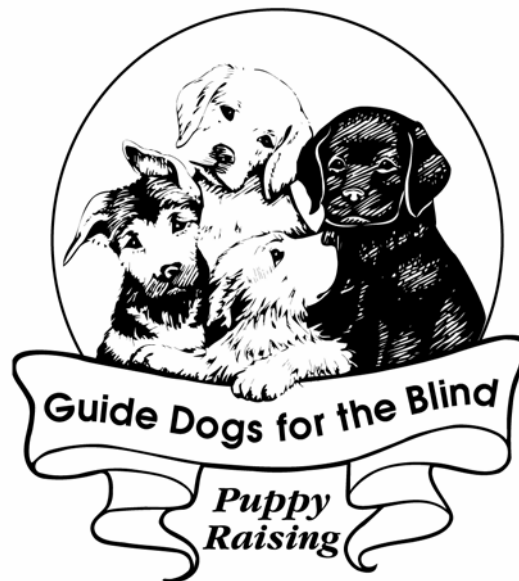




RECALL FOR TRAINING PHASE DESCRIPTIONS



Where your dog goes next.....

INTRODUCTION - TRAINING PHASES

In an effort to provide raisers and leaders with more knowledge about what the dogs-in-training do after they return to one of our campuses, we will provide weekly reports to each puppy raising club. These reports will tell the training phase of each dog. There are ten phases of training.

Attached are descriptions of activities included in each phase. By tracking the dog that you raised by his phase number and by then referring to the matching phase narrative, you can better understand our training process and your individual dog's role in it.

There is no clear defining line between each phase as there is in the case of a grade schooler who "graduates" from grade two to grade three. Guide Dog training is a seamless process in which a dog progresses at its own pace, slowly transitioning from one phase to the other. The work at each phase level builds upon the skills learned in previous ones.

Each phase is generally two to three weeks in lengths. Some dogs may advance through phases more quickly than others, but speed may not be any indicator of likelihood of eventual graduation. It is also true that a dog that seems to spend too much time in a phase may be only working on perfecting a single task before moving forward. Raisers, please do not feel disappointed if progress seems slow. Likewise, do not become too eager if progress seems quick.

Raisers should also be cautioned against plotting out on a calendar an anticipated graduation date. Dogs are usually in training for four to five months, but some dogs may stay in training for nine months or more. If a dog stays a long time in training, don't be disappointed. It may not mean that we do not like the dog; it may mean that we like him very much! In recent years, Guide Dogs has made changes in our training staffing, schedules, and protocols that allow us to spend more time developing each dog. We try our best to give each dog all the love, care, and training that it needs to become a Guide Dog prospect.

The guide dog of today needs to be *Superdog* compared to the guide dog of the past. In the last few decades, since the founding of Guide Dogs for the Blind, the world has become an increasingly confusing environment for guide dogs. They carry the responsibility for the safety not just of themselves but for their blind or visually impaired partner as well. Cars are more dangerous (faster and quieter); noise has increased (construction equipment, concerts, movie theaters); intersections are varied with a thousand different designs of intersecting paths, slopes, and angles. Take a walk on a busy city street and study it from the perspective of a guide dog needing to travel it safely, calmly and confidently. Quite amazing, isn't it?

The instructors work hard to prepare each guide candidate for the challenges of this new world. Unfortunately, dogs that may have been ideal guides in the more slowly paced, less confusing world of not long ago might be career changed today. Guide Dogs believes that we are breeding better dogs than ever, that we are screening them better for health and temperament, and that raisers and staff are working harder...all in an attempt to keep up with a world that seems to getting more complex.

In the phase descriptions that follow, we have shared information with you that we never have before this project's inception. We talk about many of the training exercises and commands that are not taught in the raiser homes. The success of this new reporting method and of our dogs depends upon all raisers supporting our efforts by *not* teaching these guidework commands or exercises in their homes. Raisers who may attempt to give their dogs "a head start" by teaching the guidework discussed in this package are, in fact, very negatively impacting the dog's potential to become a guide. Improperly, inconsistently, or untimely taught guide commands or exercises will damage a dog's chance to become a guide. Please do *not* try to teach your puppy the techniques we discuss in this package, please only teach the ones discussed in your Guide Dog Puppy Manual.

At certain times a dogs' weekly training report may reflect a phase that differs from their previous weeks report. Passing a dog back does not necessarily reflect concerns, but always reflects that we continue to see positive traits in the dog. One reason for this occurring is because each string of dogs are in various stages of training, the phase of a dog who is transferred from one string to another, which can occur for several reasons, will change. For example, a dog who is in phase ten, and considered "class ready", is not selected for class. This dog will subsequently be passed back and will be available for placement in the next class. Since the string that this dog has been passed to will be in a different phase, probably a lower phase, the dog will also be formally documented as being in the lower phase, even though they have technically completed phase ten and is considered "class ready".

On weekly Phase Reports you will also see a notation if your dog is on "breeding watch." If the dog is on "breeding watch," we are still considering it as a breeder. If a dog is no longer on "breeding watch," it will be neutered if that procedure has not already been done while in the raiser home.

