

Fidos For Freedom, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with a dedicated group of volunteers who strive to increase the quality of life of people in the Baltimore-Washington metropolitan community through the use of Hearing Dogs, Service Dogs, and Therapy Dogs. Other programs include the Junior Volunteer Program, the Dogs Educating & Assisting Readers (DEAR) Program, Community Education Programs, and Sponsorship Programs. Please call 410-880-4178 (Voice) or 301-570-7570 (TTY) for more information about any of these other exciting aspects of this organization.

The Fidos puppies and dogs in training are never boarded in commercial kennel facilities, nor does Fidos maintain a kennel in its Training Center. This allows closer contact with the dogs, affords them the opportunity to learn to behave in a household setting, and provides volunteers time to give them special attention and love. Fidos provides the food, veterinary care, crate, equipment, grooming supplies and toys that each dog will need throughout its training.

Volunteering as a Puppy Raiser, Trainer or Vacation Home Provider can be a rewarding experience for you and your family. The joy and pride you will feel when you see the puppy or dog you raised, trained, or vacationed increasing the independence of a person with a disability will be your ultimate reward. If you would like to participate in any of these worthwhile programs, call 410-880-4178 (Voice) or 301-570-7570 (TTY) to schedule an appointment with the Fidos Puppy Raiser Coordinator, Director of Training, or Vacation Home Coordinator.

The Fidos For Freedom, Inc. training center is located at 1200 Sandy Spring Road, Laurel, MD. However, mail is only received at our Post Office

**Fidos For Freedom, Inc.
Puppy Raiser, Trainer, &
Vacation Home Provider Program
P.O. Box 5508
Laurel, MD 20726**

Puppy Raiser, Trainer, & Vacation Home Provider Program Information



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Laurel, Maryland 20726
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(410) 880-4178 (V)
(301) 570-7570 (TTY)
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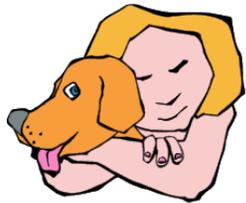
Fidos For Freedom, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and is a voting member of Assistance Dogs International (ADI). All donations are greatly appreciated and are tax deductible.



Combined Federal Campaign:
National Capitol Area CFC # 7076
Central Maryland Area CFC # 3774
Maryland Charity Campaign # 2605
United Way - Write-in

PUPPY RAISER

A Puppy Raiser is a volunteer who provides a home and basic training for a new puppy in the Fidos For Freedom, Inc. Assistance Dog Training Program. During the first year of training, a Puppy Raiser attends weekly classes at the Fidos Training Center to learn how to socialize the puppy and to teach it good household manners, proper public behavior, crate training, housebreaking, and how to eliminate on command.



A Puppy Raiser brings the puppy to the Fidos training center regularly for basic obedience training and to veterinary appointments; exposes the puppy to various sights, sounds and different populations of people; and teaches the puppy how to walk on various surfaces. A puppy remains in the Puppy Raiser's home for about one year before it enters the next phase of its training. This time provides the puppy with a chance to enjoy puppyhood, to master all of the commands it needs to know, and to reach the confidence and maturity level that Fidos requires for it to become a valued helpmate and companion for a person with a disability.

Once it has been determined that the puppy is ready to enter the next phase of its training, it will move into a trainer's home where it will develop the basic skills it will need to become a Fidos Hearing Dog or Service Dog.

If a puppy raiser decides that he or she would like to train a dog through this next level of training, they can become an apprentice trainer. When another dog in training is ready, it will move into the apprentice trainer's home.

TRAINER

A Trainer is a volunteer who provides a home for a dog in training that has completed its basic obedience training and has been socialized by a Puppy Raiser. Trainers teach the dog the specialized skills it will need to assist its future partner. Trainers are also involved in the training of the client partnered with the dog. Trainers are required to bring the dog to the training center at least twice a month and they must attend special training exercises during evening and weekend hours.

During this phase of the dog's training, an experienced Fidos trainer or an apprentice trainer under the tutelage of an experienced Fidos trainer, teaches the dog a formal retrieve. The formal retrieve classes are structured so that each dog develops this skill at its own pace, using positive reinforcement which encourages eager helpmates for Fidos clients. After successfully completing the formal retrieve classes and demonstrating an appropriate level of maturity, the dog will earn its red assistance dog in training cape or harness. The dog can then accompany the trainer to public places such as restaurants, grocery stores, or to the trainer's workplace, so that the dog can develop appropriate public deportment skills.



Training intensifies during this phase of training as the dog learns to focus on its handler and not to be distracted by other people when working in public places. Although people, other than the Trainer are discouraged from petting the dog with it is in its red harness, the dog will learn that it can still get plenty of praise and affection from its handler. When the dog is at home with its trainer and the red harness has been removed, the dog is permitted to interact with family members, friends and pets. This helps the dog learn that when "dressed" in its working attire (cape, harness, etc.) it needs to stay focused on its work.

VACATION HOME PROVIDER

A Vacation Home Provider (VHP) is a volunteer who provides a temporary home for a puppy or dog in training whenever a Puppy Raiser or Trainer travels and is unable to take the dog along. A Vacation Home Provider does not need to be a puppy raiser or trainer. However, the VHP does need to reinforce the skills the dog has already learned. There are no required levels of participation in this program. A VHP can volunteer as little or as often as desired.

When a dog goes into a vacation home, everything it will need is provided - including its crate, blanket or bed, food, treats, water and food dishes, leash, training and buckle collars with ID and Rabies tags, puppy cape or harness, favorite toys, and grooming tools and supplies. In addition, the vacation home provider will receive a Vacation Home Instructions form detailing the dog's day-to-day routine, feeding schedule, and elimination habits and a list of the commands the dog already knows and a description of how the dog can be expected to respond to each command. Also, the dog's Puppy Raiser Guidelines book will be provided which contains a copy of the dog's veterinary records and most recent rabies certificate.

When the dog returns home, the Vacation Home Provider provides the Puppy Raiser or Trainer with a completed Vacation Home Report. This report provides Fidos with important information on how the dog behaved while it stayed outside its training home. It can also help identify a problem the dog may be experiencing that hasn't been apparent in other areas of training.

Volunteering as a Vacation Home Provider is a great way to contribute to Fidos. It can also help you decide if you would like to someday become a Puppy Raiser or Trainer!

