



Table of Contents

- 1. Clarifications:..... 2
- 2. Medical Assistance Tasks 2
 - a. Call for help 2
 - b. Find the exit..... 2
 - c. Go get help 2
 - d. Go get _____ (person’s name) 2
 - e. Medication retrieval (Meds)..... 2
 - f. Phone 2
 - g. Water..... 2
- 3. Mobility Tasks..... 3
 - a. Brace..... 3
 - b. Counterbalance 3
 - c. Door operation 3
 - d. Lean 3
 - e. Post fall care 3
 - f. Propulsion or otherwise pulling the handler 3
 - g. Remove socks/pants/sleeves 3
 - h. Retrieving items 3
 - i. Stability / legs 3
 - j. Stairs – make a rail 3
 - k. Turning on/off a light 3
- 4. Psychiatric Tasks..... 4
 - a. Anxiety Alert / Anxiety Interruption / Flashback Interruption 4
 - b. Cover me 4
 - c. Deep Pressure Therapy / Grounding 4
 - d. Excuse to leave room 4
 - e. Medication Reminder..... 4
 - f. Nudge 4
 - g. Search a room 4
 - h. Wake me up / Nightmare Interruption 4



1. Clarifications:

While a dog's companionship may offer emotional support, comfort, or a sense of security, this alone does NOT qualify as a "trained task" or "work" under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), thus it does not give a disabled person the legal right to take that dog out in public as a legitimate service dog.

In addition to task training, it should also be recognized that housebreaking, basic obedience training, and mastering superior public etiquette are essential for service dogs. These behaviors include but are not limited to: no nuisance barking, no aggressive behavior, and no inappropriate sniffing or intrusion into another person or dog's space.

Some tasks listed here may be modified or combined to mitigate a handler's disabilities. Tasks may require additional foundational training to ensure that the task is performed reliably and correctly. Tasks listed under one category may be used in other categories if it is determined that the task can be modified to mitigate a handler's disability within another category. This is not an all-inclusive list; other tasks can be created and/or modified, if necessary.

Note: These are possible tasks that a dog can be trained to perform. Not all dogs will come pre-programmed with these commands, nor will all dogs be capable of performing all tasks. Hearts of Gold will work with you to train and refine these tasks as needed but the client will always need to do maintenance and generalization training.

2. Medical Assistance Tasks

a. Call for help

On a client-specific cue, the dog will place a call to a pre-programmed emergency number by activating the K-9 Rescue phone by pressing the activation button with its paw or nose.

b. Find the exit

Dog is trained to locate an exit, on cue, and to drag the handler out of the building by pulling on its leash to get the handler to follow.

c. Go get help

Dog is trained to go find a person and lead them back to the handler. This can be used if the handler is unable to find help in a store or a location outside of their home. Dog could also be trained to carry something (like a note) to a person to ask for help.

d. Go get _____ (person's name)

Dog is trained to go find a specific person and bring them back to the handler. The person must be close enough that the dog can find them safely. Dog may have to open doors to find the person. The person must also know that having the dog approach them is a cue to follow the dog.

e. Medication retrieval (Meds)

The dog will go to a predetermined location and retrieve a pill bottle or medication bag to bring to the handler. Dog can be trained to open doors, jump onto a counter, etc. to retrieve the needed medication.

f. Phone

The dog will retrieve an emergency phone from a set location and bring it to the handler so they may use it to call for help.

g. Water

The dog can be trained to retrieve a bottle of water (or other bottled beverage) from the refrigerator and bring it to the handler so that they can take their medication.



