



# **Guide Dogs for the Blind**

## **PUPPY RAISING VOLUNTEER POLICIES & PROCEDURES MANUAL**

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# WELCOME TO GUIDE DOGS FOR THE BLIND

## Mission Statement

Guide Dogs for the Blind (GDB) empowers lives by creating exceptional partnerships between people, dogs, and communities.

## Vision Statement

Guide Dogs for the Blind envisions a world with greater inclusion, opportunity and independence by optimizing the unique capabilities of people and dogs.

## Values and Behaviors

### Mission First

- Ensure that every action or decision is aligned with GDB's commitment to the mission
- Provide superior service across all aspects of the organization

### Integrity

- Demonstrate accountability, transparency (except when confidentiality applies), and honesty with all actions and decisions
- Act with and assume positive intent

### Kindness and Respect

- Treat every being with dignity and sensitivity
- Balance professionalism with humor

### Teamwork and Collaboration

- Encourage open communication
- Practice proactive, thoughtful and inclusive interactions

### Empowerment

- Promote personal development and self-reliance
- Support learning and innovation through risk-taking

## What Is Expected of You

### Standards of conduct

Guide Dogs for the Blind asks that all volunteers follow its values and the corresponding behaviors as well as the standards of conduct as they apply to puppy raising volunteers. All employees, volunteers and students in training at GDB follow this code.

Employees, volunteers and students are expected to observe certain standards of performance and conduct to ensure that the GDB mission and work is carried out in a safe and orderly way and to maintain high ethical standards throughout the organization.

GDB campuses and facilities are public places. Employees, volunteers and students are expected to conduct themselves as they would in any public area. Conduct which is not appropriate in public or which disrupts the safe and orderly operation of business is considered inappropriate. Conduct that is unsafe, unethical or illegal will not be permitted at GDB functions or events. Types of conduct that could constitute grounds for immediate dismissal include: physical violence; illegal acts such as theft, use or possession of illegal drugs or weapons; sexual activity; and inhumane treatment of a dog.

The following are examples of the kinds of misconduct that will lead to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal:

- Harassment in any form
  - See GDB's Harassment Policy in the Resources section
- Animal abuse or neglect
- Falsification of records or other documents
- Possession or use of illegal drugs or controlled substances
- Permission must be granted by the Puppy Raising Manager for alcohol to be served at GDB functions or events
- Theft, destruction or abuse of GDB property or the property of others
- Possession of weapons, firearms, or other potentially dangerous weapons or materials on GDB property, or at any GDB function or event
- Involvement in or encouragement of illegal activities
- Acts of physical violence, or acts involving threats, intimidation or coercion
- Excessive absences or tardiness
- Repeated lack of cooperation or courtesy in working with others, or failure to perform reasonable duties assigned
- Unauthorized access to computer files or inappropriate use of computer networks
- Disclosing or misusing private, proprietary or confidential information about GDB
- Unethical business practices or conflicts of interest
- Undermining or subverting business decisions, unless they are reasonably believed to be illegal or unethical
- Failure to adhere to other policies and procedures at Guide Dogs for the Blind

The above list is not all-inclusive. GDB asks that everyone conduct themselves with reasonable and proper consideration for the welfare and rights of other employees, volunteers and students and for the best interests of this organization.

## **What is a GDB Puppy Raising Club?**

The primary function of a puppy raising club is to safely and successfully raise puppies to be well-mannered socially and to be proficient at several skills. The goal is to have these dogs mature into the potential of becoming guides and partners for people who are blind and visually impaired. A puppy raising club meets under the supervision of its leader to develop the best attributes in Guide Dogs for the Blind puppies. Clubs schedule meetings, outings and events for the primary purpose of teaching skills to puppies and to socialize them to all the stimuli and distractions in the world.

A puppy raising club represents Guide Dogs for the Blind in the community. Sometimes a club or its members may formally represent GDB by taking part in publicity through their

own initiative or at the request of Guide Dogs for the Blind. Publicity opportunities may include newspaper, television or radio interviews; event appearances; or presentations before businesses, schools, or other service clubs. GDB is proud of all puppy raising volunteers, and of their commitment, knowledge and professionalism.

A puppy raising club and its members also informally represent GDB every day. When people see a raiser out with “that cute puppy in its green coat” their perception of the program is based upon the appearance and behavior of the “puppy team.” Many future students, donors and raisers are introduced to GDB programs through a conversation with a puppy raising volunteer in their community. GDB thanks all of the raisers, leaders, and club assistants who have so positively represented GDB in their communities!

## **The Puppy Raising Team**

Even before a puppy is placed in a new raiser home, there is a dedicated group of people to provide support and guidance for any problem or question that may arise. A combination of GDB staff and volunteers make up this great team.

### **Puppy Raisers**

It takes a lot of people to produce a successful guide dog team. There are more than 2,000 puppy raising volunteers who donate their time and effort in the care and socialization of GDB puppies. GDB puppy raisers are youths, adults, and youths affiliated with the 4-H and FFA programs. Guide Dogs for the Blind places puppies with raisers living in ten states: California, Oregon, Washington, Arizona, Nevada, Idaho, Utah, Colorado, Texas, and New Mexico.

### **Puppy Raising Leaders**

Puppy club leaders are volunteers who have a great breadth of responsibilities. They recruit new volunteers into their clubs and teach and support them as they learn their new roles, skills and responsibilities. They work with their Community Field Representative to maintain GDB guidelines for training puppies as well as keeping them healthy. Leaders also facilitate club meetings and outings to promote each puppy’s development and learning. Depending on the size of a club, there may be one, two or more leaders to provide this support.

### **Community Field Representatives (CFRs)**

CFRs are GDB staff members that provide hands-on training, advice and support to leaders and raisers in their territories to develop an understanding of the socialization and training standards required by Guide Dogs for the Blind. CFRs attend club meetings and outings. They also evaluate puppies, either at an evaluation site, in the puppy raisers’ homes, at a GDB facility or in evaluation homes. CFRs determine if a puppy is a good prospect to become a guide dog and whether they should remain in the program.

### **California Campus Puppy Raising Office Team**

The team working in the Puppy Raising office at the California campus is responsible for:

- Coordinating the naming of the puppies
- Assigning puppies to new raisers
- Issuing puppy raising supplies
- Scheduling puppy deliveries (air and ground) and local pick ups

- Scheduling the recall dates to the Oregon or California campus to begin their formal training
- Electronic communications with the puppy raising community, including “Leader Links” and “E-Barks.”
- Maintaining the Puppy Raising section of the website: [www.guidedogs.com/forms](http://www.guidedogs.com/forms)
- Maintaining the GDB Puppy Central Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/gdbpuppycentral](http://www.facebook.com/gdbpuppycentral)

## **GDB’s Dogs**

The breeding program at Guide Dogs for the Blind was established in the late 1940s. Labrador Retrievers represent the majority of dogs produced. GDB also breeds Golden Retrievers and Lab/Golden crosses.

The finest dogs are chosen for the breeding program. They have been carefully selected for the unique characteristics that are required to produce successful working guides. Only those dogs that have met the organization’s highest physical and temperament standards are included in the breeding program at GDB. The selection of breeding stock is done by the Breeding Manager together with input from members of Puppy Raising, Training and Veterinary Departments and outside consultants.

Broods are retired from the breeding program by age 7 or after having a maximum of 5 litters. Only the most successful broods have 5 litters, with most broods having 4 litters during their breeding career. Stud dogs are used for breeding more frequently and are retired due to age or when their production does not meet the colony standards.

## **Life in the GDB Kennel**

The Canine Welfare and Neonatal Department is responsible for the majority of dogs that are not in training, which includes: puppies, boarding dogs, the breeding stock, newborn puppies, and most career change dogs awaiting placement. The dogs and puppies are under the supervision of professional GDB staff 24 hours a day. This round-the-clock care allows for the monitoring of all births as they occur, care and feeding of newborn puppies, and the efficient administration of medications and veterinary care.

## **Puppies**

The gestation period of the female is ~63 days. Expectant mothers are brought to the whelping kennel five days before the official due date of her puppies. The stall has a closed circuit camera allowing monitoring from the kennel kitchen or the on-campus studio apartment. During birth, the kennel staff assists when needed.

The puppies spend their first three weeks with their mother to nurse. Socialization begins shortly after birth with volunteers and staff gently handling and cuddling them daily. At 3 weeks of age, the wading pool is removed and the puppies are free to move about the floor covered with shredded newspaper. At this time they start eating solid food. The puppies’ daily socialization with volunteer Toddler Puppy Socializers increases as well. They are exposed to new people, toys of different textures, as well as new and interesting scents.

At 6 weeks of age the puppies are brought to the puppy kennel. It then takes another 10 days to 2 weeks until the mother’s milk has completely dried up and she can return home to

her custodial family.

While in the puppy kennel, the pups share stalls with their littermates. Each puppy in a litter is identified by the mother's name, a shaved area on its coat that is unique to that puppy in its litter and a microchip. Generally, all puppies in a litter have names that start with the same letter of the alphabet. The puppies are given names taken from a list provided by the puppy raisers and breeding custodians of the sire and dam and other sources.

The puppy kennel is also the place where the puppies first experience the outside world. Seven days per week, they are socialized by volunteer Puppy Socializers. From age 6 weeks until they leave for their new homes, the puppies begin learning many new skills. Each puppy is introduced to polite taking of food rewards while walking on leash, going up and down stairs, as well as exposure to crates and different surfaces. Puppies also interact in a group play session to experience socialization with other pups, as well as playing on various play structures. Daily handling includes body massages and exposures to mouth, tail and paw handling. Puppies are discouraged from chewing on inappropriate objects, such as hands, clothing and leashes. When the puppies are about 8 weeks old, they are ready to be placed with their raiser families.

## **GDB's Training Methods**

GDB is the foremost guide dog school in the world utilizing positive training techniques. The Training Department pioneered clicker training after trials showed that dogs trained operantly with food rewards, learned much faster and were more engaged in the training process than dogs trained in a traditional manner. Puppy raisers were introduced to the benefits of rewarding their puppies with food in addition to physical and verbal praise, shortly after the successful change of methods in the Training Department. Guide Dogs for the Blind is committed to maximizing the power of positive reinforcement in raising guide dog puppies. Raisers are shown how to modify the behavior of puppies by management techniques and an abundance of positive reinforcement for desired behaviors. Emphasizing positive puppy rearing results in confident, willing puppies that bond closely with their handlers and grow into happy working guide dogs.

## **Veterinary Care**

GDB has full-time veterinarians and other veterinary technician staff. The veterinarians and technicians are supported by outside specialists whenever needed, as well as volunteers. Veterinary staff is also on-call when emergency care is needed. Veterinarians assist in whelps by performing caesarian sections, if needed. When puppies are 3 weeks old, they are dewormed and given nasal drops to protect them from developing kennel cough. At 5-6 weeks, they begin receiving a series of vaccinations for Parvovirus and other diseases and they are microchipped. In the event that a GDB dog ever becomes lost or stolen, the microchip will alert any veterinarian or rescue organization to the fact that the dog is from Guide Dogs for the Blind. At 8 weeks, the pups are ready to be placed with raisers and will continue receiving vaccinations and care from veterinarians in their local areas.

When the pups return to the campus for formal training at 13-18 months, their hips and other joints are x-rayed, their eyes and hearts checked, and they are given complete physical exams including any needed vaccinations and heartworm tests.

## How Puppies Are Chosen For Placement With Raisers

Members of the Puppy Raising team generally place puppies on a first-come, first-serve basis. Placement by special request from raisers is discouraged because doing so may leave puppies unplaced during critical developmental stages.

## Puppy Packets and Equipment Needs

Puppy raisers receive a puppy packet for each puppy they raise; however, the contents of the packet will vary based on whether they are raising their first puppy, and the location in which the puppy is being raised.

### Puppy Packet Contents

- Puppy & Raiser Information Sheet
- Raiser Monthly Progress Report Information
- Veterinary Packet - includes Vet Forms, Puppy Raising Nutritional Policy, etc.
- Puppy Raiser ID Card
- 1 Puppy Collar
- 1 Adult Collar
- 1 Puppy Nylon Web Leash
- 1 Adult Leather Leash
- 1 30" Cable Tie-down
- (2) Boxes HeartGard Plus\*
  - (1) Green Box 26-50 lbs.
  - (1) Brown Box 51+ lbs.
- (2) Boxes Frontline flea & tick control\*
  - (1) Blue Box 23-44 lbs.
  - (1) Purple Box 45-88 lbs.
- *\*Note: raisers in Utah, Colorado, and Arizona will not receive Frontline.*
- Puppy toothpaste and brush kit
- Chlorhexis Ear Wash
- (5) Puppy Raising Information Cards with Instructions

### Ordering Additional Equipment and Supplies

If a club needs additional supplies or to replace faulty equipment, the leader will fill out a request on-line for the items via the Survey Monkey link available in the leader section of the Forms page ([www.guidedogs.com/forms](http://www.guidedogs.com/forms)).

Important reminder about Heartgard and Frontline: heartworm prevention and flea control is a year-round process. Raisers must give these preventatives at the first of every month. GDB supplies these materials; raisers should not purchase these products from their local veterinarian. GDB purchases these products in large quantities thereby receiving an overall discount in price. If purchased from the veterinarian, GDB pays full retail price for products it currently stocks.

Additional leashes or tie-downs for subsequent puppies can be purchased via the online Gift Shop ([www.guidedogs.com/shop](http://www.guidedogs.com/shop)).

# PUPPY RAISING VOLUNTEER APPLICATION PROCESS

## Getting Started

Once a new volunteer has begun attending meetings with a local puppy raising group they will be learning about the puppy raising process, including the basics of guide dog puppy handling, submitting an application for a puppy, and the basic requirements of the program. In addition, the volunteer may receive a club activity description that gives basic information about the club and its functions.

## Program Participation Requirements

A Guide Dogs for the Blind puppy raiser must be at least nine years of age. For raisers under the age of 16, the following requirements must also be met:

- Raisers under 16 years of age will raise a puppy under the mentorship of a parent or other designated adult. This designated adult may be a leader or other screened adult member of the puppy club.
- Parent(s) or adult mentor(s) of youth under 16 will commit to ensuring that all program requirements for puppy raising are met.
- A parent or guardian must complete and sign the *Parental/Guardian Consent & Release* form in the *Puppy Raising Volunteer Application*.
- At least one parent/designated adult mentor will attend all events, meetings, and activities with the youth under 16.

All additional family or household members that will handle the puppy at home or on outings must attend at least one club meeting within each 3-month period. In this way, all members of the household receive the same instruction and support while raising the puppy.

## Co-Raising a Puppy

Some volunteers are not able to raise a puppy full time due to a work schedule, family responsibilities, or some other reason. In such cases, the volunteer can work with the club leader to find another volunteer in the club with whom to co-raise a puppy. This kind of arrangement allows more individuals and families to raise a puppy in a way that suits their lifestyles. In addition, co-raising can help a puppy be more comfortable with transitions in its schedule and to become accustomed to different handlers, both of which are helpful for the development of a working guide dog. At the same time though, co-raising a puppy requires a great deal of cooperation and communication. For example, it is important to think about which raiser is going to make required vet care appointments and other such responsibilities. The *Co-Raising Agreement* located in the *Forms and Resources* section was designed to help both co-raisers make decisions and feel confident that the puppy they share will have its needs met in a consistent equitable way.



## **Guidelines For Puppy Raisers With Multiple Dogs**

- The total number of dogs allowed in any GDB puppy raiser home will vary with each individual's home situation. The leader must give approval for multiple dog households with final approval by the GDB Community Field Representative (CFR).
- GDB puppies may not reside in a home containing another animal that GDB staff determines to present a hazard to the puppy's safety or development.
- The maximum number of GDB puppies allowed in any one raiser or puppy-sitting home is two.
- A GDB puppy and any other puppy being raised by the same household must be at least 6 months apart in age, or less at the CFRs discretion.
- Except in cases of a brief overlap, a single individual may raise only one GDB puppy at a time.

## **Submitting An Application**

When a volunteer has attended a minimum of three consecutive meetings, they may request a volunteer application from their club leader. The applicant may be approved for a puppy after having met the following requirements:

- A successful home visit from club leaders (e.g., no further modifications to house or yard required)
- Demonstration of a minimum level of puppy handling skills, including appropriate use of cues, proper training techniques, appropriate use of headcollars, etc
- Completed a minimum of five days of puppy sitting of program puppies

## **Compliance with GDB Guidelines, Policies and Procedures**

All GDB guidelines, policies, and procedures are to be adhered to by all associated with the puppy raising program, including GDB employees, club assistants, raisers, leaders, raiser parents, and others participating in the program. GDB policies, guidelines, and procedures have been designed to ensure that all activities related to the organization are productive, safe, ethical, and legal. Failure to comply with any aspect of these policies and guidelines can lead to the suspension or termination of one's volunteer relationship with Guide Dogs for the Blind.

## **Volunteer Term of Service**

GDB is greatly appreciative of the time that all volunteers generously devote to its organization and mission. Personal commitments and goals may at times limit one's involvement. Volunteers are engaged for no definite period of time. Volunteers may terminate their relationship with Guide Dogs for the Blind at any time, with or without reason or notice, and GDB may do the same.

## **Equal Opportunity**

Guide Dogs for the Blind believes that all people are entitled to equal opportunity under the law. GDB, its staff, and its volunteers may not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, age, medical condition, disability, veteran status, marital status, or any other consideration that has been made unlawful by federal, state, or local laws.

## **Parental Support and Participation**

Raising a puppy involves a great degree of responsibility and patience. Puppies can be challenging by exhibiting behaviors including jumping and mouthing. For this reason, parental support is critical for youth puppy raisers.

Parents need to realize the responsibility that their child is assuming when agreeing to raise a GDB puppy. While GDB puppies are bred to be more manageable and agreeable to handling and instruction, the level of good behavior that they must achieve surpasses that of most household pets. Traits and behaviors that are tolerable in the family dog may not be acceptable in a guide dog candidate and may lead to a dog being career changed or transferred.

Puppies, like children, develop best in an atmosphere of trust, encouragement and praise. Parents are asked to provide strong emotional support for their children in the raising of their puppies. GDB asks that parents emphasize effective and consistent techniques and socialization as well as fair and humane treatment of the puppy that their child is raising.

GDB asks for assistance in providing a safe environment in which children can attend GDB functions. GDB strongly believes in promoting a safe environment for children and in providing carefully screened adults to work with children. To help us ensure success, parental support of all guidelines is needed, along with parental involvement in club functions and open conversation between parents and youth about what is and is not appropriate interaction by adults.

## **Parent and Other Custodian Responsibilities**

**Responsibilities include:**

- Co-signing on their youth's volunteer application
- Participating in a home interview with their child prior to a puppy being assigned to the home
- If involved in a direct supervisory, teaching, or advisory role with youth, being screened for child welfare issues
- Completing and signing any relevant documents as required by GDB
- Being knowledgeable and supportive of GDB guidelines as they pertain to GDB prescribed interaction with youth
- Following the written and verbal instructions of GDB regarding puppy raising, club management, ethical behavior, interactions with staff, volunteers, and the public
- Positively representing GDB, both formally and informally, in their puppy raising clubs and communities
- Reporting to GDB any deviation from prescribed guidelines for interaction with youth
- Ensuring that their child attends the required club and GDB functions as designated by the leader or GDB staff
- Transporting their child to and from required GDB events. Volunteer transportation to and from GDB events is not a GDB responsibility. GDB has no liability - legal, financial or otherwise - for such activities.
- Being participants and supporters in the raising process of their child's GDB puppy and attending their child's puppy club meetings and events.

