Questions to ask about canine assistance

Are you an adult or parent of a child with TSC who has epilepsy or other physical disabilities or special needs who is considering getting a seizure response or service dog? Use this list of questions to help you choose a canine assistance program¹ that best fits your needs.

1. “My child is only 4 years old.” What is the youngest age you will train a dog for, and will you train a dog for someone with an intellectual disability?
2. What skills can you train the dog to do?
   a. Example: Seizure training, autism (tethering, tracking), anxiety concerns, behavior disruption, diabetes, hearing impaired, etc.
3. What’s involved with the application process and fee?
4. Is there a cost associated to get a dog, if so, how much?
5. What breeds of dogs do you train?
   a. Are you able to accommodate for persons with allergies to certain breeds of dogs?
6. How long is the waiting list to get a dog?
7. How many dogs do you train a year?
8. Do you offer a guarantee for dog training and what happens if my dog doesn’t work out?
9. If my application is accepted, what training is involved for me to ensure a successful pairing with my dog?
   a. Do I have to travel to your facility?
   b. How long does my training last?
   c. Is lodging and food covered?
   d. What supplies do I need to bring with me?
   e. Do you offer follow-up training if needed?
10. Do you provide any future veterinary care or referral to a local veterinarian who provides free or reduced cost services for my dog?
11. How old will the dog be when I receive him/her, and how long will the dog remain in active service?
12. Will we be able to adopt the dog after he/she’s retired?

¹ The TSC Alliance does not endorse any canine assistant program. Search “service dogs” or “assistance dogs” on the internet for a list of programs.