

UNITED STATES (U.S.) DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS (VA)
OFFICE OF PROSTHETIC AND SENSORY AIDS
GUIDE AND SERVICE DOG VETERINARY HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE
PERFORMANCE WORK STATEMENT (PWS)

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1 **2 INTRODUCTION**

2 The Department of Veteran Affairs will provide veterinary health insurance coverage for
3 Veteran-owned guide and service dogs. The dogs are privately owned by Veterans
4 suffering from visual, hearing and/or mobility impairments. Pursuant to 38 U.S.C. Part
5 17, VA will provide coverage for both a comprehensive health plan as well as
6 sick/injured insurance coverage for all Assistance Dog International (ADI) certified
7 service dogs approved by the VA for receipt of Service Dog benefits -- regardless of
8 age, breed, geographic location or pre-existing medical conditions. VA's primary
9 objectives are (1) provide Veterans assistance in keeping their service dogs in optimal
10 serviceable condition, (2) relieve Veterans of the cost and administrative burden and (3)
11 improve the overall level of cost and efficiency on behalf of the Government.

12 **3 APPLICABLE DOCUMENTS**

13 38 U.S.C Part 17 www.law.cornell.edu/cfr/text/38/chapter-1
14 VHA 2006-0057 www.va.gov/vhapublications

15 **4 SCOPE OF WORK (Attachment 1: Guide and Service Dog Population)**

16 The purpose of this procurement action is to acquire veterinary health insurance
17 coverage for all eligible Guide and Service Dogs belonging to Veterans approved by the
18 VA for receipt of Guide and Service Dog Benefits. Prior to receiving insurance
19 coverage, the Veteran shall provide VA a copy of Guide/Service dog's ADI certification.
20 Each dog must meet the clinical definition of vision, hearing, and/or mobility service
21 dogs as defined in Section 5.2.2 below. Currently, there are approximately 369 dogs
22 that are part of this program (Attachment 1). Veterinary health insurance coverage
23 shall also be made available to any and all eligible Guide and Service dogs entering the
24 program during the period of performance. Coverage will include dogs owned by
25 disabled Veterans throughout the United States and U.S. territories. The Guide and
26 Service dogs are privately owned by Veterans suffering from visual, hearing and/or
27 mobility impairments. The contractor shall provide the Department of Veterans Affairs
28 with full comprehensive, quality veterinary health care insurance coverage for all
29 accredited Veteran-owned Guide and Service dogs regardless of age or pre-existing
30 condition as long as the dog is determined capable of performing service dog duties.

31 **5 PERFORMANCE DETAILS**

32 **5.1 Performance Period**

33 Period of performance is one (1) base year and four (4) option years.

34 **5.2 Volume of Coverage Anticipated**

35 In terms of pricing, quantities will be broken out into thresholds of 25 service dogs per
36 line item. The Contractor (Insurer) shall notify both the Contracting Officer's Technical
37 Representative (COR) and the Contracting Officer (CO) in writing when quantity per
38 threshold has exceeded 20 dogs in any given Contract Line Item (CLIN).

39 **5.2.1 Place of Performance (See Attachment 2: Geographic Regional Map)**

40 The contractor will be required to provide insurance throughout the United States, US
41 territories, and the Philippines. Coverage will be broken out into two geographical
42 regions (East and West) to include US Outlying Territories and Philippines. Puerto Rico
43 and US Virgin Islands will be included in the East Region. Guam and Philippines will be
44 included in the West Region (Attachment 2).