- Ensuring that their child follows the written or verbal guidelines outlined by GDB concerning the raising and care of GDB puppy

## **Puppy Raising Volunteer and Staff Responsibilities**

### **GDB Leader**

#### **Basic Responsibilities**

- Completion of a leader application package
- A successful background screening, and completion of orientation on child welfare issues
- Minimum age of 18 years
- Compliance with all GDB program requirements and guidelines
- No actions that would negatively affect the wellbeing, physical or otherwise, of youth or animals
- Receiving and processing raiser applications
- Conducting a thorough home interview with each applicant and family to determine suitability of the raiser and the home environment
- Insuring each raiser has access to all GDB puppy development and policy and procedures materials; thoroughly reviewing the contents of these materials with each raiser when the puppy first arrives home and on a regular basis thereafter
- Teaching raisers the techniques and guidelines as established by Guide Dogs for the Blind regarding puppy handling and socialization
- Assist with the recruitment of new club members
- Representing a positive image of GDB to the public
- Working with their designated CFR to determine the best possible environment for the puppies
- Notifying the CFR of any situation that may be potentially unsafe, contentious, litigious, harmful to the reputation of GDB, or otherwise harmful
- Following all GDB protocols and policies for working with and protecting youth
- Mediate conflicts between club members

#### **Length of Term**

- All volunteers serve as needed at the discretion of the organization
- Leadership is not transferable from club-to-club without GDB approval

### **GDB Puppy Raiser Requirements**

- Minimum age of 9 years; no upper age limit
- Completion of an application package
- Successful home visit by a GDB approved leader (this includes all homes in which the puppy will reside)
- Using GDB approved training and management techniques when working with or caring for GDB puppies
- Compliance with all GDB guidelines
- Submission of monthly reports on puppy's progress and other reports, per program

requirements

- Communicating effectively with other volunteers, GDB staff, and the public
- Direct one-to-one adult contact with youth requires a successful background screening, signing of a contract, and completion of orientation on child welfare issues
- No actions that would negatively affect the wellbeing; physical or otherwise, of the volunteer, other raisers, or an animal

### **Length of Term**

- All volunteers serve as needed at the discretion of the organization
- Raising a GDB puppy is not necessarily transferable between puppy clubs (e.g. when moving) and must be approved by the CFR

## **Volunteer Application Procedures and Guidelines**

The following procedures outline the application process for both adults and youth volunteering to assist Guide Dogs for the Blind in its puppy raising program.

All persons applying to be puppy raising volunteers may request, complete, and sign all appropriate sections of the *Puppy Raising Volunteer Application* and submit it to the club leader. The leader will retain a copy for their club files and sends the original to the CFR for approval.

Every person has a right to apply even if a leader has concerns in regard to them as a viable applicant. With the Community Field Representative's approval, leaders approve or deny all raiser applications for their club. The supervising Community Field Representative must be notified prior to a leader's approval or denial of any application (see the *Recruiting Puppy Raising Volunteers* section below).

Leaders will have access to the *Puppy Raising Volunteer Application* in the leader section of the Forms page online. Leader will create a "pending" file for puppy raising applications. These applications should be kept until the applicant is "officially" enrolled with the club. Leaders will keep all new applications in the pending file unless/until one of the following happens: 1) the person becomes an official puppy sitter or puppy club volunteer in the puppy club; or 2) the person is ready for a puppy and fills out a *Puppy Placement Questionnaire* (in which case the application and PPQ can be sent together).

If an applicant does not become officially involved in the club, and it has been 12 months since they have attended a meeting or otherwise been engaged in the program, the application should be destroyed. If they return, they will need to fill out a new application to continue in the program.

### **Outside Organization Application and Screening**

Any volunteer who wishes to be concurrently enrolled in another organization (examples: 4-H, FFA) must meet all application and screening guidelines of that organization. These volunteers must contact the other entity as needed.

## Applying for Leadership

CFRs and/or the Puppy Raising Manager have the responsibility of interviewing, evaluating, and selecting leader candidates. Leaders may not appoint additional leaders or successive leaders. Leaders who have recommendations for leader applicants should inform their CFR.

The training provided for new leaders takes place over a period of up to one year and is comprised of the following steps:

1. Submit completed *Puppy Raising Volunteer Application* including recommendations to appropriate CFR
2. Pass background screening
3. Complete leader policies and procedures training presented by CFR
4. Complete puppy handling training presented by CFR or designated leader
5. Observe four puppy field evaluations with CFR
6. Understand information needed in, and importance of, monthly puppy reports and the Final Report
7. Observe an experienced leader on four home visits for puppy application approval and review the application. See the *Home Interview Guide* in the *Forms and Resources* section.
8. Attend three GDB training events approved by CFR
9. Mentor with an experienced leader, designated by CFR
10. Attend four meetings or outings of other puppy raising clubs

If a leader will supervise a puppy raising club under the umbrella of 4-H, FFA, or other such program, he or she will be required to attend that organization's training sessions as well.

## Confidentiality and Security

All records relating to a leader's application and screening process will be maintained as confidential. Only the following GDB staff will have access:

- GDB President and CEO
- GDB Vice President of Community Operations
- GDB Puppy Raising Manager
- GDB Puppy Raising Operations Manager
- GDB Vice President of Human Resources

GDB at its sole discretion may contact legal counsel to review the appropriateness of a volunteer to work with youth or otherwise volunteer for GDB.

As part of required security:

- All applicable records will be stored in a secured part of the GDB database with restricted access
- All applicable records will be accessible only to persons referenced above
- All other reasonable attempts at confidentiality will be maintained
- All applicable records will be maintained throughout a volunteer's service
- As required by law, a volunteer can have access to his or her files

## Recruiting Puppy Raising Volunteers

Guide Dogs for the Blind and individual clubs need puppy raising volunteers in order to continue providing guide dogs to people who are blind or visually impaired. The continued health of the organization and its mission depend on each club's recruitment efforts.

In addition to providing a number of raisers consistent with the number of puppies, continual recruitment has other benefits as well:

- An opportunity to select only the most promising candidates
- A waiting list for puppies provides leaders more opportunity to:
  - thoroughly screen applicants
  - require an applicant to attend several meetings before assigning a puppy
  - train volunteers prior to puppy placement
  - assign volunteers to supportive roles other than puppy raising

Volunteers, either while raising a puppy or not, may volunteer as other types of club volunteers. Leaders can assign a role to each person as appropriate (e.g. puppy sitter, Facebook page manager).

Leaders must carefully consider the reasons for recommending accepting or denying an application. All applications must be approved or denied by the CFR.

Factors that help qualify an applicant include, but are not limited to:

- Commitment to GDB's Mission and Values and Behaviors guidelines
- Ability to learn and apply dog handling skills
- Good communication skills
- Willingness to follow instructions
- Willingness to work cooperatively with club leaders, other club members, and GDB staff
- Willingness to positively promote puppy raising and GDB to the public
- Consistent attendance at meetings

Factors that would disqualify an applicant or returning raiser include, but are not limited to:

- A history of actions that GDB deems inappropriate to be in a setting with youth
- Inability to meet basic program guidelines outlined in the volunteer application process and requirements
- A person in the home who may be endangered by the behaviors of a GDB puppy
- Other pets that may negatively impact the proper development of a GDB puppy
- Too many other dogs or other pets in the home
- Prior failure to meet GDB program requirements or lack of compliance with GDB values, behaviors and standards of conduct
- Use of non-GDB approved training techniques
- Demonstrated consistent lack of ability to handle a dog in accordance with GDB

standards

Valid reasons for declining an application are performance-based and factual. Evaluation of an applicant may not include either speculation or personal feelings. Leaders should consult with their CFR whenever they have a question about an applicant's suitability for the program.

Guide Dogs for the Blind does not discriminate against any applicant for volunteer service in any program based on race, religion, color, national origin, sexual orientation, ancestry, physical disability, marital status, veteran status, gender, or any other factor prohibited under local, state, or federal law. GDB leaders are expected to abide by this policy in all interactions with volunteers and staff.

### **Protected Information**

- Date of birth
- Marital status
- Name of spouse
- Spouse's occupation, place of employment, or time on the job
- Number of children and ages
- Whether child care can be arranged for children
- Ancestry
- National origin or race
- Age
- Gender
- Sexual orientation
- Religion
- Union or political affiliations

*The above information may be obtained only after retention of the volunteer's service and must not have any bearing on decisions regarding qualifications.*

# VETERINARY CARE GUIDELINES

## Vaccinations and Anti-Parasitic Treatments

GDB puppies leave campus having been given the following vaccinations and anti-parasitic treatments:

- 2 weeks - Pyrantel
- 3 weeks - Ponazuril
- 4 weeks - Pyrantel
- 6 weeks - DA2PP, Intranasal Bordatella, Pyrantel and Ponazuril
- 8 weeks - DA2PP, Heartgard Plus and Ponazuril
- 10 weeks - if a puppy is still on campus when it is 10 weeks old it will be given an additional DA2PP booster

When puppy raisers receive the puppy, they are instructed to continue with the following schedule:

- 12 weeks - DA2PP, Leptospirosis #1
- 16 weeks - DA2PP, Rabies, Leptospirosis #2  
*Puppies are considered fully covered 5 days after this vaccination*
- 18 weeks - Influenza, bivalent #1 (OPTION 1)
- 20 weeks - Parvovirus vaccine only (if available) or DA2PP and Influenza, bivalent #2 (OPTION 1) or Influenza, bivalent #1 (OPTION 2)  
It is thought that maternal antibodies from the dam can last longer than 16 weeks in approximately 1% of GDB puppies and continue to cause resistance to vaccination attempts. This additional vaccine at 20 weeks is expected to confer immunity to Parvovirus to that 1% which did not respond to the initial vaccines.
- 23 weeks - Influenza, bivalent #2 (OPTION 2)
- *GDB does not recommend or reimburse for Corona virus or Lyme disease vaccines*

**NOTE:** some local veterinarians will prefer to administer the influenza vaccination series three weeks apart instead of two. If that is true of the local veterinarian you utilize, the second option is to administer the first influenza vaccination at 20 weeks and the second at 23 weeks.

## Visiting GDB Campuses

GDB puppies are welcome to visit the GDB campuses and attend graduations one day after their second influenza vaccination is complete, whether that be at 20 weeks plus one day, or 23 weeks plus one day assuming that all other vaccinations are also completed.

Puppies not yet fully vaccinated should only visit campus for scheduled veterinary appointments. Puppies coming to GDB campus for veterinary care that are under 16 weeks of age should be carried from the car to the veterinary clinic unless they are too large to be carried safely. Puppies that are 16 weeks of age or older may be walked into the clinic for their appointments. Puppy raisers should park as close to the clinic as possible and keep



puppies off any grass; hard surfaces should be used for walking and relieving. Any individual exceptions to this policy must be approved by GDB Veterinary staff.

## Veterinary Care Reimbursement Guidelines

GDB appreciates all the love and care raisers devote to the puppies they raise. Guide Dogs for the Blind is 100% committed to providing the highest quality of care to the wonderful dog in the GDB program and believes that the Veterinary Care Program will guarantee that this occurs consistently and efficiently. In the event of an emergency, GDB authorizes raisers to get stabilizing treatment for a puppy. As soon as the condition has been stabilized the raiser should request that the attending veterinarian contact veterinary staff at GDB prior to providing further care. The raiser should also contact their leader who will contact GDB as soon as possible.

## Chain of Communication

It is important that there is good, clear communication about the health and care of all guide dog puppies. In order to ensure that this occurs, puppy raisers and leaders are asked to keep in touch with one another, communicate with their CFR and provide timely documentation of veterinary care to GDB.

## The process for Vet Care Reimbursement is broken down into two tiers:

- **Tier 1** care is for mild illnesses and conditions (*see detailed list below*). Total treatment cost for Tier 1 conditions ***should not exceed \$150***. When at the vet with the puppy, please ask the vet if care is likely to fall in this range. Treatment for **Tier 1 conditions does not require preauthorization** from Guide Dogs for the Blind. Puppy raisers will communicate all health concerns about their puppies to their leaders and follow their direction for care. Leaders will consult with the CFR when necessary to determine when a puppy should be taken to the vet.
- **Tier 2** includes any treatment that is estimated to cost **more than \$150**. In addition, any conditions that are chronic or recurring are considered Tier 2. ***Preauthorization for Tier 2 treatment is required***. If a problem does not resolve as expected, recurs more than once, or requires urgent attention, the leader will alert the CFR. ***The puppy raiser is responsible for contacting GDB for preauthorization of care***. The raiser is most familiar with the situation and has first-hand knowledge of the dog and its condition. The GDB vet will make recommendations for further care. Many of the more difficult and/or chronic conditions will involve the GDB veterinarian working directly with the CFR, leader and puppy raiser. Working together will insure a clearer, more effective treatment plan for the puppy.
- In addition to the care of specific conditions, GDB appreciates the raiser's efforts to ensure that all veterinary invoices and other records are sent in to GDB as quickly as possible. This allows us to maintain a complete and up-to-date record for each puppy. This is especially important when a dog requires urgent care or is experiencing a complex, chronic problem.

To help puppy raisers recognize what type of care their puppy needs, please review the following guidelines.

## **Guidelines to determine Tier 1 or Tier 2 Level of Care by Condition**

### **Lameness**

- For mild lameness: (still bears weight on limb, no other obvious pain or discomfort) raisers should let leader know of limp and provide strict rest for 24 to 48 hours. If limp persists after 48 hours, or if resolved with rest but reoccurs soon after resuming normal activity, schedule vet visit.
- For moderate to severe lameness: (obvious lameness, partial to total non-weight bearing, obvious pain when handled or moving), schedule vet visit.

### Vet visit:

Exam and meds are ok. If radiographs are recommended, visit is likely to exceed Tier 1 care. Call GDB Vet Care Coordinator for authorization. Typically the specific area of discomfort that is causing the lameness should be identified prior to taking any x-ray.

### **Eye Problems**

Tier 1: if the puppy has minor eye discharge (a bit of 'sleep' in the corner of its' eyes once or twice a day) or minor watery eyes with no other symptoms, the raiser should monitor to see if this resolves on its own. If it persists for a week or more or becomes worse during this time, the raiser should consult their leader.

If a puppy has marked redness (inflammation, conjunctivitis), significant ocular discharge, squinting, rubbing/pawing at its eyes, or otherwise seems to be showing signs of eye discomfort, the puppy raiser should contact their leader and take the pup to local vet for exam and meds. This does not require preauthorization.

If a puppy's eye(s) appear cloudy, the puppy raiser should consult with their leader and make an appointment to take the dog to the vet.

### Vet visit:

As long as the estimate for this care is less than \$150, it is considered Tier 1 and no preauthorization is necessary.

Tier 2: if the local veterinarian recommends an exam with the ophthalmologist or recommends any sort of surgery, the raiser should contact their leader and the GDB Vet Care Coordinator for consultation.

If a raiser is concerned about a puppy's vision, the raiser should notify their leader and contact the GDB Vet Care Coordinator.

### **Urinary tract problems**

Tier 1: if a puppy is urinating frequently or inappropriately, the raiser should consult with their leader to determine whether the pup's pattern may be more indicative of a houstraining or marking issue vs. a medical problem. If the leader feels a medical issue

could be at the root of the problem, an exam by the local vet is recommended. The leader may also consult with the CFR at this point.

#### Vet visit:

The veterinarian will likely do an exam and collect a sample of urine to help determine if there is a medical issue contributing to the frequent/inappropriate urination. The veterinarian may dispense medications to treat a urinary tract infection if one is identified. The most common causes for frequent/inappropriate urination in GDB pups include:

- non-medical issues like excitement, immaturity (poor housetraining), drinking lots of water (tanking).
- vaginitis
- bladder infections

Tier 2: if a puppy has been treated for a urinary infection and symptoms resolve but then return a short time after treatment, the puppy raiser should consult with their leader and consult with the GDB Vet Care Coordinator.

#### **Skin problems**

Tier 1: there are a large variety of things that can cause skin problems. If a puppy raiser notices a problem, they should contact their leader for advice on whether it is minor and manageable at home, or whether the pup should see the vet. Sometimes small or minor lesions can be addressed at home by use of medicated shampoo (chlorhexi), ear cleaner (chlorhexi flush) or Neosporin ointment. Ensure adequate flea control on ALL pets in the household, including indoor or outdoor cats. The leader may choose to consult with the CFR at this time.

#### Vet visit:

If the club leader or CFR recommend a vet visit, the puppy may be taken for an exam and/or medications. Sometimes a skin scraping test is indicated. Likewise, if the local vet recommends a diet change this must be discussed with the club leader and CFR. Consultation with the GDB Vet Care Coordinator may also be indicated.

Tier 2: any of the following situations require consultation with the GDB veterinary staff before proceeding:

- The local vet is recommending blood tests or allergy tests because of skin problems
- If pup experiences recurrent skin problems, the puppy raiser and leader should seek input from the CFR who may consult with the GDB vets, depending upon nature of problem.

#### **Vomiting**

Tier 1: for a pup that vomits once or twice and appears healthy otherwise, withhold food and water for 6-12 hours and monitor. If no further vomiting occurs, slowly reintroduce water first and then small amounts of food after this waiting period.

If the puppy has severe vomiting (more than 2-3 times in the first hour) and it continues after the fasting period or if the pup acts lethargic or listless, the puppy raiser should

consult the leader.

Vet visit:

Tier 2: if vomiting is particularly severe and continuous, especially if the puppy is acting lethargic or listless or if vomit contains blood, seek medical care at the local veterinarian immediately. The raiser should call the leader and the GDB veterinary clinic once the pup is at the hospital being examined.

If a pup requires a vet visit, the veterinarian may want to do a radiograph of the abdomen as well as dispense medications, and possibly a special diet. Please make sure the local vet stays in close contact with the GDB vets.

**Diarrhea**

When to contact a veterinarian:

- the puppy's temperature goes above 103 degrees
- vomiting accompanies the diarrhea for more than half a day
- quite a bit of blood appears in the stool
- the diarrhea persists more than two days
- the puppy cannot keep water down
- the puppy is markedly depressed

Tier 1: if diarrhea is mild (stools are loose or watery but no blood) and pup is acting normally, the pup should be fasted for 8-12 hours depending on the severity and the puppy's age (8 hour fast for puppies under 4 months; 12 hour fast for puppies over 4 months). It is ok to continue to give water normally during this time. If diarrhea stops and the puppy is acting normally, then a bland diet (see below) can be started after the fasting period. If stools improve, the bland diet should be continued until they are normal and then the regular diet should be slowly re-introduced over a 2-3 day period.

If stools continue to be loose after the initial fast and introduction of bland diet, raisers should contact the leader for more instructions.

If the puppy has recurring bouts of diarrhea with days or weeks of normal stool in between, the leader should be contacted and consult with the CFR. The leader may recommend taking the puppy to the vet. The veterinarian may want to do more diagnostic tests after examining the pup. The raiser should take a fresh stool sample to the visit as the vet may want to analyze it. If anything more than routine tests or treatments are recommended, the puppy raiser should contact GDB Vet Care Coordinator first for more instructions.

Vet visit:

Tier 2: if diarrhea is severe (large amounts, frequent episodes, or bloody) the raiser should contact their leader for more advice before starting the bland diet protocol.

If vomiting is also present or dog is acting very lethargic or depressed, take the dog to the vet immediately. Contact the leader and the GDB vet clinic when at the hospital and the pup is being examined.

### ***Bland Diet for Diarrhea***

Feed the puppy absolutely nothing for the first 8 hours (for a puppy under 4 months), or 12 hours for an older puppy (4 months or more) after a diarrhea episode occurs.

When the puppy is ready to eat again use either a formulated bland food such as Hill's Science Diet I/D recipe or prepare a bland diet of cooked (not instant), white rice and non-fat or low fat cottage cheese. The meal should be 1 part cottage cheese to 3 parts rice. Use homemade diets exclusively for 24-48 hours; during this time offer plenty of fresh water. Puppies should not be on a homemade bland diet exclusively for more than 3 days without consulting with the local veterinarian.

The puppy can also be given Pepto-Bismol for up to 48 hours. This over the counter medication is available in several forms. Pepto caplets may be the easiest form to give the puppy. They are capsule-shaped tablets that are meant to be swallowed like a pill (no chewing needed and no messy liquid to clean up). For puppies less than 20 pounds, give either 1 teaspoon or one half of a caplet. For puppies 21-40 pounds, give 2 teaspoons or 1 caplet. For puppies over 40 pounds, give 4 teaspoons or 2 caplets. This medication can be given 2-3 times per day for up to two days in a row.

