

# Military Working Dog Adoption Reality Checklist

**Adopting one of our dogs – whether a retired military working dog or one that failed training – is a lifelong commitment and should only be done after careful consideration. It will mean a lifestyle change and adjustment for everyone involved. Please consider the points below before making your final decision.**

Please initial each box and return this form to the MWD Disposition Coordinator



1. I have reviewed information on the breed traits of the dog that is being offered for adoption.

Shepherds (Belgian Malinois and German shepherds) <http://dogs.answers.com/dog-breeds/before-you-adopt-things-to-know-about-shepherd-dog-breeds>  
Belgian Malinois (Belgian shepherd) <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4xIra4xAkb8>  
German shepherd [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WBf\\_YIAmebA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WBf_YIAmebA)  
Labrador retriever <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0cj81wHmfXc>

2. I understand that this dog was selected for the MWD program because it is a high-energy dog, and it will require regular exercise and mental stimulation (up to two hours per day depending on the dog).
3. I understand that lack of regular exercise and mental stimulation can lead to behavioral issues.
4. I understand the dog I adopt may not be housebroken. I will take steps to humanely housebreak this dog.
5. I understand that a crate is not “punishment” but a safe haven for the dog and a housebreaking tool.
6. I understand that this dog may live up to 15 years, and I am prepared to provide general care, medical care, exercise, training, and companionship for that length of time.
7. I understand that for a healthy dog, costs of vet care (shots, flea, and heartworm preventative) food, toys, and minimal boarding and grooming can cost \$500-\$700 per year.
8. I understand that this particular breed is susceptible to most diseases that afflict humans such as allergies, cancer, heart disease, arthritis, and other health issues, including emergencies.
9. I understand this dog will shed, and may blow its coat twice a year. I understand this dog will need regular brushing.
10. I understand this dog is not a “hypoallergenic” dog, and that anyone with allergies to dogs will likely have an allergic reaction to it. No one in my household is allergic to dogs.
11. I understand that most of this dog’s life was spent in a kennel (not a house), and it may take 30-90 days to adapt to its new circumstances and family.
12. I understand I need to be patient and consistent while the dog learns the rules of its new home.
13. I understand that this dog may arrive without obedience training. I am willing to seek professional assistance as needed to resolve any issues.

14. I am prepared to socialize this dog with other pets I currently own. I understand that it may take 30-90 days for this dog and my current pets to warm up to each other, and that they may never warm up to each other. I am willing to seek professional assistance as needed to resolve any issues.
15. I understand that this dog may arrive with behavioral issues (e.g., chewing, marking, jumping on the furniture, counter surfing, digging, fence fighting, barking, jumping, etc.). I am willing to seek professional assistance as needed to resolve any issues.
16. My work hours and lifestyle (and those of my family) allow enough time to provide this dog appropriate care, exercise, training, and companionship.
17. I understand this dog may be able to escape from the back yard if left unattended. I also understand that fences not locked with a padlock could result in others allowing my dog to escape.
18. I am not planning any major life changes that will affect my ability to provide a loving home for this dog for the next year (i.e., marriage, new children, moving, new job, etc.).
19. I understand that if I am a student, in the military (especially if deployed often), or travel frequently, I may want to consider waiting until my life is more settled to adopt a dog.
20. I understand that I am expected to provide a home for this dog, and that placing this dog in a kill shelter or dumping it somewhere to fend for itself are unacceptable methods for rehoming this dog.
21. I understand that attempting to rehome this dog via social media will place the dog at risk of being picked up by people with inhumane purposes such as dog-fighting, torture, and/or experimentation.
22. I understand that children must be supervised at all times when interacting with this dog.
23. I understand that I should dog-proof my home and yard.

**If (after reviewing this checklist) you now feel that one of our dogs is not right for your lifestyle, your local animal shelter has many candidates available for adoption that may be the right fit for you. We will understand if you go that route instead.**

24. I have read and understood each of the items above. I am committed to giving this dog a home. I wish to continue with the MWD adoption process.

Yes

Not at this time

Printed Name

Date

**DISCLAIMER:** Internet links provided herein do not constitute an official endorsement by the US Air Force, Department of Defense, or any other government agency. Such suggestions are made in the hopes that potential adopters will seek out as much information as they can to provide their new dog with the best life possible. We encourage the use of additional sources of information.