45 **5.2.1.1 Eastern Region:**

46 Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, New
47 Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, Vermont, Florida, West Virginia,
48 Virginia, Georgia, Kentucky, South Carolina, North Carolina, Tennessee, Alabama,
49 Louisiana, Mississippi, Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, Wisconsin, Puerto
50 Rico, US Virgin Islands

51 **5.2.1.2 Western Region:**

52 Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, Oklahoma, Minnesota, Alaska, Hawaii, Washington,
53 Oregon, Idaho, California, Colorado, Montana, Utah, Wyoming, Nevada, Iowa, Kansas,
54 Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Guam, Philippines

55 **5.2.2 Clinical Definition of Vision, Hearing, and Mobility Guide and Service Dogs**

56 **5.2.2.1 Service Dog:**

57 A service dog is a dog that works with an individual with one or more disabilities.
58 Service dogs are trained to perform a wide range of tasks that mitigate a variety of
59 disabilities, including but not limited to: bracing, retrieving, alerting to a medical crisis,
60 and providing assistance in a medical crisis. Service dogs can be partnered with adults
61 with disabilities requiring a wheelchair, someone who needs help walking and/or
62 balancing, or someone who has disabling seizures. Service dogs are trained to do
63 tasks to mitigate their partners' disabilities. The presence of a dog for protection,
64 personal defense, or solely for comfort does not qualify that dog as a service dog.

65 **5.2.2.2 Guide Dog (GD):**

66 A GD is a dog for the visually impaired that has been trained by a bona fide GD school
67 to guide and provide other specialized services to a blind or visually impaired person.

68 **5.2.2.3 Hearing Dog (HD):**

69 A HD is a service dog specifically trained to assist persons with deafness or severe
70 hearing impairment by alerting the partner to environmental sounds such as doorbells,
71 smoke alarms, telephones, baby crying, alarm clocks, intruders, or other noises. HDs
72 are trained to alert their owners by touch and lead them to everyday sounds. HDs may
73 be used outside the home to alert to traffic hazards or sirens.

74 **5.2.2.4 Mobility Dog (MD):**

75 A MD is a service dog specifically trained to provide physical assistance to a person
76 with a physical disability that impacts gait, balance, strength, dexterity or other
77 musculoskeletal or neurological functioning associated with mobility. The dog may
78 provide assistance for maneuvering and navigation in conjunction with mobility assistive
79 devices. To assist with environmental control and activities of daily living, the dogs are
80 commonly trained to retrieve objects, open and close doors, assist with dressing
81 activities, and operate light switches.

82 **5.2.2.5 Seizure Response Dog (SRD).**

83 A SRD is a service dog specifically trained to recognize that a person is having a
84 seizure and to provide support to the person during the seizure (ictal period) and after
85 the seizure when the person is recovering (post-ictal interval). The support that a SRD
86 can provide may include, but is not limited to: 1) contacting via a dedicated phone, an
87 emergency medical service (typically “911”) or a family member or other specific
88 individual who can provide human support to the Veteran; 2) retrieving water,
89 medication or other supportive material for the Veteran when the Veteran regains
90 consciousness in the post-ictal period; 3) providing bracing support to the Veteran
91 during the post-ictal period to facilitate the ability of the Veteran to rise from the floor or
92 wherever the Veteran is during the seizure. SRDs do not abort seizures, cannot be
93 expected to break the fall of a person having a seizure, and cannot prevent persons
94 having a seizure from injury due to activities such as biting one’s tongue or choking

95 **5.3 Eligibility for Insurance**

96 Dogs must maintain ability to function as a service dog in order to be eligible for
97 insurance. If at any time the VA learns from any source that the dog is medically unable
98 to maintain that role, or VA makes a clinical determination that the Veteran no longer
99 requires the dog, VA will provide at least 30 days notice to the Veteran before benefits
100 are no longer authorized. The Veteran may present contrary evidence in accordance
101 with VHA Directive 2006-0057 in order to resolve conflicts about whether an appropriate
102 clinical decision has been made. Prior to a service dog’s coverage becoming activated,
103 the Contracting Officer’s Representative (COR) shall provide the contractor/insurer with
104 the following data:

- 105 • Veteran’s name
- 106 • Service dog’s name
- 107 • Service dog’s age, breed, zip code
- 108 • Copy of ADI Certification
- 109 • Photo of service dog