### **Coughing**

Tier 1: if a puppy is coughing mildly and it does not resolve within 24-36 hours on its own, or gets worse, the raiser should call their leader. A thorough history of the puppy's coughing (e.g., how long it has been going, when does it happen, and whether it is getting worse) will be helpful at this point.

If the pup's coughing is severe and they are acting lethargic or depressed, the leader may advise the raiser to take the pup to the veterinarian.

#### Vet visit:

Usually coughing can be treated symptomatically with medications. Further tests such as radiographs are generally unnecessary, especially if this has not been a chronic problem.

Tier 2: if the veterinarian recommends additional tests including radiographs, the puppy raiser should contact their leader and the GDB veterinary clinic for authorization.

### **Ear infections**

If a raiser notices discharge or debris in the puppy's ears, they will have to assess the severity to decide whether the pup should be taken to the vet.

Tier 1: mild debris noted after cleaning may be normal. If debris is still present in subsequent cleanings or the puppy raiser notices any redness or pain when cleaning the ears, they should contact their leader. If there is a large amount of discharge, swelling or redness, a bad odor in the ears, or dog seems to be in pain (crying out or scratching at ears), the raiser should contact their leader and make an appointment with the local vet.

#### Vet visit:

The veterinarian will likely look inside the ear canals to assess the severity of the infection. They may want to take a sample of the debris to evaluate what is causing the infection. They will probably dispense medications to treat this and schedule a follow-up

visit to ensure the ear infection has resolved. These rechecks are very important as ear infections can linger for long periods of time if not eliminated completely.

Tier 2: if an ear infection does not resolve after treatment or if the puppy continues to develop new ear infections, the raiser should inform their leader and contact the GDB veterinary clinic for consultation.

### **Vaccinations and Spay/Neuter**

Vaccinations given according to the approved schedule are Tier 1 and no pre-authorization is required.

**Never** spay or neuter a GDB puppy without authorization from Guide Dogs for the Blind. The Puppy Raising office sends an official spay/neuter letter to raisers to give to their veterinarian. When having a puppy spayed or neutered, no reimbursement authorization is necessary as long as the cost for the procedure falls within the existing guidelines (neuters:\$200; spay: \$250). Immediately upon completion of the altering procedure, the local veterinarian will complete and return the spay/neuter certificate provided to Guide Dogs for the Blind.

### **Fleas**

All GDB puppies that live in states where fleas reside go home with a supply of Frontline. Frontline should be applied the first of every month. If Frontline is not effective contact the leader who will contact the CFR about using Frontline every 3 weeks instead of 4 or the possibility of using an alternative product (see *Flea Prevention Information for Puppy Raisers* in the *Forms and Resources* section).

Flea infestations can occur quickly in any home. It is important that all family pets are treated with a flea control medication. Frequent vacuuming of the home with special attention paid to dog beds and dog areas can also cut down and help manage flea infestations. Flea eggs laid on the host (dog or cat) generally fall to the ground where they hatch. Vacuuming can greatly reduce the number that survive and hatch. It may also be necessary to treat the home with a flea control spray or fogger and treat the yard before an infestation is under control.

### **Non-Reimbursable Items**

The following items are not available for reimbursement:

- Any grooming, including toenail clipping and anal gland expressing
- Food and supplements not on the approved Nutritional Guidelines or pre-approved by GDB
- Vaccinations not listed on the approved guidelines
- Pill pockets
- Flea and tick prevention (provided by GDB directly)
- Heartworm preventative (provided by GDB directly)
- City or county licensing fees or Rabies tag fees

# EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP

A leader's responsibilities are tremendously diverse. CFRs and other puppy raising program staff are always happy to provide additional information and tools as needed.

There are many elements involved in providing effective leadership. A puppy raising leader is responsible for helping club members successfully raise puppies for GDB and for representing GDB in a positive manner to raisers and the public.

## Primary Qualities of An Effective Leader

- Understanding of GDB's current dog handling techniques and the ability to apply and teach them
- Understanding of and commitment to GDB's mission, policies, and protocols
- Team building skills
- Ability to coach others
- Willingness to delegate
- Communication skills
- Ability to resolve conflicts
- Ability to lead by example

## Understanding of the GDB Mission

The GDB mission as it applies to puppy club leaders is to have or create a club that provides the teaching and activities necessary for raisers to successfully raise their pups. This involves inspiring raisers to develop their dogs to their full potential. Along with communicating the mission, a good leader demonstrates through their own actions how others can achieve the mission.

## Team Building

A successful leader builds a club into a cohesive team while at the same time encouraging each member according to their individual strengths and interests. A leader recognizes genuine teamwork by placing equal value on each team member's contribution. A leader is not simply delegating jobs. Rather, a true leader invites the input of others and allows discussion of club plans and activities. In this way all members of a club, raisers and leaders alike, feel valued and united as they work together in raising their puppies.

## Coaching

Good leaders are also good coaches. Coaching helps raisers achieve their own and each puppy's full potential. A good leader gives praise and support, and acts as a sounding board when someone is working on a new idea. They help raisers develop new approaches to problems when they are facing discouraging situations.

## Delegating

Leaders are doers. They enjoy working toward goals and also enjoy working with others to achieve those goals. In delegating a job or responsibility, a leader allows another person in

the club to make a decision or perform a task independently. By delegating some of the tasks involved in leading a club, a leader will be less burdened by the work involved and will have more competent, confident, and satisfied raisers and co-leaders to work with.

### **Communication Skills**

Communication is the key to effective leadership. Communication is a two-way street: one must be careful and clear, both when speaking and when listening to another.

A key to effective communication is listening. Active listening means that as someone is speaking, the leader is listening to what is being said as well as to what is not being said.

Allowing for feedback is another aspect of communication that an effective leader must promote. As a team, club members need to be able to share their opinions and suggestions freely.

### **Decision-Making Responsibilities**

A leader and Community Field Representative share responsibility for the safety, emotional wellbeing, and skill development of the volunteers and puppies under their supervision. At times, decisions need to be made that a raiser or other volunteer may not regard as favorable. Some actions are within a leader's area of responsibility; others belong to the CFR. In order to avoid confusion of roles, the following details the duties of each position in possible stressful or confrontational situations.

#### **A CFR's Responsibilities**

- Transferring a dog from a home and into a new home
- Career changing a dog
- Sending a dog for health or behavior evaluation
- Denying an individual's participation in GDB activities
- Approving or denying all applications in consultation with the club leader(s)

#### **A Leader's Responsibilities**

- Assigning puppy sitting
- Temporarily removing a puppy from a home for evaluation
- Requesting the CFR to temporarily take a puppy for evaluation
- Temporarily removing a puppy from a home if it is in danger or in a situation unsuitable for its proper development
- Temporarily removing a puppy from a home if it is endangering other people or animals
- Submitting any letters of dispute, reprimand or any other sensitivity to the CFR for review prior to distribution

CFRs are responsible for supervising the leaders, raisers, club assistants, and puppies in their territory. GDB asks that all volunteers and their family members work with their CFR in a cooperative fashion. A CFR's decisions represent those of the organization. If any volunteer has concerns about a CFR's decision or actions, they should contact the Puppy



Raising Manager.

### **Conflict Resolution**

In spite of a leader's best efforts and skill, there is bound to be conflict within a club at some point. Conflict can actually lead to new ideas and highlight possibilities not yet explored. When a conflict surfaces it should be dealt with quickly and honestly.

If a leader is directly involved in a conflict it is even more important that they remain objective. If necessary, the leader should have a co-leader or the CFR help mediate so all involved know that the leader did not have undue influence over the resolution.

Sometimes an acceptable solution cannot be reached within the club regardless of attempts made to do so. In that case, a leader should follow the chain of communication described below, by following steps one through five:

1. Parties involved in conflict try to resolve problem together
2. If unsuccessful, ask for help from leader(s)
3. If unsuccessful, request assistance from the CFR
4. If unsuccessful, contact the Puppy Raising Manager
5. If unsuccessful, the Vice President of Community Operations may become involved

### **Supporting Community Change**

The role of leader includes the task of helping club members understand and embrace changes in GDB's training methods or policies as they relate to puppy raising. This task is not always easy. It is a leader's job to first understand the rationale behind changes as much as possible, adjust to the change, present the change positively to the club, and help the group adjust to the change.

GDB has a commitment to continually improve its programs. It also has a commitment to its puppies and to all of its volunteers to provide them the support and resources required for full participation in the program. It is important that leaders trust that changes are being initiated for the improvement of GDB and convey that trust to their club members. The desired improvements from changes to methods and policies may not be readily apparent to an individual. GDB is an organization that values and depends on leaders' feedback. Leaders are encouraged to share their feedback with their Community Field Representative or through communication with the Puppy Raising Department.

### **Recognizing Raisers and Other Volunteers**

Leaders are in a unique position to offer support and guidance to puppy raisers. They can help shape how their raisers respond to challenges associated with puppy raising. By maintaining a positive working atmosphere, fostering teamwork and support, and presenting puppy raising as much more than a simple pass or fail, the leader can guide, develop, and retain raisers and promote their skill and leadership in the club. By treating each raiser as an individual, leaders can make the puppy raising experience more personally rewarding.

Other volunteers can also be recognized for the tremendous support they provide to the leader and to the club. Their talents in publicizing club activities, fundraising, puppy sitting, planning events, etc. are crucial to the club.

## **Foster a Positive Environment**

- Develop an atmosphere of trust and encouragement for both puppies and people
- Express all opinions and intentions with honesty, even unfavorable ones
- Be available to answer questions, instruct, or give emotional support
- Return all calls and emails within 48 hours; 24 hours if urgent or a complaint
- Recognize a person's potential and encourage their development
- Point out successes; small, as well as large
- Acknowledge attempts even though they may have not been successful
- Give a raiser a break from a challenging puppy by providing puppy sitting

## **Tools of Recognition**

- Verbal praise at the time of the person's effort
- Praise in front of other volunteers or GDB staff
- A special phone call to say "thank you," "good job"
- Thank you or recognition-of-effort card
- A certificate
- An award as part of a formal ceremony
- A silly or fun award that is rotated throughout the club to recognize special efforts
  - a unique trophy
  - a special shirt to wear at meetings
- Promote the club or a club member to the local media
- Ask the Community Field Representative to write a special letter of support or recognition

## **Providing Emotional Support**

One of the most difficult aspects of raising a puppy for GDB is returning a dog for formal training (recall). Likewise, having a puppy career changed for a health or temperament issue is a great disappointment for a raiser and sometimes for a whole club. Leaders are the first line of response for raisers when these things occur. It is also important to remember that leaders can call on GDB for support as well. For example, asking a CFR to take a little extra time to explain the reason for a career change or requesting that veterinary staff answer the questions of a puppy raiser whose puppy is experiencing an illness or injury.

## **Teaching Raisers the True Meaning of Success**

It would be easy to think that successful puppy raising results in a dog that graduates as a guide dog. Puppy raisers aren't responsible for producing working guides. Raisers are responsible for nurturing and socializing puppies, productively supporting their club and fellow volunteers, and promoting the puppy raising program and GDB to their communities.

Leaders can help emphasize that fact by rewarding puppy raisers and their families for their activities within the club. Raisers should be recognized for their efforts all along the way:

- successfully housebreaking their pups
- teaching their puppies good manners

- introducing the puppies to new situations
- teaching the puppies to respond to cues
- properly introducing GDB dog handling techniques
- providing a positive image and education to the public about the mission of Guide Dogs for the Blind and the puppy raising program
- being a positive part of a team within the club
- participating in club and GDB activities

The staff at Guide Dogs for the Blind knows from the beginning that not all dogs will become guides. The success or failure of each dog rests on the results of the dogs' health, temperament, and guide dog training.

Raisers succeed when they develop a puppy to the best of its abilities.

# CLUB STRUCTURE

## Leadership Structure

All club leaders must be approved by the Community Field Representative (CFR) and complete the GDB leader training under their supervision. For clubs with more than one leader, a primary leader will be chosen with the approval of the CFR. GDB provides a leader with a basic list of responsibilities and support materials for their role as a puppy club leader.

An important puppy club leader responsibility is to be a liaison between GDB and the raisers in the club. Being a positive representative of GDB's puppy raising program is key to having a club that works in harmony with the mission. Strong leadership and clear communication are essential qualities in a club leader.

Likewise, open communication with CFRs is essential. Leaders must keep CFRs aware of all conflicts and problem issues with club volunteers and the puppies or with the public.

Communications regarding all issues should begin as soon as they surface. If GDB staff is aware of problematic situations as they arise, their support will be more timely and effective.

## Multi-Leader Groups

Larger clubs with multiple leaders will determine how to assign responsibilities between them. Co-leaders are encouraged to assume roles based on their interests and talents, using the list of responsibilities provided by GDB. Leaders will provide raisers with a written list of each leader's responsibilities, as well as contact information.

The following guidelines are provided to maintain consistent communication amongst leaders:

- Monthly club leadership meetings are required.
- Agenda items for these meetings can be proposed or presented by all leaders.
- All communication about club matters will include all club leaders so all are kept up to date.
- When communicating by phone or informally in person, make sure to relay information to other leaders via email or follow-up telephone calls.

Community Field Representatives and Guide Dogs for the Blind will schedule periodic leader trainings to ensure all are kept current of changes in the organization, training techniques, and other topics. Leaders are required to attend 80% of these trainings per year. To facilitate attendance, CFRs and other GDB staff will schedule these trainings as early in advance as possible.

## Club Division

Occasionally a single club will re-form into two separate groups. There are two situations in which this might occur:

1. Membership in the club has grown to a point that meetings and outings have become unwieldy, or members live throughout a large area and travel to meetings has become too time consuming.
2. Differences in style or goals within the leadership and club make it difficult to move forward with regular club activities.

Splitting an existing club or creating a new club in an area in which a club already exists, is allowed only with the consultation and approval of the CFR and Puppy Raising Manager.

A number of factors need to be considered in this type of situation: are there enough raisers to maintain two clubs? If the instigating issue is an interpersonal one, is splitting the club the best way to resolve it?

### **Finances and Equipment**

In the situation of a second club forming by splitting from an existing club, the question of whether club monies and equipment will be shared must be addressed. It is important to note that the new club is not automatically entitled to any funds or equipment. The original or pre-existing club is under no obligation to provide funds or equipment to the new group, but may choose to do so if the original club's leadership considers it appropriate. Club equipment in use by a raiser moving to the new club, remains the property of the original club and will be returned to that club when the current puppy returns for training or otherwise leaves the raiser's home.

## **Requirements of a GDB Club**

### **Requirements For the Formation of a New Club**

- All new clubs must submit an *Application to Establish a GDB Puppy Raising Club* (this form should be requested from the CFR) prior to approval.
- All new GDB clubs are approved or declined by the CFR in consultation with the Puppy Raising Manager.
- All clubs must be supervised by a leader who meets the application, screening, training, and performance standards of GDB.
- All clubs must have at least three potential puppy raising homes, which may include the leader.
- Each prospective member must reside close enough to their leader and club meeting site to facilitate meeting attendance, monitoring, instruction and constructive intervention by the leader when needed.
- To best facilitate CFR supervision and instruction, clubs may be required to meet with other clubs at central sites of the CFR's choosing.
- A club does not have an exclusive territory. Other clubs that meet GDB requirements may form in the same geographical area.

## Requirements For Maintaining a Club

- Leaders, raisers, and club assistants will meet all guidelines of GDB; including: attending group meetings, trainings, evaluation, or other sessions as requested by their CFR or the organization.
- Clubs that have fewer than three puppies placed with approved raisers will be individually evaluated to determine if the opportunity for growth warrants their continuation as a club.
- Clubs that are concurrently enrolled in other organizations (4H, FFA) must also meet the requirements of that organization.

## Club Profile Document

All clubs are strongly encouraged to develop a document for distribution to all club members which gives basic information about the club and its functions. This information may also be made available to volunteers through a club website, Facebook page, or other electronic means. Information contained in this document includes:

- Calendar of Club Activities: regular meeting days, times and locations; detail of any other regular club outings and activities
- Attendance requirements
- Leader names and contact information
- Club and GDB website information
- Financial expectations and obligations: dog food, crate, toys, fees for outings, dues for incidental club expenses (postage, copies, etc.)
- Fundraising information: brief description of club fundraising activities and expected raiser participation

The club description document is to be updated annually. The CFR will be provided with a copy of each club's paper.

## Meeting Attendance

Puppy raisers are required to attend 80% of required meetings and outings during each six month period of participation in the program. Raisers with puppies that are temporarily unable to attend club events due to a veterinary issue will still attend training meetings. Mandatory meetings include training meetings and socialization outings. Fundraising meetings and events, and planning meetings for other events should generally be considered as optional. Individual clubs may, at their discretion, require attendance at a limited number of fundraising events or activities (80% attendance at this type of meeting would not apply).

For puppies over 5 months, the *minimum* number of required meetings/activities is two per month. For pups under 5 months, the *minimum* number of required meetings/activities is 4 per month. More activities can be offered as optional. It is important that puppies be present at 80% of meetings at a minimum. On the occasion that a raiser cannot attend a meeting, they are required to contact the leader and make other arrangements for the puppy to be at the meeting, if possible.

## **Club Activity Requirements for Club Volunteers Not Currently Raising a Puppy**

- Puppy sitters and all other club volunteers that handle puppies as part of their club involvement, will attend a minimum of 80% of training meetings in each six month period. Participation in socialization outings may be required if the club leadership feels this is necessary to increase dog handling abilities.
- Those club volunteers that do not routinely handle dogs must attend all club meetings or activities as appropriate to handle their job function (example - a treasurer would need to attend all business meetings, but not socialization outings).

## **Puppy Exchanges**

Puppy exchanges, or trades, are an integral part of the puppy raising program and participation by all raisers and their puppies is required. The following guidelines outline the minimum requirements for these exchanges within puppy raising clubs:

- Minimum frequency of six exchanges per year (more at discretion of the club leadership and CFR)
- Exchanges are to be coordinated and monitored by a leader or designated club member
- Raisers may not opt out of allowing the puppy they raise to be exchanged

## **Puppy Sitting**

Puppy sitting is coordinated by a leader or designated club member. Raisers will not make arrangements for puppy sitting directly with the sitter.

## **Puppy Numbers**

GDB may set a maximum number of puppies for individual clubs at its discretion.

## **Club Governance**

Guide Dogs for the Blind strives to maintain consistency in the manner in which puppy raising clubs operate. Understanding that clubs and their members will vary in their needs and interests, a certain amount of flexibility in application of guidelines is appropriate.

## **Club Decisions**

- Primary club leader will not have veto power over decisions made by the total club leadership.
- In the event that a majority vote cannot be reached, the issue in question will be taken to the CFR for resolution.
- When conflict occurs in a group that cannot be resolved by the leadership group, the CFR will help facilitate a resolution.
- Voting on club matters will take place through a simple majority vote of club members.
- Decisions regarding outings (ideas, locations, special dates and times) should be based on the leadership's decision and the consensus of club members.
- If a group chooses to fundraise, have dues or any kind of monies collected:
  - A treasurer will be designated.

- There will be strict accountability of funds. Treasurer will make quarterly reports on expenditures and income to full club membership.
  - Receipts must be given and a set of books maintained to track every transaction. These documents remain with the club, even if there is a change of treasurer.
  - All GDB policies and practices for club fundraising and handling of funds must be followed; see the *Club Fundraising* section of this manual.
- Decisions regarding expenditures for general club benefit (equipment, outing and meeting expenses, operational expenses) can be made by club leadership without a general club vote, providing for the dollar amounts discussed in the next bulleted item. Expenditures for items that benefit individuals must be voted on by general club membership.
  - The primary leader may make or authorize expenditures up to a maximum total of \$100 per month without club leadership or club approval. Expenditures between \$100 and \$250 must be authorized by club leadership (by vote or consensus). Expenditures over \$250 must be approved by a vote of general club membership.
  - Club dues and fees for use of club-owned equipment may be charged as long as the club membership approves and fees are assessed in a consistent manner.

### Decision Making Format

- There is no specific format for all club decisions. A simple majority vote is recommended whenever feasible.
- A meeting agenda is strongly recommended for all club meetings. Agenda items may be proposed to a club leader by any club member. The leadership has the responsibility to approve, or not, all submitted agenda items. Agendas and meeting minutes help maintain clear records of discussions and decisions.