Some dogs, unfortunately, do not go on to become either guides or breeders. These dogs are what we call career change dogs. Near the end of this package you will see several articles on career change dogs that will help you better understand your possible options on receiving the dog back. You'll also learn how Guide Dogs takes every effort to find loving, caring homes for those dogs we place.

Guide Dogs for the Blind has been very successful for many, many years. Our success is dependent upon all those many successes that you have at home - teaching your puppy to

not relieve in the house, to only relieve on command, to respond to every obedience command, to be unafraid of distractions in your community, and to love and trust people.

Dogs can be career changed for many factors not in a raiser's control, including a dog's health, temperament, or guidework skills. A raiser's success should be measured by the amount of love, effort, and time spent with a puppy. If you worked your hardest and did your best, you should be proud of both yourself and your puppy. We are!

PHASE 1 OF FORMAL GUIDE DOG TRAINING

Week 0

Before formal training begins, the new dog is introduced to the Guide Dog kennels, campus walks and the formal training program.

The first step for each dog during this important transitional period is receiving a physical exam, which is usually performed by a Canine Welfare Technician (CWT). They thoroughly check each dog from head to tail and check the nose, teeth, eyes, ears, coat, skin and feet. Any ailments, abnormalities or concerns are noted by the attending CWT and are brought to the attention of the Veterinary staff. Most dogs that enter training are in excellent condition, while some will require medication for minor ailments such as an ear infections or conjunctivitis.

Within the first week on campus:

- ✓ A staff veterinarian x-rays each dog's hips.
- ✓ A staff veterinarian will examine any abnormality noted during the physical
- ✓ An eye specialist formally checks each dog's eyes.
- ✓ Gets an accurate weight

During this initial examination each dog also receives vaccines for:

- ✓ Distemper
- ✓ Hepatitis
- ✓ Parvovirus
- ✓ Parainfluenza
- ✓ Bordatella
- ✓ Rabies

After the hip x-ray and eye check are completed, some dogs will be put on the breeding "watch list." All others still intact will be neutered or spayed. Those dogs being considered for the Breeding Colony, but end up not selected will be altered later, once the Training and Breeding departments have evaluated them.

When the physical examinations have been completed, each dog is formally assigned to a string and a specific training kennel. A string consists of approximately 35 - 55 dogs in San Rafael and 20 - 25 dogs in Oregon. This count depends on the number of students expected to enter class training following the completion of the string's training, which takes approximately five months. Most strings are overseen by five instructors and four to five Canine Welfare Technicians in San Rafael and three instructors and two CWTs in Oregon.

Before formal obedience training begins, each dog's personality and controllability are evaluated to prepare instructors in how to motivate and teach each dog most effectively.

Phase one normally coincides with the team of Instructors returning from a graduate follow up trip, after they have completed a class. Until the team is back, the CWTs and the float instructor staff care for the new dogs by:

- ✓ taking them for walks on campus
- ✓ integrating the dogs into community run play sessions
- ✓ matching roommates in the kennel to ensure happy pairs that play well together
- ✓ daily grooming
- ✓ administering any medication
- ✓ ensuring that the dogs are eating well
- ✓ human and dog interactive play sessions
- ✓ providing kennel enrichment activities

Kennel enrichment is anything that stimulates the senses and decreases stress in a kennel environment. The Canine Welfare Technicians' primary focus is to care and provide kennel enrichment for the dogs in the kennel. Some enrichment takes place daily for every dog, while other activities are done intermittently, while other activities are targeted towards specific dogs (stressed dogs, boarding and retired guides, career changes, breeding stock waiting for homes). Kennel enrichment activities are continuously evolving and the CWT staff is continually coming up with ways to entertain and stimulate your puppies.

Enrichment activities consist of the following variety:

- ✓ Bones and chewable toys
- ✓ Food stuffed Kongs and ice cubes
- ✓ Hanging toys with or without food in them
- ✓ Plush and squeaky toys - these toys are closely monitored and are not recommended to our raisers or graduates
- ✓ Interactive toys
- ✓ Baby pools filled with water or a toy put in them
- ✓ Playground equipment
- ✓ Scents: vanilla, peppermint, anise, lemon, almond, etc sprayed in the kennel on the ground
- ✓ Bubbles
- ✓ Mirrors
- ✓ Wind catchers
- ✓ Sound Machines
- ✓ Music
- ✓ Wellness room: T-Touch, massage, and Reiki
- ✓ Behavior Training for dogs that need additional socialization or for career changes or breeders waiting for placement.

- ✓ Exercise: walks, treadmill, yards
- ✓ Pilates
- ✓ Cuddle Time

Training department staff is carefully observing each new arriving string of dogs in order to make sure that each dog is making as smooth an adjustment to the kennels as possible.

Dogs can receive additional:

- ✓ Kennel enrichment programs
- ✓ Agility programs
- ✓ Play sessions in community run
- ✓ Frequent walks on campus
- ✓ Consistent, supervised, time in the Training department office
- ✓ Nights spent supervised in the dormitory
- ✓ Any specialized programs specific to the needs of that dog (vet care, extra time in the office, etc.)