110 **5.3.1 Adding Service Dogs to Contract:**

111 Full coverage shall commence 7 days after VA provides insurer with written notification.

112 **5.3.2 Deleting Service Dogs from Contract:**

113 Full coverage will end 7 days after VA provides insurer with written notification.

114 **6 VETERINARY HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE**

115 The contractor shall provide comprehensive, quality veterinary health insurance
116 coverage for all accredited Veteran-owned Guide and Service dogs, to include the
117 following:

118 **6.1 Wellness Insurance Coverage**

119 The Wellness Plan will include all dogs deemed by the VA to be currently performing as
120 service dogs. If a service dog has a pre-existing health/physical condition that does not
121 impact or interfere with the dogs ability to perform its service dog duties, the dog will be
122 eligible for full coverage under the Plan. (e.g.: dogs with pre-existing conditions that do
123 not prevent the dog from being a functioning service dog are NOT excluded from
124 coverage).The Insurer shall bill VA directly. There shall be no premiums, copayments,
125 or deductibles associated with the policy.

126 **6.1.1 Vaccinations (all vaccinations recommended by veterinarians will vary per**
127 **dog per region)**

- 128 • Distemper Parvo
- 129 • Leptospirosis
- 130 • Hepatitis
- 131 • Rabies
- 132 • Lyme Disease
- 133 • Bordetella (2 per year)

134 **6.1.2 Comprehensive Exams (annual) ****

- 135 • Ooscopic Exam
- 136 • Ophthalmic Exam
- 137 • Rectal Exam
- 138 • Dental Exam
- 139 • Neurologic Exam
- 140 • Cardiovascular Evaluation
- 141 • Weight/Nutritional Counseling
- 142 • Coat & Skin Evaluation
- 143 • Abdominal Palpation
- 144 • Urogenital Evaluation
- 145 • Musculoskeletal Evaluation
- 146 • Pulmonary/Lung Evaluation
- 147 • Tonometry/Ocular Pressure
- 148 • Intestinal Parasite Fecal Exam

- 149 • Roundworm and Hookworm Dewormings
- 150 • Blood Sample Collect/Prep
- 151 • Blood Cell Count
- 152 • Differential Exam of Blood Cells
- 153 • Internal Organ Function Screens (liver, kidney, calcium/phosphorus,
- 154 cholesterol and diabetes)
- 155 • Canine Dental Prophylaxis Protocol (utilizes one blood screening and one
- 156 internal function screen, listed above)
- 157 • Urine Sample Collect/Prep – Free Catch
- 158 • Urinalysis – Individual Tests
- 159 • Urine Specific Gravity
- 160 • Urine Sediment Exam
- 161 • Chest X-Rays (3 views)
- 162 • Electrocardiograms

163 **6.1.3 Miscellaneous Wellness Insurance Coverage**

- 164 • Ear Swab and Microscopic Exam (1st Year)
- 165 • Dental Cleaning (sedation/general anesthesia is required for all cleanings)
- 166 • Grooming (Blind Veteran-owned dogs only)
- 167 • Heartworm/Lyme/Ehrlichia Test – Rocky Mountain Tick Fever
- 168 • Free Interstate Health Certificates (when needed)

169 **6.2 Sick/Injured Insurance Coverage**

170 The policy shall guarantee/provide full coverage for all treatment (and associated
171 prescription medications) subject to premiums, copayments, deductibles or annual caps
172 determined to be medically necessary, including euthanasia and cremation services.

173 **6.2.1 Miscellaneous Sick/Injured Insurance Coverage**

- 174 • The Sick/Injured Policy will not exclude dogs with pre-existing conditions that
175 do not prevent the dog from being a service dog.
- 176 • The Insurer shall bill VA directly for any premiums, copayments, or
177 deductibles associated with the policy.
- 178 • The VA, and not the Veteran, will be billed for any premiums, copayments or
179 deductibles associated with the policy, however, the Veteran will be
180 responsible for any cost of care that exceeds the maximum amount
181 authorized by the policy for a particular procedure, course of treatment or
182 policy year. If a dog requires care that may exceed the policy's limit, the
183 insurer will, whenever reasonably possible under the circumstances, provide
184 advance notice to the Veteran.