### Club Websites, Newsletters & Social Media

- All information on the website, Facebook page or other club sponsored media site will be approved by the club leadership prior to posting.
- No personal phone numbers, email addresses, or home addresses are provided under any circumstances. The use of last names on club websites is discouraged. When necessary, refer to a person by job title or first name only.
- No personal information or photo will be posted on the website without approval of individual referenced.

For information on GDB's guidelines on social media, logo use and branding, please refer to the *Marketing and Social Media* section of this manual.

### Other Types of Service Programs

GDB puppy raising clubs are to operate solely under the guidelines and expectations of Guide Dogs for the Blind, unless they are affiliated with another organization (i.e. 4H, FFA). In such situations, puppy raising management can identify the methods to best operate these types of clubs and activities, consulting with the other organization as appropriate. Joint service dog clubs are not allowed within the GDB puppy raising structure.



If a leader or member of a GDB puppy raising club decides to raise a dog for another guide dog or service dog school, they are to maintain their work with that dog separate from the GDB club and puppies. Different programs have very different training methods and cues. To avoid confusion, it is necessary to keep the GDB puppy club activities for the training and socialization of its own program puppies.

# CLUB FUNDRAISING

Guide Dogs for the Blind is very proud of the essential contributions that its puppy raising volunteers make in raising puppies. GDB recognizes the other great contributions that these volunteers make daily in reaching out to their communities by doing public relations; educating about blindness and related issues such as access; teaching the public about positive and humane dog care and training through actions and words; and fundraising to support their local efforts and Guide Dogs for the Blind's mission.

The following document is designated for internal use at Guide Dogs for the Blind (GDB) only, GDB staff and participating clubs.

## Background

GDB provides puppy raisers with supplies such as leashes, puppy jackets, and collars, and approved veterinary care supplies and expenses. Additional expenses are incurred by raisers in the course of their volunteerism for purchases such as dog food, toys, equipment, and travel. Leaders may incur more substantial expenses through personal financial support for the clubs that they manage. Puppy raising clubs are expected to be financially self-supporting and may incur expenses for site rental, volunteer recognition, community recognition, stationary and office supplies, food, and other expenses. Puppy raising clubs support their operations and the puppy raising efforts of their raisers with donations from their members and from businesses and individuals in their communities.

Several basic principles apply to the functions of puppy raising clubs and volunteers. Puppy raising volunteers are agents and representatives of GDB. In a GDB-authorized function, GDB is accountable - legally and otherwise - for the acts of its volunteers. As a result, GDB is responsible for providing its volunteers with guidelines to ensure that club fundraising practices are practical, legally sound, and financially accountable.

As volunteers, GDB puppy raisers are provided certain protections under the Federal Volunteer Act of 1997. The primary element of this act stipulates that volunteers who act within the realm of their identified duties and without deliberate malice or willful neglect cannot be held liable for their actions (with the exception of operating a motor vehicle). In order to ensure that GDB volunteers receive the full benefits of the protections of this legislation, GDB is responsible to clearly define volunteer responsibilities in all functions, including fundraising.

GDB clubs not fundraising under the umbrella of 4-H or FFA must ensure proper legal protections by utilizing the GDB infrastructure to fundraise. Without utilizing GDB's non-profit status, tax identification number, accounting, and receipting, volunteers may be incurring personal tax and other liabilities.

4-H puppy raising clubs are governed by their state university systems through a set of guidelines that provide for fundraising under the state 4-H umbrella.

GDB leaders, puppy raisers, and other club members operate as volunteers for Guide

Dogs for the Blind, a non-profit 501c3 organization. Club volunteers may not form a puppy club as a separate 501c3 or other such entity.

The decision by a puppy raising club to fundraise is entirely voluntary. Clubs are not required to engage in fundraising.

## **Benefits**

This program is intended to produce benefits for both GDB and participating clubs including:

- Ensure proper legal and financial protections for volunteers in the solicitation and use of donated funds
- Defray the cost of raising a puppy
- Defray the cost of operating a puppy raising club
- Enhance local marketing efforts and media relations through use of promotional materials from GDB
- Enrich the youth development experience by allowing youth to be involved with marketing and fundraising activities
- Enhance protection of puppy raising club members against accounting errors by a club member(s) in the process of fundraising
- Utilize the existing GDB infrastructure for the deposit, receipting, and accounting of funds

## **Resources from GDB**

In order to more effectively support the fundraising activities of clubs, GDB will dedicate increased organizational assistance to club fundraising:

- An account at GDB for clubs to deposit funds
- Recognition of successful and/or innovative efforts of clubs at puppy raising events, on GDB's web site ([www.guidedogs.com](http://www.guidedogs.com)), and in GDB publications
- Development and distribution of appreciation certificates for club use

## **Guidelines**

In fundraising as in all activities, GDB staff and volunteers will maintain high ethical standards and perform in accordance with local, state, and federal laws. All participating clubs, volunteers, and GDB staff agree to follow the guidelines and procedures in this document, other applicable GDB guidelines, and the instructions of supervising GDB staff or volunteers.

All puppy raising volunteers and clubs that collect or hold money utilizing Guide Dogs for the Blind resources (e.g., name, image, puppies, events, volunteers) are required to use the Club Fundraising program when doing so. This system protects the organization, clubs and volunteers as individuals.

GDB has developed fundraising and related accounting procedures for puppy raising clubs to protect the organization, the clubs, and the club volunteers. These policies are

vital and staff and volunteers are expected to comply with their intent. GDB will consider suspension of fundraising by clubs or leaders who continue to disregard these policies. GDB puppy clubs may not maintain a local banking account. All funds in excess of the \$400 petty cash limit must be deposited into a restricted account at GDB.

### **Professional and Legal Standards in the Solicitation of Funds**

Guide Dogs for the Blind's volunteers are required to meet all pertinent legal and practical expectations in the course of their business, including fundraising. This includes but is not limited to accounting, receipting, reporting, and payment of local and state sales taxes. Donors must be informed that their funds are being restricted to the puppy club and not going to general GDB funds. If funds are not sent with a "Deposit Form," or are not accompanied by a note from the donor stating that the funds can be restricted to the puppy club, in most cases they cannot be moved to the club account.

### **Honoring the 4-H Relationship**

Clubs affiliated with 4-H are required to meet the standards of that organization for all 4-H associated activities.

### **Building New Relationships**

GDB encourages its volunteers and clubs to build relationships within their communities with like-minded businesses, organizations, and individuals. Any formal or legal collaboration between clubs and other businesses, organizations, or other legal entities must be approved by GDB.

### **Expectation of Club Member Support**

All club members are expected to support the activities of their clubs including fundraising. It is expected that before undertaking fundraising or a particular fundraising project that consensus of support will be given by the club membership.

### **Defining Club Governance Authority**

GDB-designated puppy club leaders have direct responsibility for control of club functions, volunteers, and puppies. Disputes regarding leader authority may be resolved through existing GDB protocols on conflicts and communications.

### **Loss of Fundraising Privileges**

All fundraising by GDB clubs must be under the approval and protocols of GDB. GDB has the authority to suspend or rescind the fundraising privileges of a club or a volunteer.

### **Contracting Approval**

GDB puppy raising clubs and volunteers may not enter into a contract in the name of GDB. Any contract entered into by a volunteer will be considered their act as an individual separate from GDB; and in this context, a volunteer is fully responsible for any resulting liability. Please contact the CFR before entering into any contract for club activities.

### **Ownership of all Funds**

Funds are deposited into an account restricted for the use of the club that raised the funds. Funds raised by volunteers acting in GDB's name are GDB property.

## **Ownership of Equipment and Supplies**

As GDB volunteers raise the funds, all equipment and supplies purchased with funds raised in GDB's name are GDB property.

## **Club Dissolution**

Clubs may be dissolved only by the decision of GDB. All club assets are the property of GDB. Any funds or materials in club possession must be returned to GDB.

Upon reactivation of a club (by returning members, by the use of the same club name, by the establishment of a new club with the same leadership, or by the assumption of puppy raising within a community or region) funds may not be re-designated to the newly formed club.

## **Resolving Fund Conflicts**

Any resolution of a dispute regarding the expenditure, distribution, or accounting of funds will be made at the sole determination of GDB.

## **Club Structure Guidelines**

Refer to the *Club Structure* section of this manual for guidelines regarding the management of funds and voting of expenses within each puppy club.

## **Requirements for a GDB Club Account**

Clubs are required to route all donations and expenditures through GDB's accounting system thereby meeting the requirements set forth by the IRS. The official recognition of donations will be sent directly from GDB; this is what donors will use for tax purposes. Clubs are encouraged to write personal thank you notes to donors, however these notes cannot include the GDB tax identification number or any specific information about the donation, i.e. amount or date of gift.

Puppy raising clubs are required to complete a *Puppy Club Account Application* available in the leader section of the Forms page online. Once approved the club must adhere to all guidelines.

## **Procedures**

All puppy club account forms are available in the leader section of the Forms page online.

### **Receiving and Depositing Donations**

A club may solicit funds from individuals or companies for cash or in-kind donations for use by the club. However when soliciting from companies for funds other than matching donations, the club should ensure that this company is not one that GDB already has a formal relationship with. Refer to the appropriate use of funds for ideas on support items for the club. In order to receive, deposit, and ensure proper acknowledgement is made, follow these procedures:

### **Cash/Check Donations**

All funds deposited to the club account must be accompanied by a *Puppy Club Deposit Form*. Checks must be made payable to "Guide Dogs for the Blind" and the

puppy club's name and account number should be noted on the subject line of the check.

- If a club receives cash as a donation, the treasurer, leader, or other designated club member may deposit the cash into a personal bank account and use a personal check, money order, or cashier's check to deposit. If this is done the "Funds Replacement" box on the *Puppy Club Deposit Form* must be marked. Receiving funds personally and writing a personal check to GDB for the total amount could give the false impression that the volunteer has personally donated to GDB and it is against IRS guidelines to claim these donations on personal taxes. Checking the "Funds Replacement" box ensures that the check is not reported as a standard donation.
- Matching funds from employers are an excellent way to raise funds. However these are very difficult for GDB to track. All matching funds must include a separate correspondence or notation on the check stating that these are for the puppy club and must include the club name and account number. In most cases matching funds without these notations cannot be moved.

### **Credit Card Donations**

Clubs can receive credit card donations online; direct donors to the following page: [www.guidedogs.com/givetoclubs](http://www.guidedogs.com/givetoclubs). Clubs are listed first by state, then by name and account number.

### **In-Kind Donations**

The donor completes the *In-Kind Donation Agreement* and submits to the CCP Operations Manager for proper donor acknowledgement. This applies to all goods and services, including items solicited for auctions. Although no monetary amount will appear in the club account for in-kind donations, GDB is required by law to declare the fair market value of all goods and services.

### **Expense Reimbursement**

To receive reimbursement for club expenditures, complete the *Puppy Club Expense Reimbursement Form*. All expenditures must fall within the appropriate use of funds.

The Expense Reimbursement Form must be submitted with **original** receipts. All receipts must be submitted within 90 days of expenditure. Note that expense forms submitted without receipts will be returned for appropriate documentation. If there is no receipt for an expense, contact the CCP Operations Manager for approval of the expense. Once adequate funds are verified in the club account, a check is processed and mailed.

### **Transferring Funds**

When a puppy club would like to use account funds to sponsor a harness at graduation or transfer funds to another puppy raising club account, complete the *Transfer Form* to identify the reason and amount to be transferred.

### **Documentation**

All club account paperwork must be original; GDB auditors will not allow for faxed or e-mailed copies; this includes all forms and receipts. All receipts must be submitted within 90

days of purchase.

### **Account Balances**

A puppy raising club is required to maintain their account balance including all deposits and expense submissions. GDB keeps a running record of the club's incoming deposits and expenses and a statement is e-mailed monthly to each account with activity recorded.

### **Petty Cash Fund**

A club may maintain a petty cash fund of up to \$400 to assist with small cash expenditures; all other club funds must be held within the club fundraising account at GDB. The petty cash fund is for small cash expenditure reimbursements or emergency purchases for the club. The petty cash fund must be held in cash only, no monies can be held in a bank account. The petty cash fund should only have expenditures; no monies should be "deposited" into the fund. If a club needs to have a cash drawer for any reason they can use a portion of the petty cash fund as change, however they must deposit all proceeds to their club account at GDB and return the original amount of the change back to their petty cash fund. To start or replenish a petty cash fund, clubs must submit a *Puppy Club Expense Reimbursement Form*.

Puppy clubs are required to designate a Petty Cash Coordinator (this person can also be the treasurer or a leader or this can be their sole responsibility) within their club to maintain the petty cash fund. The Petty Cash Coordinator undertakes the following responsibilities:

- Agrees to responsibility for the maintenance and accounting of the fund including keeping a ledger showing all expenditures and all original receipts
- Agrees to reconcile the account on a monthly basis
- Agrees to submit the petty cash ledger and all receipts and supporting document to GDB if audited
- Agrees to reconcile the account before terminating volunteer relationship

### **Appropriate Use of Funds**

- In regards to puppy raising clubs, GDB has sole authority in determining appropriateness of expenditures.
- Questions regarding uses other than those referenced below should be directed to the CCP Operations Manager or the Puppy Raising Manager.
- Any use of funds must be specific to the mission of Guide Dogs for the Blind
- Puppy raising costs including dog food and equipment (i.e., crates, dog runs, x-pens, tie-downs)
- Boarding costs for females in-season
- Support for club activities including office supplies, rental of meeting rooms, and selected socialization outings
- Dog transportation, including transportation of career change dogs back to puppy raiser for adoption or placement
- Puppy raiser travel to GDB events including graduation ceremonies

- Materials to support the club including rental for event space, speaker fees, community events, etc.
- Club awards for puppy raisers; i.e. certificates, plaques
- Donations to GDB including, but not limited to, underwriting the harness for client/dog at graduation
- Publicity for club activities
- Flowers, cards for bereavement or illness of a puppy raiser or family

### **Inappropriate Use of funds**

- Personal use
- Loans of any nature
- Items not directly related to puppy raising, GDB, or club functions
- Expenses for career change dogs or pets
- Anything not approved by GDB or the club

## **Fundraising Ideas**

### **Fundraising Special Event**

Host a fundraising special event in the community that may include ticket sales, sponsorships or auctions. Note that local and state laws may apply.

### **Business Fundraising Night**

Coordinate a fundraising night with a restaurant that offers a percentage of sales to benefit non-profits. Clubs promote their fundraiser locally and invite people to dine at the restaurant. A percentage of the dining proceeds are donated back to the puppy club. For example, Chevy's is located in most puppy raising states and offers 25% of the dining proceeds back to the charity. Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream offers a similar program.

### **Entertainment Fundraising**

Selling Entertainment Books, Sally Foster products, See's Candy, or other sales programs can be an excellent way to fundraise. Profit margins and policies vary for each state or program.

### **Service Club Presentations**

Clubs can arrange for presentations at local service club meetings as a way to connect with the community. Consider local Lions Clubs and Rotary Clubs as a way to educate people on the GDB mission and the need for club funding.

### **Corporate Matching Gift Programs**

Club volunteers can double a donation to their puppy club by checking with their employers' Human Resource Department about matching gift programs. Fill out the company's matching gift form and send it along with a personal contribution. Also ask about company programs that recognize employees' volunteer hours with a gift to the employee's charity of choice.

### **Raffles and Other "Games of Chance"**



GDB recognizes the history and success of raffles and opportunity drawings in the past. However, the regulations and registration requirements from the Attorney General and reporting requirements on the IRS Form 990 regarding these forms of fundraising has become increasingly burdensome. Due to the difficulty of meeting the requirements for this type of fundraising, puppy clubs cannot hold any raffles, opportunity drawings, 50/50 drawings or any “game of chance”. The only acceptable forms of drawings are a door prize or a giveaway that requires no donation or purchase; clubs may also consider silent or other auctions as an alternative.

Any specific questions regarding the Club Fundraising program should be directed to the CCP Operations Manager.

# TRAVEL GUIDELINES

Travel can be a good socialization opportunity for a guide dog puppy, but it also needs to be a positive experience for the puppy, raisers and for the general public who may come into contact with the puppy on its travels. Regardless of the means of transportation, GDB staff and volunteers must make every effort to ensure that a program dog travels as safely as possible.

Here are some general guidelines to ensure a safe and pleasant trip:

- Raisers should check with leaders before taking a puppy on a trip; the leader needs to know where each puppy is and if the planned trip is suitable. If the puppy is not ready for such a trip, the leader will help coordinate with a puppy sitter in the club or perhaps with another club close by. If a puppy sitter is unavailable, raisers may have to board the puppy at an approved kennel in their area at their own expense.
- Travel outside of the supervising CFR's territory must be approved by the CFR by filling out the *Puppy Travel* form and submitting it to the leader who will forward it to the CFR. If raisers are not sure if the area they plan to visit is outside of their CFR's territory, they should consult with their leader.
- GDB puppies are only allowed to travel within the states covered by GDB CFR staff. However, puppies may travel into states that are not covered by staff so long as the destination is no more than three hours from a functioning puppy raising club. Raisers may travel into Canada so long as the destination is no more than three hours from a functioning puppy raising club. No travel is allowed into Mexico.

The states covered by GDB staff are:

- Arizona
  - California
  - Colorado
  - Idaho
  - Nevada
  - New Mexico
  - Oregon
  - Texas
  - Utah
  - Washington
- For raisers of intact female puppies, the potential of the dog coming into season while on a trip must also be considered. For intact female puppies over six months of age, raisers must consult with their leader and/or CFR as to the suitability of the trip and discuss accommodations that may need to be made if the female comes into season.
  - Raisers should carefully consider the appropriateness of settings frequented on vacation. Amusement parks, festivals and fairs may overwhelm the puppy. Hot weather may make it uncomfortable or even dangerous for a puppy to go on an

outing. Consult the Socialization Guide and be prepared to make alternate accommodations for the puppy. Sometimes a local puppy raising club can arrange puppy sitting in their area; plans should be made through leaders and CFRs well in advance of the trip. When visiting family members in their home, raisers should consider the suitability of other pets in the home that may interact with the guide dog puppy.

- It is good planning to take a crate along on the trip if there is room. A wire crate can fold up for ease of packing and is very handy when staying in hotels and unfamiliar homes. Fabric crates are not suitable for guide dog puppies.
- Any travel with puppies not fully vaccinated should be carefully considered due to the risk of exposure to pathogens.
- Raisers and leaders may not demand, coerce, lobby, argue, litigate or otherwise attempt to force issues of access for any puppy denied access to any means of public or private transportation.
- A GDB puppy causing a disturbance on public transportation must exit that transportation at the first available opportunity.
- Raisers need to be prepared with a backup plan in case of denied access. This is particularly crucial when traveling by air. (See *Airline Travel with GDB Puppies* below.)

Travel provides many opportunities for development in a guide dog puppy. Equally beneficial however, is the puppy learning to adapt to other households and different work/school routines. To a puppy, going to stay with another club member is just as big an adventure as going on a trip out of town! Raisers should discuss their travel plans with their leader at the earliest opportunity so that other arrangements can be made for the puppy should it be decided that the pup is not ready to travel.

## Career Change Dogs

- Career change dogs may not ride within the cabin of an airline and may not access other means of public or private transportation made available specifically to program-active dogs either by law or by the courtesy of transporter.
- Career change dogs may never wear a guide dog harness or puppy coat to gain access to a means of transportation.

## Transporting GDB Puppies in Vehicles

The primary rule in dog transportation is to use common sense. Raisers should evaluate the situation utilizing the guidelines that follow and select a safe, manageable option. The primary goals are safety and teaching the puppy to calmly remain where it is placed in the vehicle.

- A puppy that is not trusted to remain calm in all circumstances should be on tie-down or crated while in a vehicle. If volunteers are transporting a potentially unruly or otherwise distracting puppy, it must be crated or managed by a passenger, so as not to distract the driver.
- The safest place for puppies to ride in cars is in a secured crate, if one will fit in the back seat or a cargo area. Depending on the type of vehicle a puppy raiser drives,

there may not be room for a crate.

