with their Hearing Dog.
  - o Knowledge of local access laws and appropriate public behavior.
6. The program must document monthly follow ups with clients for the first 6 months following placement. Personal contact will be done by qualified staff or program volunteers within 12 months of graduation and annually thereafter.
7. Identification of the Hearing Dog will be accomplished with the laminated ID card with a photo (s) an names of the dog and partner. In public the dog must wear a cape, harness, backpack, or other similar piece of equipment or clothing with a logo that is clear and easy to read and identifiable as an Assistance Dog.
8. The program staff must demonstrate the knowledge of deafness, deaf culture and hearing impairment. A staff member or agent must know basic sign language. The program shall make available to staff and volunteers educational material on deafness, deaf culture and hearing impairment.
9. The client must abide by the ADI Minimum Standards of Assistance Dog Partners.
10. Prior to placement the Hearing Dog must meet the ADI Standards and Ethics Regarding Dogs, be spayed/neutered and have current vaccination certificates as determined by their veterinarian and applicable laws. It is the program's responsibility to inform the client of any special health or maintenance care requirements for each dog.