185 **6.3 Fit for Service Certification/Recertification Requirements**

186 Upon successful completion of annual comprehensive exam, each guide and service
187 dog will be certified/recertified as Fit for Service. Insurer shall require the licensed
188 veterinarian performing annual exam(s) provide Insurer with copy of certification/non
189 certification of guide and service dog(s) fitness for duty. Insurer shall provide copy of
190 certification/non-certification to VA on a monthly basis. Any dog determined non-
191 serviceable will be removed from contractual coverage 30 days after Veteran is notified
192 in writing.

193 **6.4 Reporting Requirements**

194 The Contractor shall maintain an electronic database of all participating guide and
195 service dogs in the program, to include dates of service and treatment provided.
196 Database must be available to VA during business hours and all data contained in the
197 database must be shared with VA on request.

198 **6.4.1 Monthly Reports**

199 Shall be provided by Contractor/Insurer to VA. The monthly report shall provide copies
200 of all fitness certifications/non certifications. Non certifications shall include supporting
201 clinical documentation. Monthly report shall be provided NLT 5 working days after end
202 of each month.

203 **6.4.2 Quarterly Reports**

204 Shall be provided by Contractor/Insurer to VA NLT 5 working days after end of each
205 quarter. The Quarterly Reports shall contain the following data:

- 206 • Total number of Wellness claims
- 207 • Total number of Sick/Injured claims
- 208 • Total number of dogs added to the VA's Insurance policy
- 209 • Total number of dogs removed from the insurance policy

210 **6.4.3 Annual Close-out Report**

211 Shall be provided by Contractor/Insurer to VA NLT than 30 days after end of contract
212 Base Year and all option years. Closeout report shall provide a summary of the
213 following data:

- 214 • Total Number of Participating Dogs
- 215 • Vaccinations: Number of dogs vaccinated and total costs incurred.
- 216 • Comprehensive Exam (annual service): Total number of dogs examined and
217 total costs incurred
- 218 • Fit for Service Certification: Total number of dogs certified based upon annual
219 comprehensive exam.
- 220 • Fit for Certification: Total number of dogs failing annual certification.

- 221 • Teeth cleaning (sedation included in this service): Total number of dogs seen
- 222 and total costs incurred.
- 223 • Sick/Injured Services: Total number of cases and total costs incurred.
- 224 • Miscellaneous services/chargeable itemized breakdown with total costs incurred.
- 225 • Total number of dogs removed from contract.
- 226 • Total number of dogs added to contract.

227 **6.5 Additional Stipulations:**

228 **6.5.1 Contractor shall ensure:**

- 229 • Verification of veterinarian licenses
- 230 • Establishment of online Customer Hotline for Veterans
- 231 • Establishment of online registration for Veterans to enroll service dogs
- 232 • Establishment of formal online complaint process for Veterans

233 **7 GOVERNMENT ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

234 **7.1 Points of Contact**

235 **Contracting Officer (CO):**

236 The Contracting Officer for this effort is as follows:

237 Name: Jesse Hardy
238 Email: Jesse.Hardy@va.gov
239 Telephone: (540) 479-8450 ext. 251

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241 **Contracting Officer's Representative (COR):**

242 The Contracting Officer's Representative for this contract is:

243 Name: TBD
244 Email: TBD
245 Telephone: TBD

246 **7.2 Government Authorities**

247 **7.2.1 CONTRACTING OFFICER (CO)**

248 The Contracting Officer (CO) has the overall responsibility for the administration of this
249 Contract. The CO, without right of delegation, is the only authorized individual to take

250 actions on behalf of the Government to amend, modify or deviate from the contract
251 terms, conditions, and/or requirements.

252 If the Contractor makes any changes at the direction of any person other than the
253 Contracting Officer, the change will be considered to have been made without
254 authority and no adjustment will be made to cover any increases in charges that may
255 result.

256 The CO may delegate certain specific responsibilities to its authorized representative –
257 the Contracting Officer's Representative (COR).