- Allowing pups on seats is not permitted, but there are some cars that give no option due to floor space or other factors, including front seat airbags. If the raiser has no choice but to allow the puppy on a seat, the pup should be kept in one spot, preferably on the rear seat and not allowed to move around. If riding in someone else's car, it is courteous to provide a large towel or sheet to cover the spot to help keep the seat clean.
- There is concern over the danger to children and animals with some passenger side airbags. In some incidences, accidents triggering these airbags have injured and even killed small children and animals. For this reason, we advise having puppies that ride in cars that have front seat passenger airbags, lie on the back seat floorboards, the back seat if there is not adequate room on the backseat floorboards, or on tie-down on the passenger floor at a level which will be below an activated airbag.
- Car seat restraints should not be used for a guide dog puppy. There is limited evidence of the complete testing of any of these devices. Devices are most often tested for fabric strength not animal injury prevention. Improperly designed models may have the potential to cause injury to a puppy.
- A puppy may ride in the back of a station wagon or hatchback, but it should remain in one spot and be well-behaved. If the surface is slick, a non-slick surface such as a rubber-backed carpet or a rubber mat may be provided for the pup to ride on. Puppies can become worried if they slide around and cannot get any traction to brace themselves. This may cause a fear of car riding.
- GDB puppies may not travel in the back of open pickup trucks. If a raiser must transport the pup in the back of a pickup truck, it must have a shell and the puppy must be safely secured in a crate.

*GDB puppies may not be left unattended in vehicles regardless of the weather. A common cause of death in dogs is being left unattended in cars on hot, or even just warm, days.*

## **Airline Travel with GDB Puppies**

Due to the increasing number of flight delays, cancellations and the possibility of a flight having multiple "service" dogs on board, GDB recommends that raisers very carefully consider whether taking their puppy on board an airplane is really of benefit to the puppy. Just as ticketed passengers are experiencing increased scrutiny of their persons and belongings when they fly, so do service animals and guide dogs. Guide users, GDB staff, and some puppy raising volunteers, have reported incidents where they experienced unexpected delay and inconvenience when traveling with a dog or program puppy. There have been occasions when a puppy has been refused permission to fly in cabin with the ticketed passenger.

Raiser needs to always inform the airline ahead of time that they are traveling with a guide dog puppy. Raisers need to be prepared with a backup plan in case of denied access. Ticket and gate personnel may deny boarding for a GDB puppy in training even though the raiser has received permission to fly the puppy when booking the flight. Puppy raisers should always remember that there is no legal right to transport puppies in the cabin of airplanes. Such access is granted as a courtesy from individual airlines that wish to voluntarily do so. Different airline staff may interpret airline policy differently. Raisers may be denied access at any time and must willingly comply with the instructions of the airline employee that they

are communicating with. Raisers must always be courteous when interacting with airline personnel or other passengers.

- All puppies transported within an airline cabin must be approved by the supervising CFR by submitting the *Puppy Travel* form to the leader who will advise and forward to the CFR. Puppies may be denied permission to fly in the cabin if the pup is not developmentally ready for such a journey.
- Raisers are responsible for obtaining a Health Certificate and Rabies certificate, required by law, to transport a dog by air. GDB will not reimburse for any costs associate with airline travel unless the travel is at GDB's request.
- Puppies below the age of 20 weeks, and all other GDB puppies that show evidence of behavioral or medical conditions that might affect their ability to behave appropriately during an airplane trip, must be flown as freight or excess baggage (with advance permission from the airlines and the approval of their CFR only.)
- No youth under 18 years of age may transport a GDB puppy in an airline cabin without an adult GDB-trained handler in attendance.
- GDB puppies are allowed to travel by air within the ten western states (CA, OR, WA, NV, ID, AZ, UT, CO, TX and NM) *only*, and must always have permission to fly from the club leader and the Community Field Representative (CFR). Remaining in the states in which GDB has puppy raising staff gives raisers an emergency contact in case there is a problem while traveling.
- Additionally raisers should consider the following:
  - The duration of the flight – is it appropriate for the age and relieving schedule of the puppy?
  - Flight times vs. meal times – puppies should not be fed pre-flight.
  - Direct flights are preferred
  - Raisers should always travel with an extra day of food for the pup in the event of delays.
  - Raisers may consider downloading the app “Where to Go: a directory to airport animal relief areas” (Apptology) to their smartphone, which provides the locations of animal relieving areas in airports,

### **Going Through Security with a GDB Puppy**

- The handler and dog are able to clear metal detector machines as separate units (utilizing a sit-stay command). However, the handler must retain physical control of the dog even if the handler is being screened. This means holding onto the leash at all times. (See note below about leash type for this.)
- Screeners will need to visually and physically inspect an animal when an alarm is sounded during its screening. This is normally done by hand, however the hand wand can be used. The hand wand can be used in the “vibrate” mode so as not to frighten the dog.
- When a raiser receives permission to fly with a puppy, the raiser should carry an additional leash (nylon slip type with no metal) to use when taking the dog through security. Raisers may have to make such a leash as commercially available ones have metal rings. The cord leash should be at least six feet long and longer would be

preferable. The reason for this is that sometimes the raiser is required to have the dog stay on one side of the metal detector and then be called through to the raiser on the other side.

GDB understands that guide dog puppies are part of the family and that raisers will want to include them in their vacation and travel plans. When it is possible to do so in a safe reasonable manner, GDB will try to accommodate those wishes. GDB appreciates raisers understanding when such arrangements are not possible. It is GDB's first priority to make travel safe and ensure the well-being of program puppies.

# ACCESS AND ETIQUETTE

## Public Goodwill

Guide Dogs for the Blind is extremely proud of its puppy raising volunteers, not just for the work they do and the contributions they make to developing GDB's puppies into guide dog candidates, but for how well they represent the GDB program to the public. Leaders, raisers, and other volunteers are the best advocates that the program could hope for. It would be impossible for GDB to establish a presence in so many communities without its amazing volunteers.

Puppy raising volunteers represent not only the club but also GDB's programs, dogs, students, and graduates. It is important that they represent Guide Dogs for the Blind in a positive way.

## Etiquette

Please remember that volunteers are GDB representatives; whether at a formal presentation, on the street, at a mall, or wherever they go. Puppy raisers should:

- Be prepared to answer questions about their puppy and about GDB
- Remember to relieve puppies in appropriate areas, not on other people's property
- If a puppy does have an accident, raisers will clean it up promptly. A clean-up kit should always be on hand.
- Only puppies that are ready for the experience should be socialized in public
- Emphasize positive training methods in public
- Keep puppies carefully groomed and in clean puppy coats (see additional *Puppy Coat and Equipment Guidelines* at the end of this section)
- Present themselves in a positive manner to the public by being conscious of their own appearance, actions and speech.

## Access

Guide Dogs for the Blind benefits greatly from public access into businesses, schools, workplaces, restaurants, and other sites as this provides a wide range of experiences for program puppies. Public access for working guide teams and other service dog teams however, can be damaged by a volunteer who demands access to a site where a puppy is not welcome.

State laws vary regarding granting public access to guide dog puppies. GDB policy states that regardless of permission granted by state laws, GDB puppies may only have access to public or private places where they are granted willing admittance or inclusion by the proprietor, manager, or staff of the business, facility, or service. GDB will not lobby or otherwise attempt to achieve access for puppies in any setting where the puppies are not welcome. Raisers and leaders may not demand, coerce, lobby, argue, litigate, or otherwise attempt to force issues of access for GDB puppies.

If a puppy raiser is denied access, they may briefly explain their role and what they believe

the state or local ordinance regarding access to be and then politely leave if still asked to do so. There are many places where puppies are welcome. It is best to enjoy those sites rather than possibly having a conflict in public. A puppy's development has never been harmed by a few instances of denied access. Creative raisers and leaders can always find socialization opportunities. If a raiser is repeatedly denied access in the community, they should contact their Community Field Representative.

It is a good idea to contact the management of a place of business prior to visiting. This creates a positive impression and may very well allow access where an unannounced visit may have raised questions. Whether they agree to permit entry or not, thank them for their time.

Reminder: puppies are never to be left unattended in a public place even if it is only for a moment to run inside and ask for permission to enter. Unfortunately puppies left alone may be stolen, mistreated, or get into mischief.

Career change dogs may never wear a GDB harness or puppy coat to gain access to a means of transportation, event, facility, or business which by law or courtesy provides access to program-active dogs.

## **Finding Meeting Sites**

Finding locations for meeting sites can be challenging. Some site managers are reluctant to make their facilities available to dogs. This reluctance may be due to previous negative experiences with dogs at the facility or from public perceptions about dogs. Leaders and raisers may best change this perception by complying with the facility rules, courteously managing their puppies' behaviors, and cleaning up after them, both from relieving and shedding.

### **Suggested Meeting Sites**

- Club members' homes
- Schools
- Churches
- Government maintained buildings
- Government maintained parks
- Local businesses that maintain public access meeting rooms
- Local service organization (Lions, Elks, etc.) facilities

### **Suggested Outing Sites**

In addition to a regular meeting site, a club should also utilize a variety of outing sites that would be both fun for raisers and productive for socializing puppies.

- Grocery stores
- Malls
- Parks
- Public transportation
- Restaurants



- Theaters
- Concerts
- Guide Dogs for the Blind campuses
- Public squares
- Tourist attractions
- Fairs

Please also refer to puppy socialization guidelines provided by GDB when selecting venues for club outings.

### **Facility Policies**

Organizations and government agencies have different regulations regarding adult supervision of youth. For example, a school's adult volunteer screening process for people using its facilities may be more stringent than GDB policy. If this is the case, leaders and other adults working with raisers at the school site need to be screened using the school's standards. Leaders have the responsibility of learning the policies of the facility that they are using and following those policies in addition to GDB's.

- Make sure that the facility manager knows how many dogs will be at the site.
- Respect facility rules such as "no smoking."
- Always clean up messes made by both people and dogs and return the facility to the same condition or better than when the club arrived.
- If required to do so, please remember to lock doors and turn out lights when leaving.

Some sites require proof of insurance before they will allow a club to use their facilities. Guide Dogs for the Blind provides such insurance for its raisers and leaders. A copy of the policy may be obtained by request from the CFR.

### **Providing for Safety**

Puppies under 17 weeks of age cannot be in a high dog-traffic area, which would include parks and pet supply stores. Puppies' needs for training and socialization opportunities must be balanced with protecting them from the possibilities of infectious disease.

Meeting and outing sites should be safe for both puppies and raisers. The ideal meeting place is one that is well-located, comfortable and welcomes people and dogs.

When taking youth on an outing, special considerations must be made. Leaders should ensure that they have adequate supervision for the number of children participating. Keeping track of young raisers and their puppies in a crowd can be challenging. GDB discourages taking children to events where alcohol is consumed. If a leader supervises youth raisers, they need to refer to the guidelines regarding protecting youth, providing transportation, and other relevant safeguards in the *Providing for a Safe and Ethical Puppy Raising Environment* section of this manual.

### **Thank You's**

It is always a good idea to periodically thank those who provide the use of their facilities for puppy club meetings and outings. A thoughtful card or certificate of gratitude is a great

way to create a positive association with GDB and the business owner or manager.

## **Puppy Coat and Equipment Guidelines**

Guide Dogs for the Blind provides the leader of each group with green puppy coats in a variety of sizes. Puppy raisers will receive a puppy coat when their puppies are ready to be socialized in public and with each successive size as the puppy grows. Puppies should wear this coat whenever they are in public, especially in a place where dogs are not normally allowed. The coat provides a visual explanation to the public as to why the puppy is in an area where dogs may not normally be allowed. These guidelines are not meant to discourage raisers from having fun with their puppies at special club meetings/parties and at GDB Fun Days. It is not appropriate for GDB puppies to wear costumes in public, but at special events, such as a puppy club Halloween party, dressing up a pup is allowed.

- The coat is also a symbol of the work of Guide Dogs for the Blind. Only GDB puppies may wear a puppy coat. It is never to be used on a career change dog or any other family pet.
- Puppy coats should be kept clean and in good condition with no obvious wear and tear
- Puppies should wear only the puppy coats, collars, headcollars, and other approved items provided by GDB; no additional items should be worn or added (i.e. bandannas, other patches, etc) without the approval of the CFR
- Headcollars may only be tan, green, or black
- No additional items should be added to the puppy coat, including pins, buttons, or other adornments
- Puppy coats are the property of GDB and must be returned to the leader when the puppy leaves the group.

# MARKETING AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Puppy raisers play a huge role in building the GDB brand, whether it is serving as an ambassador in the community or sharing news via social media. It is important that puppy raisers and GDB work together to build GDB's brand in a consistent and compelling way. Here are some key things to remember:

## Media Opportunities

If a reporter reaches out to a puppy raiser, they should let GDB's marketing team know. Marketing staff can either work with the reporter directly or coach the volunteer on the best way to manage the opportunity. If a club is interested in having the media cover a puppy delivery or other special event, please contact [marketing@guidedogs.com](mailto:marketing@guidedogs.com).

## Photography

Puppies make great subjects and everybody loves to see photos of them. Puppy raisers' photos are used in GDB's newsletters, web sites, gift shop items, and beyond. The best way to submit photos is via the group photo pool on Flickr: [www.flickr.com/groups/GDB](http://www.flickr.com/groups/GDB). Photos should have the highest resolution/largest file size available, e.g. send 2mb file vs. 600kb version. Ideally puppies should be wearing their jacket in any photos. Images of puppies in GDB-branded gear cannot appear in other organizations' materials or for anyone's profit or commercial gain without marketing's permission. Using images to raise funds for individual puppy clubs is not allowed.

## Corporate Partners

GDB continues to develop exciting partnerships with corporations. Often times, there will be opportunities for puppy raisers to enjoy the benefits of these partnerships and/or help advance them. These relationships must be managed carefully and clubs and volunteers are asked to consult with marketing first rather than contacting the partner directly.

GDB has developed some tools and guidelines to help. Please review the following materials available in the *Forms and Resources* section:

- About GDB paragraph
- GDB Brand Guidelines for Puppy Raisers
- GDB Fact Sheet
- GDB FAQs for Puppy Raisers

For any questions or comments about marketing, please contact [marketing@guidedogs.com](mailto:marketing@guidedogs.com).

## GDB Social Media Guidelines

Here are some great ways to stay updated on what's new at GDB:

- Facebook: [www.facebook.com/guidedogsfortheblind](http://www.facebook.com/guidedogsfortheblind) and GDB Puppy Central: [www.facebook.com/gdbpuppycentral](http://www.facebook.com/gdbpuppycentral) (feel free to share posts)

- Twitter: GDB\_official
- Instagram: GDB\_official
- YouTube: [www.youtube.com/guidedogsaregreat](http://www.youtube.com/guidedogsaregreat)
- LinkedIn: [www.linkedin.com/company/guide-dogs-for-the-blind](http://www.linkedin.com/company/guide-dogs-for-the-blind)
- Blog “No Bones About It”: <http://guidedogs.blogspot.com>
- Flickr images:
  - Group Photo Pool (uploading images) - [www.flickr.com/groups/guidedogsfortheblind](http://www.flickr.com/groups/guidedogsfortheblind)
  - Public GDB Galleries (accessing GDB photos) - [www.flickr.com/photos/guidedogsfortheblind](http://www.flickr.com/photos/guidedogsfortheblind)

The following are guidelines for the use of social media platforms to ensure volunteers can help GDB build a consistent and compelling brand.

## Help Us Build the GDB Brand

Primary branding for a club’s social media page should be the puppy club name and logo NOT GDB’s logo. It is important to reference that the club raises puppies for GDB and link to its Facebook page and/or website. Of course, pictures of pups in their jackets that show GDB’s name/logo are wonderful to share (clubs and raisers are encouraged upload any favorites to the GDB Flickr photo pool – link above). Clubs and volunteers may not promote any non-GDB related products with GDB branded puppies or with the use of hashtags (e.g. #guidedogsfortheblind), as it should not appear that GDB itself is endorsing them. If a volunteer sees misrepresentations made about Guide Dogs for the Blind in the media, they are encouraged to share their concerns with the GDB Marketing team by contacting the marketing team ([marketing@guidedogs.com](mailto:marketing@guidedogs.com)).

## Posting Photos/Video

Everyone loves to see puppies! All photos/video depict must show puppies being handled in an appropriate manner (e.g. a photo should not show a puppy being held upside-down or in potentially harmful situation). Volunteers should consult with their leaders prior to posting videos with a GDB puppy on social media.

## Obey Copyright Laws

It is critical that all volunteers demonstrate proper respect for the laws governing copyright and fair use or fair dealing of copyrighted material owned by others. Content shared should always be attributed to the original author/source. It is a good general practice to link to others’ work rather than to reproduce it.

## Respect the Audience and Guide Dogs for the Blind

The public in general and GDB volunteers, and employees, reflect a diverse set of customs, values, and points of view. It is important that all posts by clubs and volunteers are consistent with GDB website, policies, or publications. Volunteers are encouraged to express themselves as individuals but they should do so respectfully and think about potential consequences of their posts. This includes not only the obvious (no ethnic slurs, offensive comments, defamatory comments, personal insults, obscenity, etc.), but also the proper consideration of privacy and topics that may be considered objectionable or inflammatory - such as politics and religion.

## **Handling Controversial Issues**

GDB prefers that clubs and volunteers avoid arguments (brawls may earn traffic but nobody wins in the end – don't try to settle scores or encourage others into inflammatory debates) and make sure what is posted is factually correct. Volunteers should use their best judgment and be sure to make it clear that the views and opinions expressed are theirs alone and do not represent the official views of Guide Dogs for the Blind. *Please refrain from sharing medical advice regarding puppies or dogs; let's leave that to the professionals.*

## **Protect GDB Graduates, Employees, and Other Volunteers**

Graduates, employees, volunteers, and someone else's puppy/dog should not be cited or obviously referenced without their approval. Never identify a graduate, employee, or volunteer by name without permission. Volunteers should be sensitive about posting images or using names of dogs that might have been recently career changed, switched out of class, or have just retired (it's important for GDB staff to be able to communicate directly with the appropriate parties prior to such information being released in a public forum).

## **Privacy Protection**

Privacy settings that might allow others to post information or see information that is personal should be set to limit access. Volunteers should be mindful of posting information that they would not want the public to see.

## **Be Honest**

Volunteers should not blog anonymously, using pseudonyms or false screen names. They should not say anything that is dishonest, untrue, or misleading. If a volunteer has a vested interest in something they are discussing, this should be pointed out. What is published will be around for a long time, so it is important to consider the content carefully and also be cautious about disclosing personal details.

## **Be the First to Respond to Mistakes**

If an error occurs, the volunteer should be up front about the mistake and correct it quickly. If an earlier post is modified, make it clear that this is so. If there is an accusation of posting something improper (such as copyrighted material or a defamatory comment about them), deal with it quickly - better to remove it immediately to lessen the possibility of a legal action. Also, it is never a bad idea to have a friend proofread the page to catch errors that spell check won't catch.

## **One Final Note**

Social media is a great way to share information about GDB but it should be done in a way that reflects the guidelines above. It's wonderful that everyone (puppy raisers, graduates, breeder custodians, volunteers, etc.) is connecting so much over social media, because it ultimately creates a stronger network and community around GDB's mission. GDB puts a lot of time and expertise into matching the right dogs with the right people, so it's good to remember that when a raiser thinks their puppy/dog might be a good match for someone, they should refrain from any "matchmaking" and leave those decisions to the staff at GDB. Please contact the marketing for any questions or concerns: [marketing@guidedogs.com](mailto:marketing@guidedogs.com)  
*Policy violations will be evaluated and potentially subject to disciplinary action.*

# PROVIDING FOR A SAFE AND ETHICAL PUPPY RAISING ENVIRONMENT

Raising a puppy is a demanding job, and GDB appreciates and supports its volunteers in their efforts and involvement in activities that strengthen the puppy raising program. The information in this section should provide clarity and guidance for volunteers in their role with GDB.

