

GUIDE DOG ACCESS RIGHTS AND ETIQUETTE



Access Rights

Guide Dogs provide Queenslanders who are vision impaired with a safe means of independent travel. Guide Dogs and Guide Dog Users' Right to enter public places – including shops, hotels, motels, restaurants, as well as taxis, buses and trains, are protected by law.

The following legislation covers rights of a Guide Dog and its user:

- 🐾 The Guide, Hearing and Assistance Dogs Act 2009 provides legal access for persons who require the aid of a Guide Dog to enter public places and public passenger vehicles.
- 🐾 The Guide, Hearing and Assistance Dogs Act 2009 also sets out the rights and responsibilities of Guide Dog training institutions, trainers, and person in charge of public places and public passenger vehicles.
- 🐾 The Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 applies to Queensland residents and prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities, including those who use a Guide Dog.
- 🐾 The Building Units and Group Titles Act 1980. Section 12 of this Act allows the owner or occupier of a strata lot to keep a Guide Dog and overrides by-laws that prohibit dogs.



The official status of a Guide Dog can be checked by asking to see the official Guide Dog ID cards given to clients by Guide Dogs Queensland or by calling the association and asking for verification.

All Guide Dogs, whether in Guide Dog Training or in the Puppy Development program, must be in a coat or harness which is an identifying symbol under the Guide, Hearing and Assistance Dogs Act 2009 when in a public place or passenger vehicle.

Penalties do apply to people who are found guilty of refusing access to a Guide Dog.

Etiquette

The working partnership of a Guide Dog and client is inspiring to see, but it is the result of intensive training for both the person and the Guide Dog.

Though it's natural for people especially children to want to pat, praise or meet the Guide Dog, you could be endangering the safety of the team by approaching the team.

Guide Dogs Queensland has some important tips we ask the general community to be aware of when they meet or see a Guide Dog in harness. Please remember:

- 🐾 When a Guide Dog is in harness it is working. Whether it is walking, sitting or sleeping, it should not be patted, fed, or distracted.
- 🐾 The Guide Dog must not be the centre of attention. A well-intentioned pat can undo months of training.

- 🐾 We encourage the general public to restrict prolonged eye contact with the Guide Dog.
- 🐾 Please talk to the person and not the Guide Dog.
- 🐾 Please don't grab the person or the dog's harness. Ask if they need assistance first.
- 🐾 If you provide assistance to the Guide Dog User, please walk on the person's opposite side to the Guide Dog.
- 🐾 Please make sure your pet dog is on a leash or under control around the Guide Dog. When approaching, it may be polite to let the person know that you have a dog.
- 🐾 If you see a stray pet dog, please contact your local Council.

When out in public, the person who is blind or vision impaired and the Guide Dog are concentrating on reaching their destination safely. They need to maintain that level of concentration and being interrupted can inconvenience the user who must stop and regain control of their dog.

Out of harness and at home, Guide Dogs are just like any other pet dog – they romp, play, roll and run – but with the harness on they are highly skilled guides.



We are here to help please contact us

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