258 **7.2.2 CONTRACTING OFFICER'S REPRESENTATIVE (COR)**

259 The Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) will represent the CO in the
260 administration of technical details within the scope of the Contract. The COR is also
261 responsible for the final inspection and acceptance of all Contract deliverables and
262 reports, and such other responsibilities as may be specified in the Contract. The
263 COR is not otherwise authorized to make any representations or commitments of any
264 kind on behalf of the CO or the Government. The COR does not have authority to
265 alter the Contractor's obligations or to change the Contract specifications, price,
266 terms or conditions. If, as a result of technical discussions, it is desirable to modify
267 Contract obligations or the specification, changes will be issued in writing and signed
268 by the CO.

269 **7.3 Government Furnished Materials:**

270 Prior to activation of each service dog's coverage, the COR shall provide the
271 contractor/insurer with the following data:

- 272 • Veteran's name
- 273 • Service dog's name
- 274 • Service dog's age, breed, zip code
- 275 • Copy of ADI Certification
- 276 • Photo of service dog

277 **8 DATA**

278 The Government shall have unlimited rights to all data developed by the contractor
279 under this contract.

280 **8.1 Confidentiality of Data and Privacy Act.**

281 Any information systems involved with this contract are classified as systems of records
282 subject to the Privacy Act of 1974 (Public Law 93-579).

283 The contractor may, during performance, observe or handle information subject to the
284 Privacy Act or other Federal regulations. Duplication or disclosure of data and other
285 information to which the contractor will or may have access because of this contract is

286 prohibited by law. It is understood that throughout the performance of the contract, the
287 contractor may have access to confidential data that is either the sole property of VA or
288 is the sole property of other than the contracting parties. The contractor hereby agrees
289 to maintain the confidentiality of all such data to which access may be gained throughout
290 contract performance, whether title thereto vests in VA or otherwise. The contractor
291 hereby agrees not to disclose said data, any interpretation thereof, or data derivative
292 thereto unauthorized parties in contravention of the provisions, without the written
293 approval of the CO, or the party in which the title is wholly vested. Also, FAR 52.224-1
294 Privacy Act Notification and FAR 52.224-2, Privacy Act, as stated in Section I, Contract
295 Clauses, apply to this contract. All contract personnel performing on this contract will be
296 required to sign a Certificate of Confidentiality and Non-Disclosure prior to commencing
297 work. The Certificate will be provided and maintained by the COTR.

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299 **9 Guide and Service Dog Health Insurance PWS**

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PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS SUMMARY

302 **OBJECTIVE:** Provide veterinary health care and insurance coverage for all eligible
 303 service dogs approved by Veterans Affairs.

Task	PWS Reference	Performance Standard	Acceptable Quality Level (AQL)	Method of Surveillance
Provide comprehensive, quality veterinary health care insurance coverage	PWS Paragraph 6.0	Resolve all valid service requests	100%	Online Customer feedback to contractor and/or Government personnel
Assure that Veterans Affairs is satisfied with quality of service (timeliness, courtesy, adherence to contracted benefits coverage)	PWS Paragraph 4.0 & 6.0	Receive no more than <u>1</u> valid complaint during a month period.	95%	Online Customer feedback to contractor and/or Government personnel
Maintain an electronic database of all participating service dogs in the program	PWS Paragraph 6.4 & 6.5	The database may not contain more than <u>5%</u> inaccurate/erroneous information	95%	Monthly/Quarterly /Annual Reports Online Registration System
Provide timely reporting/ notification on items requiring government action	PWS Paragraphs 5.3, 6.4 & 6.5	No more than <u>5%</u> of required notifications/incident reporting may go unreported or be submitted later than the specified time period.	95%	Monthly/Quarterly /Annual Reports Online Customer feedback to contractor and/or Government personnel
Deliver required reports	PWS Paragraphs 6.4 & 6	No more than <u>5%</u> of required notifications/incident	95%	Monthly/Quarterly/Annual Reports

		reporting may go unreported or be submitted later than the specified time period		Online Customer feedback to contractor and/or Government personnel
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