## **Compliance with GDB Guidelines, Policies, and Procedures**

All GDB guidelines, policies, and procedures are to be adhered to by all associated with the puppy raising program, including GDB employees, club assistants, raisers, leaders, raiser parents, and custodians. GDB policies, guidelines, and procedures have been designed to ensure that all activities related to the organization are productive, safe, ethical, and legal. Failure to comply with any aspect of these policies and guidelines could lead to the suspension or termination of one's volunteer relationship with Guide Dogs for the Blind.

## **Volunteer Term of Service**

GDB is greatly appreciative of the time that all volunteers generously devote to its organization and mission. Personal commitments and goals may at times limit one's involvement. Volunteers are engaged for no definite period of time. They may terminate their relationship with GDB at any time, with or without reason or notice, and GDB may do the same.

## **Equal Opportunity**

Guide Dogs for the Blind believes that all people are entitled to equal opportunity under the law. Guide Dogs for the Blind, its staff and its volunteers may not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, age, medical condition, disability, veteran status, marital status, or any other consideration that has been made unlawful by federal, state or local laws.

## **Non-harassment**

GDB will not tolerate harassment of its employees, students, graduates, volunteers, or others on any basis including, but not limited to, gender, sexual orientation, age, race, color, physical or mental disability, marital status, veteran status, national origin, and/or religion. While it is not always easy to define precisely what harassment is, it certainly includes slurs, epithets, threats, derogatory personal comments or visual depictions, unwelcome jokes and teasing, or unwanted physical contact or gestures.

Any volunteer who feels they are a victim of harassment, including sexual harassment, should immediately report the matter to their leader or CFR. All complaints will be promptly investigated and appropriate action will be taken.

No volunteer or employee who has in good faith reported suspected cases of child abuse, neglect, or endangerment will face any disciplinary action by GDB or legal penalties under the law even if the resulting investigation does not substantiate their claims.

## Ensuring the Safety of Youth

### Adult Volunteer Screening Process

Adults enrolled as puppy raising volunteers who instruct, advise, or otherwise supervise youth (under 16 years of age) must also successfully complete a background screening to determine their ability to safely interact with youth.

Everyone who serves Guide Dogs for the Blind has an obligation to ensure that youth volunteers are safe from emotional and physical harm not only at GDB functions but in other environments as well. See the tips below to help volunteers recognize and report suspicions of child abuse, neglect, and endangerment.

GDB will offer additional instruction in child abuse prevention, recognition, and reporting as part of both its Introductory Leader Training and other periodic training sessions.

The following information on the recognition and reporting of child abuse is based on information from the Washington State University, Cooperative Extension and the United States Department of Justice.

### Providing a Safe Environment

To ensure a safe environment for GDB youth volunteers, all volunteers and parents of youth volunteers must adhere to the GDB guidelines, policies, and instructions.

- All youth must be supervised at all times by a qualified, screened adult.
- Youth are not allowed to supervise other youth without a qualified, screened adult present.
- All adults who interact directly with youth must undergo orientation and periodic training in proper interactions with youth including the recognition, prevention and documentation of child abuse.
- In a private setting a GDB adult volunteer supervising a youth must have an additional adult present.
- At meetings the number of youths to screened adults should not exceed 12:1.
- On outings the number of youths to screened adults should not exceed 8:1.
- A youth volunteer may not visit the home of an adult volunteer or staff member except under the guidelines of established in this manual.
- An adult may not visit a youth volunteer at the youth's home without the youth's parent or designated adult guardian present.
- Volunteers may not transport staff, members of the public, or other volunteers. GDB bears no responsibility or liability for transportation to and from GDB events, meetings, outings, or other functions.

### Defining Child Abuse

- Child abuse and neglect are defined as the injury, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, negligent treatment, or maltreatment of a child by any person that harms the child's health, welfare, mental well-being, and/or safety.
- Physical abuse includes a non-accidental physical injury.

- Sexual abuse includes sexual exploitation and other sexual conduct or contact performed to gratify sexual desire.
- Neglect is defined as an act or failure to act that constitutes a clear and present danger to a child.
- Emotional maltreatment includes belittling, rejecting, failure to provide a positive atmosphere, and/or causing emotional distress.

## Recognizing Child Abuse\*

\*Note that these signs are not only indicative of abuse

- Physical indicators of physical abuse include:
  - Unexplained bruises, welts or burns in various stages of healing
  - Injuries reflecting the shape of an object, electrical cord, belt, bite, cigarette, etc.
  - Unexplained injuries
  - Injuries inconsistent with information from the child
  - Injuries inconsistent with information from the parent/guardian/caretaker/other adult
- Behavioral indicators of physical abuse include:
  - Reluctance to have physical contact with adults
  - Behavioral extremes such as aggression or withdrawal
  - Complaints of discomfort or soreness
  - Wearing of clothing inconsistent with the weather
  - Reporting of injuries by parents or other adults
  - Avoidance of home
- Physical indicators of neglect include:
  - Consistent hunger
  - Poor hygiene
  - Inconsistent dress
  - Consistent or prolonged lack of supervision
  - Abandonment
  - Unattended physical, medical, or hygiene needs
- Behavioral indicators of neglect include:
  - Craving food
  - Stealing food
  - Constant fatigue, listlessness or exhaustion
  - Substance abuse
  - Delinquency
  - Self-destructiveness (cutting, burning, etc.)
  - Frequent absence or tardiness
  - Reports of no caretaker in the home
- Behavioral indicators of sexual abuse include:
  - Withdrawal, chronic depression, poor self-esteem, or suicide attempts
  - Fear of physical contact or closeness



- Inappropriate sexual knowledge or behavior
- Reports of sexual abuse by adult
- Poor peer relations
- Chronic attempts to runs away
- Avoidance of home
- Physical indicators of emotional maltreatment include:
  - Delayed physical development
  - Substance abuse
  - Ulcers, asthma or severe allergies
- Behavioral indicators of emotional maltreatment include:
  - Habit disorders (sucking, rocking, self-mutilation, etc.)
  - Antisocial or withdrawn behavior
  - Destructiveness
  - Neurotic behaviors (developmental regression, obsessive behaviors, excessive cleanliness, unrealistic fears, etc.)
  - Behavioral extremes (aggressive, passive)
  - Overly adaptive behavior (unrealistic willingness to agree, obsessive compliance, etc.)
  - Delayed emotional development
  - Suicide attempts
- A single indicator or occurrence may not be proof that abuse occurs, but one should be alerted to:
  - The repeated presence of an indicator
  - Multiple indicators
  - The severity of a single indicator
  - The knowledge that often no visible indicators may be present
- If a child reports abuse, one should always:
  - Listen to the child
  - Be supportive
  - Reassure the child that it is acceptable to give information
  - Use the child's language and vocabulary
  - Tell the child that help is available
  - Let the child know that the information must be reported
  - Trust "gut instincts"
  - Report the information to an immediate supervisor or another manager
  - Report to 4-H, FFA, or appropriate educational staff if so affiliated
  - Report to the appropriate governing agency if so required by state law
- If a child reports abuse, one should never:
  - Blame the child
  - Doubt the child
  - Promise secrecy or confidentiality
  - Panic
  - Express shock

- Ask leading or suggestive questions
- Make negative comments regarding the alleged perpetrator
- Disclose information indiscriminately

### **Reporting of Child Abuse**

State laws vary regarding child abuse reporting; see *Child Abuse Reporting Laws in GDB Puppy Raising States* in the *Forms and Resources* section. A volunteer who works with youth has the responsibility to understand the laws in their state. Some states have legal penalties, including prosecution, for individuals who do not report cases of suspected child abuse. States will not prosecute or otherwise penalize a person who in good faith reports child abuse. If one is uncertain if they are mandated to report, they should report with the wellbeing of the youth being foremost.

### **What to Do if Abuse is Suspected**

- Report to the appropriate governing agency if required by state law. Again, state laws vary; see *Child Abuse Reporting Laws in GDB Puppy Raising States* in the *Forms and Resources* section. The phone number can usually be found by searching “Child Abuse Reporting” and including the county name.
- Report the information to an immediate GDB supervisor or another manager.
- Report to any other organization or entity that the raiser may be affiliated with (4-H, FFA, school, church, etc.)

### **What Not to Do if Abuse is Suspected**

- Investigate the case yourself
- Question the alleged perpetrator
- Release information to uninvolved third parties
- Question one’s own judgment or otherwise delay reporting
- Contact the media

Retaliation by an employee or a volunteer toward an individual who in good faith reports suspected cases of child abuse will be considered harassment and may lead to dismissal of that employee or volunteer.

No volunteer or employee that reports neglect or endangerment will face any disciplinary action by GDB or legal penalties under the law even if the resulting investigation does not substantiate his or her claims.

### **Confidentiality**

During the course of service, volunteers may have access to confidential and proprietary information. To respect and protect confidentiality, such information may not be used or disclosed except when authorized. In all such instances, disclosure should be approved in advance through the CFR or other member of GDB employee management.

The following are examples of confidential information:

- Graduate/student information: health and training records, publicity files
- Personal and personnel information about employees, volunteers, donors, applicants, and clients
- Breeding records (e.g., pedigrees, health records)
- Mailing lists
- Media lists
- Donor lists
- Invoices referring to personal or confidential issues
- Individual and group donor information
- Dog health and training history
- Administrative and financial documents

## **Conflicts of Interest/Unethical Conduct**

GDB expects its volunteers to avoid situations that could be construed as a conflict of interest or as unethical conduct, as illustrated by the following examples:

- Engaging in business conduct that is damaging to GDB's reputation.
- Promising or giving something of value to anyone doing or seeking to do business with GDB in order to influence them in matters relating to GDB.
- Accepting gifts, entertainment, services or other benefits where the purpose is to unduly influence business decisions.
- Selecting vendors based on non-business reasons, such as personal or former relationships.
- Directing business to a relative, friend or company in which the employee or family member has a direct or indirect financial or personal interest.
- Undermining business decisions.
- Breeding, selling, boarding or giving away GDB dogs for personal gain or influence.
- In addition, volunteers are not authorized to enter into any contract in the name of Guide Dogs for the Blind. Any contracts entered into by a volunteer are their own financial or other liability.

## **Financial Liabilities**

GDB requires that all who participate in its programs provide reasonable care and control of GDB dogs to prevent injury or harm, such as dog bites or property damage to third parties. GDB's breeding program, selection process and training programs are designed to minimize these risks; however, nothing replaces the care and attention of the volunteer to prevent risky situations and to ensure proper control of the dog at all times.

Volunteers raising dogs for GDB have been outstanding in their control of the animals entrusted to their care. Claims have been rare because prevention through good handling, good control and the exercise of "good common sense" have been the hallmark of program participants. However, individuals do assume some risk in their roles as custodians.

Guide Dogs for the Blind does maintain insurance to help cover program participants. Legal protections are also provided to volunteers under the Federal Volunteer Protection Act of 1997, minimizing volunteers' civil liabilities. To further minimize the potential for personal liability, volunteers are advised to maintain insurance coverage to protect themselves from

claims arising from third parties for the action of the dogs they are handling. Volunteers who maintain standard homeowners or renters packages of insurance will generally find their coverage sufficient. GDB suggests that volunteers review their policies or contact their insurance agency for a review.

If a third party has been injured (or their property damaged) volunteers may receive a claim for damages. If an injury or property damage claim occurs, please notify *all* of the below *immediately*.

- The volunteer's own insurance company
- Guide Dogs for the Blind

A volunteer is personally financially liable for any damages incurred:

- By non-compliance with GDB guidelines, policies and protocols
- By negligence or disregard for safety
- In the course of their involvement in a non-GDB sponsored (or organized) event, meeting or other activity
- In transportation to and from any GDB activities
- By any outside contract entered into by a volunteer
- Driving a motor vehicle

## **Incident Reporting**

Sometimes a volunteer will need to notify GDB about an incident; use the following guidelines when reporting incidents.

### **Emergencies**

If an emergency occurs involving a GDB volunteer or puppy, Guide Dogs for the Blind must be notified immediately. A volunteer should attempt to contact their Community Field Representative first. If the CFR cannot be reached, the volunteer should contact the Puppy Raising Department in San Rafael from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at (800) 295-4050. If the emergency occurs after 5:00 p.m. or on a weekend, the volunteer should notify GDB at the same number by selecting option 1 in the afterhours voicemail menu about what to do in an emergency.

### **Other incidents that need to be reported**

- Suspected child abuse or neglect
- Harassment, including sexual harassment
- Injuries to people
- Any injury caused to a person by a GDB puppy, including but not limited to dog bites
- Any injury to any other animal by a GDB puppy
- A lost, injured, ill or deceased puppy
- Dog fights
- Abuse or neglect of a GDB puppy or dog
- Abuse of any animal by a GDB employee or volunteer
- Any lack of compliance with guidelines established by GDB

Any of the above incidents must be reported to the CFR the next workday. If the CFR cannot be reached, report the incident to the Puppy Raising Department at (800) 295-4050.

## **Use of GDB Property and Licensed Materials**

Negligence in the care and use of GDB property or conversion to personal use is not allowed. GDB stationery may not be used for raiser and leader correspondence.

Please refer to the *GDB Branding Guidelines for Puppy Raisers* in the *Forms and Resources* section for detailed information on the use of the GDB logo.

## **Fundraising**

Refer to the *Club Fundraising* and *Club Structure* sections of this manual for the policies and protocols for fundraising and the handling of funds.

## **Expenses and Reimbursements**

GDB does not provide any financial or in-kind compensation to raisers and leaders for hours worked. GDB does not reimburse travel or other expenses to raisers and leaders except at the discretion and pre-authorization of the Vice President of Community Operations.

GDB offers reimbursement for authorized veterinary expenses for GDB puppies; refer to the *Veterinary Care Guidelines* in this manual. GDB offers no other financial reimbursements for raising puppies.

Puppy raising volunteers share none of the employment benefits or legal protections provided to paid staff.

## **Compliance With Other Organizations and Government Entities**

Some government entities and organizations may have policies that differ from GDB. For example, schools may require stronger screening guidelines than GDB for those who use their facilities. GDB advises its staff and volunteers to be aware of laws that may govern their actions and to comply with all local, state and federal laws or regulations.

## **Communications**

Raisers and leaders are also asked not to contact staff in other departments, such as the Training, Breeding or Veterinary Departments, unless directed to do so by a Community Field Representative or other member of GDB management.

All communications made by GDB employee and volunteer staff to the public, media or GDB persons that they supervise, should be positive and supportive of GDB. In cases of sensitive communications or incidents, volunteers should notify their CFR prior to communication with others or other involvement.

## **Staff or Puppy Club Leader Visits to a Raiser's Home**

To ensure both the safety and the proper development of GDB puppies, GDB staff or

leaders at times visit puppy raising homes. The following guidelines help ensure that GDB goals for its puppies are met; that volunteers' privacy is respected, and that a cooperative attitude is maintained among all program participants.

- Prior to the placement of a puppy, all homes must undergo a visit by club leaders or by puppy raising staff to ensure safety and productivity for a GDB puppy.
- If a youth raiser resides part-time or for vacation periods of over two weeks within another household, that home may require a visit at the discretion of the supervising CFR.
- A staff member or volunteer should be accompanied by another adult when visiting the home of a puppy raising applicant with whom he or she is unfamiliar.
- A raiser may receive additional visits as requested by their leader or GDB staff.
  - A raiser who believes that requests for additional visits are excessive can address concerns by contacting their CFR.
- A staff member or leader must attempt to contact a raiser prior to visiting that raiser's home. "Surprise" visits are discouraged and should be initiated only if a raiser is not responding to communications or if a puppy's welfare is a concern.
- A staff member or volunteer may not enter another's yard or home without the permission of that person.
- An adult may not visit a youth volunteer at the youth's home without the youth's parent or designated adult guardian present.

## **Puppy Evaluations**

Community Field Representatives have a responsibility to evaluate puppies in the field periodically or as requested by raisers, leaders, GDB veterinary staff, outside veterinary staff or the GDB Breeding Department. Raisers and leaders have a responsibility to make the puppy available at the location and time requested by the CFR.

The Puppy Raising Department evaluates puppies in the field for the following purposes:

- Recording the behaviors and physical traits of puppies
- Relaying information to the Breeding, Veterinary and Training Departments
- Evaluating a puppy raiser's handling techniques
- Producing individualized instructions for the improvement of raiser techniques or dog behaviors
- Evaluating puppies for the consideration of transfer, career change or recall
- Opening productive and positive direct communication between CFRs, leaders and raisers
- Systematic review of the development of puppies to make improvements to the puppy raising program
- Ensuring the well-being of a puppy and the home in which it lives

When a medical, behavior or temperamental problem develops or is observed with a puppy, the CFR will talk with the leader and the family to develop a plan of action. The puppy may return to GDB, or be moved to an evaluation home, for a medical or training evaluation.

## **Reasons for Removal of a Puppy from a Puppy Raising Home**

GDB reserves the right to remove a puppy from a home at the organization's discretion.

A puppy may be removed if GDB is concerned that the puppy is in danger of death, injury or other health problems. A puppy may also be removed if the organization determines that it is not being socialized or trained in a manner that best develops it as a potential guide.

Possible reasons for the removal of a GDB puppy from a home include, but are not limited to:

- Physical abuse of the GDB puppy, or of another dog or animal
- Use of unapproved training methods and equipment
- Lack of proper health care, including veterinary, nutrition, parasite control or grooming
- Lack of adequate socialization or training
- Inability of the raiser or significant family members to control the puppy
- Repeated instances of the puppy getting loose or lost
- Lack of compliance with requirement to keep puppy on leash
- Poor attendance by the raiser at required GDB group activities or requested evaluations
- Unsafe living or housing conditions
- Behavioral problems of other dogs within the raiser home or with access to the GDB puppy
- Poor compliance by the raiser or family member with GDB guidelines, procedures, or recommendations
- Relocation of the raiser to an area that is not supervised by a CFR or leader

GDB guidelines and procedures provide for puppies' safety and well-being. They also support the positive socialization and training needed for every puppy to reach its full potential as a guide dog.

If a puppy's immediate health or safety is in jeopardy, a leader may temporarily remove a puppy from a raising home. Non-emergency or permanent transfers must be handled by the CFR. The CFR and the leader will set reasonable goals and deadlines for attaining them with everyone in the raising home so that everyone understands what is expected of them. GDB prefers to keep a puppy in the original home, whenever possible. However, when a problem persists and reasonable goals cannot be met by the raiser and family, the CFR may determine that the puppy should be placed in another home. This decision will be made with careful thought, consideration and open communication with the leader and the raiser home. The raiser and family will be treated with dignity and respect.

## **Death, Severe Injury or Loss of a GDB Puppy**

GDB acknowledges that the death, severe injury or loss of a GDB puppy is devastating for everyone involved. It is a loss for the raiser, the family, the leader, the club, the community and Guide Dogs for the Blind.

GDB will not automatically replace a deceased puppy or return an injured puppy to the raiser. The raiser, leader and CFR will discuss all circumstances prior to any decision. The

leader and CFR will evaluate, when and if, it is appropriate for another puppy to be placed in the home.

## **Reporting to Community Field Representative Staff**

Incidents involving GDB staff, volunteers and dogs that require a leader to notify the CFR include but are not limited to:

- A person applying for a volunteer role that directly involves teaching or supervising youth
- Suspicion of possible child abuse or neglect
- Suspicion of possible animal abuse by a GDB volunteer or staff member
- Suspicion of possible abuse or neglect of a GDB dog or puppy
- Misuse of funds
- Uncertainty about approving a volunteer applicant
- Accepting or denying a volunteer application
- Scheduling of an event
- A conflict within a club
- A conflict with a member of the public
- A conflict with a collaborating agency, school or organization
- Receipt of a complaint from the public about a volunteer, staff member, puppy, program, policy or incident
- Contact with the media regarding extensive or potentially controversial coverage
- An access issue where a puppy's access to a socialization setting is questioned or denied
- Any potentially litigious situation
- The intention to request information or materials from another department
- Harassment, including sexual harassment
- Injuries to people
- Any injury caused to a person by a GDB puppy, including but not limited to dog bites
- Any injury to any other animal by a GDB puppy
- A lost, injured, ill or deceased GDB puppy
- Dog fights involving a GDB puppy
- Any puppy illness or injury not responding to treatment
- Any major or chronic lack of compliance with GDB guidelines
- Any ongoing behavior or temperament problem in a puppy
- Any other incidents involving GDB dogs, volunteers and/or employees and the public which may be regarded as unsafe, negative or sensitive

If a volunteer feels that an adequate or timely response from the Community Field Representative is not being given, or if the volunteer feels that contacting the CFR is inappropriate, they can contact the Puppy Raising Manager.