3. Mobility Tasks

a. Brace

On cue, the dog will position itself in front of and perpendicularly to the handler and stand still to allow the handler to change position by putting some of their weight on the dog's shoulders for balance and stability.

b. Counterbalance

If a handler has difficulty with balance or maintaining an upright position or walking without tripping/falling, a dog can be trained to counterbalance. This means the dog will apply force in the opposite direction of the handler to stabilize them without overcompensating in either direction. This can be done while standing still or while walking.

c. Door operation

The dog can be trained to open and or close doors for their client. This includes doors within the home, refrigerator or cabinet doors, and even automatic doors operated via a button.

d. Lean

The dog will position itself perpendicular to and behind the handler. The dog will then lean against the back of the handler's legs to provide something for the handler to lean against to keep from falling.

e. Post fall care

If a handler were to fall, the dog can be trained to respond by positioning itself under the handler's head like a pillow to help them regain their equilibrium. The dog could also help prop the handler up into a sitting position, for the same reason as being a pillow, before assisting the handler to stand back up.

f. Propulsion or otherwise pulling the handler

With proper equipment, larger dogs can be trained to assist in pulling their handler's wheelchair, pull their handler (slowly) up the stairs, or pull their handler out of a chair or off the couch.

g. Remove socks/pants/sleeves

When limited mobility or painful mobility is an issue, dogs can be trained to assist the handler in removing certain articles of clothing that may otherwise be painful or difficult.

h. Retrieving items

The dog can be trained to pick or retrieve various items that have been dropped or that the handler is otherwise unable to pick up. Typical items include keys, phone, leash, shoes, slippers, glasses, and canes.

i. Stability / legs

In order to provide stability by means of a third point of solid contact with the ground, the dog can be trained to position itself directly between the handler's legs to allow the handler to grip the dog's sides with their legs for extra support.

j. Stairs – make a rail

Dog is trained to take the steps (up and/or down) one at a time and to stop on each step to allow the handler to stabilize and brace off the dog to ascend/descend the steps. This is especially useful if there is no rail for the handler to use – if a rail is present, the dog will walk on the opposite side of the rail and serve as an additional support.

k. Turning on/off a light

In cases of limited range of motion, the dog can be trained to turn on or off a light for a handler that is unable to do so on their own.



4. Psychiatric Tasks

a. Anxiety Alert / Anxiety Interruption / Flashback Interruption

Dog will alert to anxiety and/or interrupt repetitive behaviors indicative of a rising stress level. The cue the dog responds to will be client-specific, but may include things such as fidgeting, foot tapping, arm scratching, freezing, etc. The method of alert/interruption will also vary based on client need and may include things like pawing at the handler, jumping on the handler, vocalizing, etc.

b. Cover me

Dog is trained to watch the handler's back. Dog will maintain a standing position while facing behind the handler to be alert in case someone gets too close. This command is often paired with NUDGE.

c. Deep Pressure Therapy / Grounding

A dog will use his/her body weight to apply pressure to as much surface area of the handler as possible. Dog will often be trained to lick the handler's face and or try to sit/lay on them. Command can be used for when a handler is sitting (SNUGGLE) or laying down (SQUISH).

d. Excuse to leave room

Dog is trained to vocalize or "act up" in response to a subtle cue as if to indicate they need to use the bathroom to provide the handler an easy escape from a situation.

e. Medication Reminder

For those clients that struggle to remember to take their medications as prescribed, a dog can be trained to retrieve the medication in response to an alarm or even at a specific time of day and to "nag" the handler until they have taken their medication.

f. Nudge

Dog will alert the handler to a stimulus the handler is unaware of in the environment. Typically, this task is used to have the dog Nudge the handler's leg (usually with their nose/muzzle) in response to a person approaching the handler from behind when the person reaches approximately 10 feet away.

g. Search a room

Dog can be trained to enter a room (typically upon returning home), turn on the lights, check all the corners and report back to the handler that it is clear. If there is a person in the room, the dog can be trained to bark to alert the handler of the presence.

h. Wake me up / Nightmare Interruption

Dog is trained to wake up their handler in response to a certain cue. Cue is client-specific, but may include responding to an alarm clock, thrashing from a nightmare, an elevated heart rate, etc. The method for waking the handler can also vary, but often includes physical touch, vocalizations, or even turning on the light.