GDB's goal is to ensure efficient communication that enables all volunteers to benefit from the full range of the diverse knowledge and support of the many experts who work for Guide Dogs for the Blind.



## **Humane Treatment of Dogs and Other Animals**

Guide Dogs for the Blind is committed to providing high-quality care for its dogs. This commitment includes the expectation that GDB volunteers will:

- Take timely action to address potential medical conditions evidenced by physical signs of distress (such as lameness, coughing, diarrhea, ear, eye or skin irritations)
- Provide proper care during veterinary procedures, surgery and post-op situations
- Provide food, water and necessary protection from the elements
- Provide confined animals with adequate exercise and/or exercise area
- Restrict training and handling methods to techniques approved by GDB
- Prohibit a GDB puppy or dog to be bred without the authorization of the Breeding Department

Guide Dogs for the Blind does not condone any act or omission that causes unsuitable physical or psychological suffering to an animal. Animal neglect and abuse shall consist of not meeting GDB standards of care or by:

- Mishandling a dog by actions such as kicking, hitting or striking with an object
- Disrupting a working guide, puppy or dog in training
- Causing unnecessary discomfort, pain or confusion
- Abandoning a dog in their custody
- Failing to keep a dog safely fenced or protected from vehicles and other hazards
- Allowing a dog off-leash in an unsecured area
- Repeatedly allowing a dog to escape from its enclosure
- Deliberate or neglectful action, causing or not preventing a dog fight
- Killing, injuring or administering poison to an animal
- Administering improper, non-prescribed or harmful medications or drugs
- Euthanizing a GDB puppy or dog without GDB approval

Volunteers are required to report, in a timely manner, incidents they perceive to involve animal abuse or neglect. Puppy raising volunteers are requested to contact their CFR or when appropriate, another manager, when they suspect any of the above forms of animal abuse or mistreatment. The CFR will assist them in completing a report. Employee or volunteer retaliation toward an individual who files a report will not be condoned.

Volunteers must uphold standards of etiquette around GDB dogs that demonstrate respect for animals and reinforce the dogs' training. All those who interact with guides at graduation or other settings are asked to interact with the dog in a calm, positive and respectful manner, keeping in mind that a graduate and a dog are now a team.

## **Protecting GDB Puppies**

In order to better protect puppies, raisers or other individuals supervising GDB puppies are required to comply with the following guidelines:

- GDB puppies must always wear the GDB identification collar.
- GDB puppies are never to be allowed off-leash except when in a completely enclosed and secure area.

- GDB puppies are not allowed at dog parks on or off leash.
- Provide good kennel, fence and gate security. Fences and kennels should be at least five feet high and should be escape-proof.
- “Invisible” or electronic fences are not acceptable under any circumstances.
- Gates and doors to outside exits should be checked before letting a puppy out.
- Fence or kennel perimeters should be inspected frequently. Holes, weak areas or failed latches should be repaired immediately.
- Fences should be secured with a chain and snap bolt to lock kennel gates and fence gates whenever possible. Gates should be secured with a chain and snap bolt.
- Young children may forget to close gates when busy playing and their friends may not know the rules. Whenever possible, padlock gates that are not regularly used and could lead to a puppy’s escape.
- Remind all household members and visitors to close doors and gates behind them.
- Take extra precautions when friends, relatives and workers are visiting. Keep the puppy on leash, crated, or in a kennel run if there is a lot of activity in which people are coming and going.
- Teach the puppy to wait at doors, gates and when exiting vehicles.
- CFRs or leaders may require that an enclosure be made more secure.

## **Approved GDB Puppy Handlers**

Puppies develop and prosper with handling and instruction that is consistent from one handler to another. Lack of consistency between handlers may lead to confusion or inappropriate behaviors in a puppy. All persons handling GDB puppies must have received previous instruction and be approved by a GDB puppy raising club leader or staff member.

If a youth raiser and their puppy reside part time or for vacation periods of over two weeks within another household, that household’s custodial person must be in contact with the supervising CFR to ensure compliance with general GDB guidelines or those training, socialization or reporting guidelines prescribed for that raiser/puppy team. Please consult the CFR with any questions about this policy.

## **Other Dogs or Animals in the Puppy Raising Home**

Many guide dog puppies are successfully raised in homes where there are other dogs, pets or livestock. GDB puppies may in fact prosper by being properly introduced to and successfully raised with other family pets.

Certain guidelines are necessary to ensure the proper development of GDB puppies and the welfare of all animals within the home. To promote the safe and successful raising of a puppy within a home, GDB, its employees and volunteers must be sensitive to situations that may potentially be unproductive or unsafe. When after careful evaluation, a home is found not to be safe or productive for a GDB puppy or other family pets, GDB staff and volunteers may find it necessary to deny placement of the puppy or to remove the puppy from the home. Such determinations will be made at the discretion of GDB staff. Factors to consider within the home may include but are not limited to:

- The number of other animals
- The housing of non-family pets in the home either informally or formally through pet

care, training, boarding, foster care, or breeding provided within the home

- The behaviors of the other animals
- Energy and activity level of the other pets
- The interaction between the GDB puppy and other animals
- Accessibility of the GDB puppy to the other animal's toys and food
- Accessibility of the other animals to the GDB puppy's toys and food
- Division of family member's responsibilities between the GDB puppy supervision and care and other animal care
- The health, vaccinations and care of the other animals

In placing or retaining a GDB puppy within a home, GDB requires that:

- GDB puppies may not reside within a home containing another animal or a person that GDB staff determines presents a hazard to the puppy's safety or development.
- GDB puppies may not reside within a home containing another animal or a person that GDB staff determines may be endangered by the puppy.
- If staff determines that a career change dog that a raiser wishes to accept into their home is an unsuitable match for a GDB puppy, the raiser must either decline the career change dog or return the puppy.
- A GDB puppy and any other puppy being raised in the same household must be at least 6 months apart in age.
- A single individual may raise only one GDB puppy or other service dog at a time, unless approved by the Community Field Representative.
- A GDB puppy may not be left unattended with another dog.
- A GDB puppy may not be left in an enclosure that provides fence-to-fence access to other dogs with behaviors that may affect those of the puppy.

# BEYOND PUPPY RAISING

## Recall

Generally, puppies are recalled to campus for formal training and breeding evaluation between 13-18 months. The age of recall will vary depending on a variety of factors, but puppy raisers should anticipate receiving notification that a puppy is being recalled any time after 13 months of age.

About two weeks prior to the recall date, the puppy raiser will receive an email from GDB stating that the dog is being recalled. Those raisers living near one of the GDB campuses will make arrangements to transport their dogs to campus. For dogs farther away from campus, GDB staff will make arrangements for dogs to ride the puppy truck or fly. Puppy raisers that have difficulty meeting the scheduled pick-up time, date, or place should call their leader immediately.

Upon notification of recall, puppy raisers will ensure that all veterinary records for the dogs (including alter certificate and vaccination records) are submitted to the GDB vet clinic; these procedures are detailed in the e-mail sent to puppy raisers prior to recall. This streamlines the process for getting dogs settled into the kennel and scheduled for their vet check-in. It also prevents the need to administer unnecessary vaccines.

## Items That Need To Be Returned With The Puppy

- Puppy collar and headcollar
- Puppy coats (return to club leader)
- A completed *Fun Things About My Puppy* form - raisers are encouraged to be informative and positive in the information provided; a link to an online version of this form is included in the recall e-mail sent to raisers
- Veterinary records not yet submitted to GDB
- Any unused heartworm preventative
- Any unused flea or tick preventative

## On Campus

Once on campus, GDB staff settles each dog into the kennel with the rest of the dogs arriving for training and breeder evaluation. Within a few days, most dogs will have a roommate. This section details the processes for evaluating and selecting both altered dogs for the training program and intact dogs for the breeding program.

## Medical examinations

During the first week on campus, all dogs will have their initial health screenings which include:

- Orthopedic x-rays and exams
- A formal in-for-training physical by a GDB veterinarian
- An eye exam by a veterinary ophthalmology specialist
- An accurate weight

- Any vaccinations needed

If a dog does not clear any of the above exams, it may result in a career change or being removed from consideration as a breeder. For information regarding common medical career change reasons, see *Common Medical Career Change Conditions* in the *Forms and Resources* section.

## **Training for Altered Dogs**

Dogs that have already been altered (spayed or neutered) are recalled for guide training. Those dogs that pass all the initial health exams are assigned to an instructor with a training string. A string is a group of dogs all trained by one team of instructors. These dogs then begin the training program and are given systematic evaluations as they progress through the eight training phases.

Each dog's most recent phase number is accessible on the Forms page of the website. Information is updated each week on Thursday (see *GDB Training Phases* below).

Throughout training each dog is continually evaluated by training and veterinary staff. If a problem (physical, temperament, behavior or cosmetic) arises that is evaluated as being chronic, reoccurring and/or impossible to correct, the dog will be dropped from the program. It is important to understand that GDB's high standards are necessary to ensure the safety of a partner who is blind and the long-term health and well-being of the dog.

Puppy raisers often want to share the progress of their dogs in training and they are encouraged to do so. Because the full description of the training phases is a copyrighted document, GDB asks its raisers to share the more abbreviated version that follow.

## **GDB Training Phases**

The GDB training program is designed to maximize a dog's potential for success. Each dog is taken through the phases with the end goal of having all of the dogs in a string ready for class at the same time. There are eight phases of training through which the dogs progress during their training cycle.

### **Phase 0**

Health screenings (x-rays/eyes); agility; kennel enrichment; campus walks, community run intros

### **Phase 1**

Load clicker, tethering / collar response; food reward and refusal intros; obstacle course; 1st up-curb exercise; "over here"; agility; back-up chute; harness exposure; treadmill; off leash recall; begin formal obedience and pattern training

### **Phase 2**

Pattern training continues; 2nd up-curb exercise; distraction route in town; responsible lead exercise; food protocol continues

### **Phase 3**

3rd up-curb exercise; dog boot intros; preliminary obedience & guide work testing (instructor under blindfold)

#### **Phase 4**

Building work begins; intelligent disobedience and overhead introduction; traffic conditioning; natural traffic checks begin

#### **Phase 5**

Natural traffic checks continue; formal traffic training; total barricades; city routes; escalator intros; city bus route

#### **Phase 6**

City routes continue; sidewalkless; platform training; light rail route; begin leash relieving

#### **Phase 7**

Advanced overhead training; more complex routes

#### **Phase 8 - Finishing /Maintenance routes; Class preparation**

Final tests – a blindfolded GDB instructor tests the dog in the following: obedience, guide work, work inside buildings and final traffic. Dogs that pass these tests are deemed “class ready.” Other work: finishing routes; pre class phone meetings with clients; hand & chair targeting intros; pole targeting on route; dormitory building exposure; pre-class physicals; pre-class meeting: instructor team, supervisor, dorm manager, and nurses.

For a more comprehensive description of each of the eight phases of training, refer to the *Training Phase Descriptions* in the *Forms and Resources* section.

Dogs that complete the training phases are assigned to a class. Class assignment occurs when the instructor feels that a dog has the qualities needed by a particular person who is in class.

### **Class**

By the time the dogs finish their final exams in Phase 8, clients have already been scheduled to arrive for the next class. Instructors conduct pre-class phone meetings to begin the matching process between client and dog. Matches are finalized once students arrive at campus and class training has begun. To make the best matches possible, GDB has more class ready dogs than clients. This means that there are always a handful of dogs remaining for placement in a future class. These dogs continue in training with the next group of instructors and dogs.

There are different class-training program options available to clients. GDB offers two week classes for in-residence client training. On occasion, for either health or other compelling personal reasons, some clients do best with training in their own home area. In these instances, the client does not train at a GDB campus. This is called an in-home training. Most in-home training clients do not participate in a formal graduation ceremony, unless they live close to one of the GDB campuses and are able to attend. For those clients unable to attend a ceremony, see the information in the *Graduation* section below for special arrangements afforded to raisers whose dogs are trained in-home.

Depending on whether they are training in California or Oregon, clients begin training with their prospective guide dogs in residential areas of San Rafael or Gresham, respectively, and transition to routes in San Francisco or Portland. The new teams encounter many different situations together: public transportation (cars, city buses, subway systems, and ferries), heavy traffic, construction, escalators, areas with no sidewalks, etc.

## **Graduation**

Raisers are invited to attend graduation and formally present the dogs they raised to the clients who received them. If raisers plan to fly to attend a graduation ceremony, GDB recommends purchasing refundable airfare, in case something happens to cause the dog to be career changed, passed back or taken out of class at the last moment. On graduation day, raisers have an opportunity to meet and visit with the client and have pictures taken together before the ceremony (pictures are sent after graduation). Puppy raisers ceremonially present the dog on stage at the microphone. After the client speaks, the raiser has an opportunity to share a few words about their experience raising the dog. Raisers are sent a DVD of the graduation as a keepsake.

For in-home clients unable to attend a graduation, raisers may have the opportunity to visit the dog they raised on campus before it leaves for training. The in-home instructor takes photos of the working team for the raiser's keepsake. Those raisers whose dogs have been matched with clients who receive in-home training are welcome to attend graduation. Their name, the dog's name and the client's name are mentioned during the program even though the team is not present. If the raiser chooses to attend graduation, he or she also has an opportunity to make a statement at the microphone when introduced. With their consent, a statement composed by the client may also be read at the same time. Also with the client's consent, a phone call can be arranged between the raiser and graduate.

## **Tips for a Relaxing and Enjoyable Graduation**

- Puppy raisers will receive information about the opportunity to contact the student on a specific day and time prior to graduation; puppy raisers are encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity to break the ice and speak to the student prior to meeting at graduation.
- Address the graduate first (not the dog).
- Clients may offer the leash to the raiser to visit with the dog for a few minutes. Be respectful of the team's relationship and hand the leash back within a few minutes.
- When visiting with the dog, stay gentle and calm to minimize the dog's excitement. The dog is working on this day. Expect and encourage him to behave as he would in a working situation involving a crowd.
- Indicate an open seat to the client, and ask them about their class experience.
- Feel free to share positive and/or humorous stories about the dog's puppyhood. Keep in mind that the student has only begun to develop their trust and confidence in their new guide. While sharing normal puppy "challenges" with the student is fine, try not to focus on any negative subjects about raising their dog.
- Inquire about the student's lifestyle, plans or hobbies/career. Keep in mind, the client may not want to share.
- Please do not offer any training advice, even if asked.

- The client will put the harness on the dog when it is time to take photos. Additional equipment may be used for general management as well (headcollar or specialized collar).
- There is no obligation to share personal information or to ensure communication going forward between the client and the puppy raiser(s). Puppy raisers are sent the client's contact information in the email announcement informing them of the graduation. Please respect any privacy wishes that the client may express.

## **Breeder Evaluation for Intact Dogs**

Upon recall to a GDB campus, all mature puppies that have not yet been altered will be evaluated for breeding. The breeding evaluation process can take up to two months (or longer, depending on how quickly test results are received). Any dogs on the breeding evaluation list that have mild health or temperament issues that preclude them from being breeding stock may still be eligible for training; if so, they are then neutered or spayed and prepared for a training string.

Over the years, through the judicious inclusion and generous donation of many fine specimens from outside breeders, Guide Dogs for the Blind has been able to establish an excellent breeding colony of dogs especially suited to the program. At this time, 95 percent of all dogs produced for the program are bred from GDB's own breeding stock. The other 5 percent consist of dogs that are the result of co-breedings with other guide and service dog organizations as well as an occasional dog from an outside breeder. These breedings through outside or co-bred sources enable GDB to diversify its gene pool and to continue to improve its colony of breeding animals.

Today, the breeding colony consists of approximately 200 active breeders and is comprised of approximately 80 percent Labrador Retrievers, 10 percent Golden Retrievers and 10 percent Labrador and Golden cross breeds.

## **Phases of Breeder Evaluation**

Breeding stock selection is based on the results of estimated breeding value calculations, behavior assessments, health screenings, and the needs of the colony in terms of pedigree and temperament type. The dogs that have met the highest physical and temperamental standards are considered for inclusion in the colony. A thorough review of the individual dog's health and temperament history and those of its littermates, as well as its sire and dam's previous production complete the selection process.

Every raiser of a new breeding stock dog is invited to attend a graduation ceremony at the San Rafael campus to formally present the dog they raised and be recognized by GDB for their hard work and tremendous contribution. Raisers of male and female breeders are notified via email each time the breeder sires or whelps a litter and are invited to submit names for the puppies. Raisers also have the opportunity to schedule puppy visits with each new litter.

### **Phase A: Arrival Period**

Dogs are introduced to the GDB kennels, campus walks and begin breeder assessment. Each dog is assigned to an individual Canine Welfare Training Technician (CWTT) for specialized attention and training during the breeder evaluation process. CWTTs report



weekly directly to the breeding department staff on the health and wellbeing of each breeder evaluation dog.

### **Phase B: Initial Health Screening and Kennel Socialization**

During this important transitional period, each dog receives a preliminary physical exam, performed by a Canine Welfare Training Technician. The CWTT thoroughly inspects each dog from head to tail and checks the nose, teeth, eyes, ears, coat, skin and feet. Any ailments, abnormalities or concerns are noted and brought to the attention of GDB's veterinary staff. Most recalled dogs are in excellent condition, although some may require medication for minor ailments such as an ear or eye infection. During the first week on campus, dogs receive the following:

- Orthopedic x-rays and exams
- A formal in-for-training physical by a GDB veterinarian
- An eye exam by a veterinary ophthalmology specialist
- An accurate weight
- Any vaccinations needed

### **Activities throughout all phases**

- Walks on campus and playtime in an enclosed grass paddock
- Doubling kennelmates that play well together
- Daily grooming
- Medication administration, as needed
- Human and dog interactive play or cuddle sessions
- Introduction to community run playtime
- Kennel enrichment activities

Kennel enrichment is anything that stimulates the senses and puts the dogs at ease in a kennel environment. The primary focus of the Canine Welfare Training Technicians (CWTTs) is to care for and provide kennel enrichment for the dogs. Some enrichment activities take place daily for every dog, other activities are done intermittently. Enrichment activities are many, including:

- Bones and chewable toys; food stuffed Kongs and ice cubes
- Hanging toys with or without food in them
- Plush and squeaky toys – closely monitored (not recommended for raisers or clients)
- Interactive toys (rings, etc.)
- Baby pools filled with water or a toy and/or playground equipment
- Scents: vanilla, peppermint, anise, lemon, almond, etc sprayed in the kennel
- Bubbles, mirrors, wind catchers, sound machines, music
- T-Touch, Pilates, massage and Reiki
- Behavior training for dogs that need additional socialization, or for career change dogs or breeder dogs awaiting placement
- Exercise: walks, treadmill, enclosed grass paddocks
- Cuddle time

The Breeding Manager carefully reviews the results from initial health screens and begins making decisions to alter during this phase. Because breeder dogs affect many future generations of potential guide dogs, health criteria for breeding stock dogs can be stricter than the criteria for a dog to enter formal guide dog training. Thus, while a dog may not meet the criteria for breeding they may still qualify to enter formal training.

### **Phase C: Cardiology, Temperament and Pedigree Analysis**

Dogs under breeder evaluation receive an echocardiogram performed by a board certified canine cardiologist. This typically takes place the second week after recall. Dogs with minor heart abnormalities may be excluded from breeding due to the potential to produce more severe defects in their offspring. Minor abnormalities which do not affect the individual dog's health and ability to work will not prevent that dog from entering formal training.

An in town temperament assessment walk is performed during this phase and staff provide a recommendation to the Breeding Manager based on manageability, confidence, temperament, willingness, and kennel adjustment

GDB works with a population geneticist at the University of California, Davis to calculate Estimated Breeding Values or EBVs. EBVs describe the relative genetic value of each member of a breeding population. EBVs are built on quantitative data (that which can be measured by a number). EBV profiles are commonly used in livestock in reference to specific, measurable traits and only recently used with companion animals.

Preliminary decisions to include dogs in the breeding colony take place during this phase. CFRs are notified of the preliminary decision and raisers will also receive a communication directly from the breeding department staff. At this time, raisers who live within a 75 mile radius of the San Rafael campus who are interested in becoming the dog's custodial home are invited to apply.

### **Phase D: Final Health Screening**

Dogs selected for breeding undergo a final round of health clearances. An additional set of x-rays are taken to examine shoulders and hocks for potential inherited orthopedic diseases. Another type of hip evaluation takes place called PennHIP (an acronym for "University of Pennsylvania Hip Improvement Program"). This is a diagnostic technique for evaluating the hips of dogs for laxity (looseness) which can cause degenerative joint disease. The PennHIP assessment consists of three radiographs taken from different angles, which are then analyzed in order to make an assessment.

Depending on breed and gender, specific DNA tests may also be used to further assess an individual dog. Once all tests results are received and evaluated the final decision is made for breeding selection and dogs are ready for placement into a custodial home.

### **Phase E: Placement**

Breeding department staff matches breeder dogs to custodian families in the same manner that instructors match guide dogs with handlers who are visually impaired. Staff get to know potential custodians during the application process and their goal is to create a lifelong placement. Custodians must reside within a 50-mile radius of the San Rafael campus. Puppy raisers of breeders are given special consideration to serve as the breeder custodian if they live within a 75-mile radius of San Rafael and can meet all other custodial

requirements. Raisers must complete the same process as all potential custodians due to differences in volunteer responsibilities and commitments from the puppy raising program.

GDB carefully reviews and thoroughly screens each potential custodial family's application and home environment in order to ensure comfortable, safe and secure homes for these valuable breeding stock dogs. Applicants are required to complete an on-campus dog management class that covers behavior, health care, grooming, and dog handling. The ultimate goal is to obtain the best possible home for each individual dog being placed.

Once placed, breeding stock dogs are required to be kept in peak physical condition. This includes daily exercise, grooming, flea control and formal obedience training. The dogs must sleep indoors and be treated as beloved members of the family. To ensure their safety, there is a requirement that breeder dogs are always kept on leash when out-of-doors and only allowed to run freely in a securely fenced area.

### **Phase T: Waiting for Training**

A decision to alter a dog can occur at any time during the breeder evaluation process. Once that decision is made the CFR, Training and Veterinary Departments are notified. The Veterinary staff schedule the alter surgery as soon as time is available. Once the dog has been altered and has recovered for surgery the Training Department will schedule the dog for the next available training string and the dog will begin receiving training phase numbers.

# CAREER CHANGE DOGS AND RETIRED GUIDES

All dogs bred by Guide Dogs for the Blind go on to do wonderful things, whether by becoming a guide dog, a breeder, a K9 Buddy, a service dog for another organization, or a beloved pet. They are wonderful ambassadors for the program, and make friends throughout the world for themselves and for GDB. Their gifts of love, companionship and service are invaluable in any situation.

## Career Change Guidelines

The following criteria will be used in career changing dogs:

- No puppy will be career changed without an evaluation by a GDB staff member
- Prior to being career changed, the CFR may develop a planned program of improvement
- Transfer to a different puppy raising home may be considered as an alternative to career change
- Developmental stage, sex, raiser ability, socialization opportunities, and health will be considered prior to a career change
- All puppies will be given every opportunity to succeed
- All career changes will be approved by the Canine Resources Manager, Puppy Raising Manager or the Vice President of Community Operations

Upon being career changed, some dogs will be identified as candidates to become a K9 Buddy or a dog that provides a service for people through one of GDB's partner organizations.

## K9 Buddy Program

The K9 Buddy Program matches specially selected dogs to become wonderful companions to children and young adults with visual impairment. A K9 Buddy can make a remarkable difference in any child's life by fostering a sense of caring, companionship and a sense of responsibility through the human/animal bond. A dog can contribute to sensory development, motivating a child to learn and enhancing self-esteem. K9 Buddy dogs come from Guide Dogs for the Blind's own colony, but are not qualified to work as mobility assistance dogs; K9 Buddies are not trained to perform a service and are not considered service dogs as defined by the ADA (January 2010). K9 Buddies are offered free-of-charge, as are working guide dogs.

Career change dogs identified as candidates for the K9 Buddy program are evaluated for the program prior to being offered to the puppy raiser for adoption. When there is a suitable application and the dog is a good match for the child, a new K9 Buddy team is formed. As with other placements, contact information for the puppy raisers is shared with the K9 Buddy family and communication is encouraged.

The K9 Buddy program may also connect the child/family with GDB's community of puppy raisers and other supporters. This connection is as beneficial for raisers and other constituents as it is for the child and their family.

All dogs placed as K9 Buddies are recognized at a subsequent campus graduation and the puppy raiser is invited to attend and participate in that event. The DVD and photos of the ceremony are available to the new K9 Buddy's puppy raisers. The K9 Buddy youth and family may or may not attend the graduation, often based on their place of residence.

K9 Buddies are generally placed in the ten states in which there are puppies being raised and the staff to support these programs.

## **Career Change to Service Dog Candidates**

Guide Dogs for the Blind places GDB career change dogs with a select number of non-profit organizations that have been evaluated and screened by GDB (for more information, see *Service Dog Placements* in the *Forms and Resources* section). These organizations will primarily consist of service dog organizations, but may also include other non-profit organizations such as agencies for people who are blind, canine search and rescue organizations, and other organizations that GDB believes enhance people's lives.

For dogs placed in puppy raising homes prior to July 1, 2015, GDB will make these placements only after the puppy raisers have agreed to do so.

For dogs placed after July 1, 2015, GDB will offer suitable career change dogs to these designated organizations for adoption prior to the puppy raisers being offered the option to adopt the dog. Though they vary in mission and size, these organizations all have training methods, veterinary care, and other practices that are consistent with GDB's expectations.

## **Placement of Retired Guides and Breeders**

In an effort to respect the love and commitment of all dog custodians, there are policies that guide the placement of retired guides and breeder dogs.

### **Retired Guides**

Working guide dogs retired prior to one year working with a client in the field:

- The most recent raiser has the first option to receive the dog as a pet.
- If this raiser declines to accept the dog personally, the client has the option to keep the dog or place the dog only with a close family member or a close friend.
- If both client and most recent raiser decline these options, the dog is placed by GDB using the same guidelines as when a dog is career changed in the puppy home or training program.

Working guide dogs retired after one or more years working with a client in the field:

- The client has the option to retain the dog or place as he or she chooses.
- If the client declines this option, the dog is placed by GDB using the same guidelines as when a dog is career changed in the puppy home or training program.

### **Health Check & Transportation Costs for Retiring Guides Returning to their Puppy Raisers**

One of the greatest gifts a puppy raiser can give is to provide a loving home to the guide dog they raised as a puppy when it is retired. In order to facilitate these placements, GDB will provide a complete veterinary exam of the dog and, as possible, assist with the logistics of the transport of the dog to its “retirement home.”

In the case of a graduate and puppy raiser who are in contact at the time of the guide dog’s retirement and arranging the adoption themselves (and assuming the dog will not be coming to either campus), GDB will pay for a comprehensive veterinary exam at a vet clinic local to either the adopter or graduate, so that the puppy raiser has up-to-date information on the dog’s health. Transportation will then be arranged by the puppy raiser and the graduate, at their own expense. If additional logistical help is necessary, GDB will assist with these arrangements to the greatest extent possible.

If the puppy raiser and the graduate are not in contact and the dog is returned to a GDB campus for placement, the dog will receive a thorough veterinary examination by one of the GDB veterinarians. Upon notification of retirement, if the puppy raiser wishes to adopt the dog, staff will assist in making transportation arrangements for the dog. While staff will make every effort to find the most cost- and time-efficient way home (e.g. puppy truck), it will be the puppy raiser’s responsibility to pay for the cost of transportation, if necessary.

### **Retired Breeding Stock**

When a breeder is retired from that role, there are different paths they may take depending on their health, temperament and length of time in the breeder custodian home. They are as follows:

- The most recent breeder custodian has the first option to receive the dog as a pet.
- If the most recent breeder custodian does not wish to keep the dog personally, the most recent puppy raiser has the next choice to receive the dog personally.
- If the dog has had more than two custodians (puppy raiser or breeder custodian) and neither of the previous two wish to keep the dog personally, other previous custodians (puppy raiser or breeder custodian) are offered the dog in reverse order. Example of a dog that’s had four custodians: 4th custodian = 1st choice, 3rd custodian = 2nd choice, 2nd custodian = 3rd choice, 1st custodian = 4th choice.
- If no custodial volunteer wishes to keep the dog personally, puppy raisers or breeder custodians have the option of placing a retired breeder dog with a close family member or a close friend in the order described above.
- GDB has the discretion to make exceptions to the above placement guidelines.

Exceptions may include but are not limited to the following:

- dog’s temperament
- dog’s health
- dog’s compatibility with people and pets in the custodial or adopter home
- dog’s possible effect on a GDB puppy in the home
- instances of abuse or neglect in a home
- incidents of dogs running loose at the home
- questions regarding the raiser or breeder custodian’s ability to effectively care and manage the dog
- inadequate fencing or other housing needs

- previous agreements between transfer homes, leaders, and CFR's
  - other determinations by GDB in consideration for the well-being of the dog and/or the household
- Breeder dogs that have been in a breeder custodian home for less than a year may be considered for guide dog training or placed as guides or K9 Buddies. For dogs released in these stages of the program, the order of consideration for a volunteer to adopt the dog will be the same as indicated above.

## Who Receives Career Change Dogs?

- For dogs that are considered to be healthy manageable companions, GDB assesses the dog to determine if the dog is a possible K9 Buddy or service dog candidate (depending on the date of placement; see *Career Change to Service Dog Candidates* above). If the decision is that the dog will be offered in one of these capacities, the puppy raiser is notified.
- If the dog is available for adoption, the most recent puppy raiser has the first option to adopt the dog as a pet.
- If the most recent raiser does not wish to keep the dog personally, the previous raiser has the next choice to adopt the dog personally.
- If the dog has had more than two raisers and neither of the previous two wish to keep the dog personally, other previous raisers are offered the dog in the reverse order that they raised. Example of a dog that's had four raisers: 4<sup>th</sup> raiser = 1<sup>st</sup> choice, 3<sup>rd</sup> raiser = 2<sup>nd</sup> choice, 2<sup>nd</sup> raiser = 3<sup>rd</sup> choice, 1<sup>st</sup> raiser = 4<sup>th</sup> choice.
- If no raiser wishes to keep the dog personally, raisers have the option of placing a career change dog only with a close family member or a close friend and in the order described above (see further guidelines for placing with a close friend or family member - below), going in the same order as described above.
- As discussed above, GDB has the discretion to make exceptions to the above placement guidelines.

## Puppy Raiser Adoption of a Career Change Dog

How does a puppy raiser decide to keep a dog they raised?

Raisers have a great deal of attachment to the puppies that they loved, cared for, and trained, often watching them grow from cute, cuddly puppies into mature dogs. As a result of these heartfelt emotions, a raiser may feel drawn to taking a career change dog back even if adopting the dog does not really suit their personal situation. GDB staff understands a raiser's feelings of love and responsibility to the dog yet place no responsibility on raisers to keep a dog that they have raised. Unless a raiser is sure that they can provide a lifetime quality home for a dog, GDB prefers to place the dog through its Dog Placement program (see *GDB's Dog Placement Program* below).

## Things to Consider Prior to Adopting a Career Change Dog

- Is there a sense of obligation to adopt the dog?
- The dog may be a larger size or have different behaviors than when it entered training.

- Is this the best possible home for this dog?
- Will the dog get enough stimulation (playtime, exercise)?
- Does the entire family agree on adoption?
- For youth raisers: do the parents want the dog as well? Is the youth going to college soon or moving out on their own? What are the plans for the dog if this is the case?
- Will the dog get along well with all family members: adults, small children and pets?
- If there are other dogs - a GDB puppy, other career change dogs, or pets - will each animal get sufficient individual love and care?
- Can the puppy raiser afford the food and veterinary care of a large-breed dog?
- Is the yard or dog run securely fenced and at least 5 feet in height?
- If the home has a pool, is it safely fenced?
- Will the dog have adequate shelter from both the rain and sun?
- Will the dog be inside the house (at least at night)?
- How much time will the dog be alone?
- If renting, does the landlord approve?

If any of the preceding questions cause doubts, it might be best to let GDB place the dog.

### **Raisers Who Decide to Adopt a Career Change Dog as a Pet**

- GDB legally transfers the dog to the raiser after the *Agreement Confirming Gift of Dog* contract has been completed
- Any transportation costs are paid by the raiser
- With the exception of a small number of pre-approved cases, veterinary and all other expenses are the responsibility of the raiser
- If at any time the adopter cannot keep the dog, the adopter should notify and return the dog to GDB
- If at any time in the dog's life it transfers to a new home, please complete and return to GDB a *Supplemental Dog Transfer Form* (included with the adoption packet)
- Raisers are not allowed to sell career change dogs
- If concerns about a dog's behavior or health arise, please contact GDB Dog Placement program staff

### **Raiser Placement of a Career Change Dog**

If a raiser decides to not personally keep the dog, they also have the option to place the dog. In these cases, the puppy raiser may only place the dog with a close friend or close family member. GDB has found that the placements of dogs by raisers with people whom they do not know extremely well are often not successful. If a raiser cannot keep a career change dog as their own or place the dog with a very trusted person, GDB will happily place the dog.

GDB takes great care, reinforced by years of experience, in the placement of career change dogs. GDB has two Dog Placement offices, one in California and one in Oregon, that are staffed by professionally trained people whose sole jobs are to screen, select, and educate prospective homes. GDB offers not only these preliminary services but also follow-up services to ensure that the dog is happy in the new home.



## Things for the Puppy Raiser to Consider Prior to a Close Friend or Close Family Member Placement

- Does the dog have temperament, management, or behavior concerns that make it a challenging candidate for placement?
- If the dog has problems in the adopters' home, can the puppy raiser offer resources to help work through the problem?
- If the dog does not work out in its new home, is the puppy raiser willing to take it back or return to GDB?
- Would this dog be better placed by GDB's experienced Dog Placement staff?

## Things for the Puppy Raiser to Consider about the Prospective Home

- Are the prospective adopters receptive to and understand how to manage any potential negative behaviors and/or health problems?
- Does everyone in the home want the dog?
- Is the potential adopter making a decision on impulse or as a surprise gift for someone else? This is not a good way to make such an important decision.
- Will the dog get along well with all family members (adults, small children, pets/livestock)?
- Is anyone in the home allergic to dogs?
- What is the prospective adopter's motivation in wanting this dog as a pet?
- Are they interested in this dog because they really know and like it?
- Have they spent any substantial amount of time with the dog?
- Do they only want the dog because he is a "good deal?"
- Do they only want the dog as a favor?
- Do they only want the dog because it has come from Guide Dogs for the Blind?
- Do they understand that all dogs have dog behaviors, good and bad, even dogs from GDB?
- Do they understand all the responsibilities involved in providing a lifetime, loving home?
- Are all their current pets well cared for, including grooming, housing, and vaccinations?
- Have they had dogs in the past? What became of these dogs?

These factors can often best predict a dog's happiness in a new home.

Once a raiser can confidently recommend a prospective close friend or family member, the puppy raiser should refer to the earlier section *Things to Consider Prior to Adopting a Career Change Dog*. In addition to these considerations, is the close friend or close family member able and willing to obtain and use a crate? Are they willing to take the dog through obedience classes or private training to better understand and manage the dog? Are they familiar with the grooming needs of this breed? Are they willing to provide flea control and heartworm preventative? And lastly, are they planning to move in the near future? If there are any concerns about the success of the proposed placement, please let GDB select a home instead.

## Once Satisfied with a Particular Close Friend or Close Family Member Placement

- Introduce the dog to the adopters at their home
- Make sure that no family members are intimidated by the dog
- Make sure that all family members are gentle and kind, yet consistent
- Make sure that there are no possible conflicts with other pets, inside and outside the home
- Double check the yard for safety and security

### If all goes well...

- Any transportation costs to transport the dog to the new home are the responsibility of the puppy raiser or the adopters.
- With the exception of a small number of pre-approved cases, veterinary and all other expenses are the responsibility of the adopters.
- If questions arise in the new home, please ask the adopters to contact the GDB Dog Placement program for a consultation.
- If it doesn't work out with the adopters, have them contact the puppy raiser or GDB directly to return the dog.

## GDB's Dog Placement Program

The GDB Dog Placement staff individually screen and select a home for each dog. GDB receives countless inquiries each year from people interested in receiving a career change dog.

- Potential homes are screened to determine their suitability to adopt a career change dog, including a home visit/fence check.
- Potential adopters must come to GDB to meet the available dogs.
- Individual dogs are matched to individual homes.
- Dog Placement staff personally interview and introduce dogs to their potential adopters.
- GDB charges an adoption fee of \$750.
- GDB provides follow-up information: booklets and training references.
- GDB welcomes back any dog that is not compatible with the new home.

It is difficult for raisers when they, or a close friend or family member, are not able to provide a home for a career change dog. When this happens, the dog's placement becomes the responsibility of GDB's Dog Placement program. GDB spends a great amount of time, effort, and love with each adoption.

Members of the public express interest in adopting a GDB career change dog by filling out and submitting a Career Change Application. Adoption is generally only open to those living in the same states in which GDB has the puppy raising program. After careful review, only those individuals who qualify are kept on file. Acceptable applications are entered into GDB's computer database.

GDB Dog Placement (DP) has a lot of information on each dog: the puppy history (monthly reports, the *Final Report*, *Fun Things About my Puppy*, CFR reports, etc.); training and

health information; and release reason. If relevant, those involved in the formal training of the dog at GDB are also consulted for their first-hand knowledge of the dog. All of this information gives GDB a basic profile of the type of home and handler (retired couple, family with young children, a home with or without other pets, an experienced dog person, etc.) that would match best with a particular dog.

By searching the available applications in the database, GDB develops a list of potential matches. Then, considering the dog's strengths and weaknesses, DP staff spends hours reviewing the applications and talking on the phone with several potential adopters to find a home that seems best suited for a particular dog. Once GDB feels there is a possible match, the potential adopter is notified of an available dog. The dog is described in detail, both the positives and negatives. It is very important that GDB is straightforward about the dog. GDB's success depends on giving full disclosure on a dog to avoid surprises in the adoptive home.

If the potential adopter is interested, the individual and/or family are required to meet the dog on campus. During this 1-2 hour visit and showing of the dog, DP staff discusses dog behavior, demonstrates training techniques/tools, and discusses the need to set limits as well as praise the dog. GDB encourages the whole family to participate, especially if there are young children or other pet dogs in the household.

Not all meetings end in an adoption. Sometimes the adopter is just not a match for the dog, and the process begins again.

It takes time to find the right match. It is never the case of just assigning a dog to the next applicant on the list. As dogs wait for new homes, most adjust well to life in the kennels, continue to mature and learn from their assigned Canine Welfare Training Technician who continues to groom, train, and exercise them.

When it appears that there might be a likely match between adopter and dog, a mandatory fence check is done prior to placement. This check provides GDB with an opportunity to observe the home environment. Fence checks are done by GDB staff, leaders or volunteers.

GDB's primary goal in placing a dog is with a family or person who will provide a lifetime of love, care, and companionship. Since these dogs were raised to enjoy active involvement with their people, GDB encourages applications from those who want dogs for agility, obedience, tracking, pet facilitated therapy, or other disciplines and hobbies.

## **Returning a Career Change Dog to GDB**

Guide Dogs for the Blind will gladly take back any dog that it has whelped or raised. As would any reputable breeder, GDB feels responsible for the welfare of all of its dogs. GDB will provide transportation for the dog's return to us. This is the case for dogs adopted by puppy raisers and clients, outside adopters or other organizations.

If a volunteer ever has doubts about keeping a career change dog of their own, or hears of any GDB dog adopter that is no longer able to care for their dog, for whatever reason, they are encouraged to notify GDB Dog Placement staff immediately.