PHASE 2 OF FORMAL GUIDE DOG TRAINING

Approximately Weeks 1-2

Formal Training Begins Using "The Balanced Education System of Training Guide Dogs™"
(BEST Guide Dogs™)

Food Reward and Clicker Techniques

The desired goal of adopting food reward techniques into formal training was to discover a more effective means to reward and motivate dogs to work in general. With the working environments for guide dogs becoming increasingly more stressful, any means of creating a more positive attitude towards guide dog work was sought after.

After several successful food reward trials we found that dogs in training were demonstrating higher levels of confidence in work and graduates were experiencing quick and encouraging results with using food as a supplement to praise.

Following 4 years of success using food rewards GDB has trialed and successfully adopted Clicker Training Techniques into all aspects of formal training. Through 2005 and 2006 all instructor staff was educated and coached in applying clicker techniques in string training. An ongoing professional Clicker Training consultant continues to be utilized as techniques are expanded and modified to best suit the goals in guide dog training.

During the first week of training lots of time is spent with each dog teaching them collar response and while using clicker techniques.

NOTE: Puppy Raisers should not use a clicker when working with their puppies. This way their pups go into training with a 'clean slate' as far as clicker associations.

Obedience and Distraction Training

Primary focus is on collar response and responses to praise. These are the communication tools for training; the collar cues the dog's body and the praise motivates the dog to work. Martingale collars are used with all dogs starting training. Dogs requiring firmer collar corrections when distracted also wear a slip training collar, which is used when needed.

Formality in Obedience Commands is introduced:

"Sit," "Down," "Heel" (formal recall) and "Stay" are introduced as precise positions in relation to the handler. As a guide dog these precise positions are important so the dog does not interfere with or disorient their blind handler. "Come" (informal recall) is worked on leash in a variety of areas and off leash in small-enclosed areas, progressing to off leash in the community runs. Precise "Heel" position while handler is moving is introduced at the same time the dog is learning to walk ahead of the handler when in harness.

Once dogs show an understanding of basic obedience work, distractions are introduced to help teach focus and concentration towards a job. Distractions include other dogs, food, overly friendly people, scents, etc. If a dog demonstrates poor responses to motivation or collar cues, it will be placed on programs to improve their responses. Special programs

include: different types of play sessions to evaluate the type of handler interaction the dog responds to best, extra time with Instructor (relaxing time) to develop a closer relationship and extra obedience sessions without distractions to improve collar response.

Food Refusal

All dogs go through extensive and specialized training in how to accept food reward and how to refuse food in all other situations. This specialized Food Protocol training was designed to handle the delicate challenge of using food in training for a future guide dog and ensure that no negative behaviors will result around food for a future blind handler.

Body Work

Development of suitable responses to in depth grooming, pilling, bathing, ear cleaning, teeth cleaning, feeding, playing with a visually impaired handler begin. Body handling responses are evaluated and programs developed to improve issues.

Guidework Training

Introduction to wearing the harness:

Calm introduction being harnessed and standing with it on, then walking around in harness and wearing it in relaxed settings. Dogs with sensitivity to wearing the harness are put on a TTouch program and wear only the body part until they accept it. Dogs with extreme sensitivity are put on specialized socialization programs for the harness sensitivity.

Treadmill Training

Designed to physically train dogs in the mechanics of a rhythmic gait/speed and maintenance of that gait while leading in harness. The appropriate pace and speed are also identified for each individual dog during treadmill training. All dogs receive a very systematic and careful introduction to walking on the treadmill to ensure they are not only safe while using it but enjoy their time on the treadmill. The introduction techniques are so successful that it's common to see dogs trying to get on the treadmill before their turn while waiting for only their second session.

NOTE: Puppy Raisers should never put their pups on treadmills or escalators.

Dogs in treadmill training are introduced to the "Forward," "Halt," and "Hopp-Up" commands while learning to pull into harness with a straight body position.

Dogs receive 3 treadmill sessions before beginning harness workouts downtown with their instructors.

Physical Agility Development

Dogs are introduced to low height agility obstacles to promote confidence on unusual surfaces and develop coordination for stair and escalator work. Methods

used to teach the dogs careful placement of their feet using caution on the obstacles at slow speeds (very different from methods of teaching pet dogs agility). Coordination training in how to physically back up is introduced at this time and will continue for several weeks to prepare dogs for future traffic avoidance training. In traffic avoidance, dogs must back up in a straight line while facing the oncoming vehicle. This Back-up training program teaches dogs the mechanics of backing up in a very positive and fun way.

Obstacle Course

Dogs are walked, on leash, through gradually more challenging clearance courses with obstacles. Leash cues are used by Instructor to move in the desired way a finished guide would move. Dogs are encouraged to walk slightly ahead of Instructor. Courses are designed so that new dogs will not need to stop, but keep moving to work the safe path out of the course.

PHASE 3 OF FORMAL GUIDE DOG TRAINING

Approximately Weeks 3 & 4

"The Balanced Education System of Training Guide Dogs™"(BEST Guide Dogs™)

Obedience and Distraction training

Formality in obedience responses continues:

"Sit", "Down", "Heel" (formal recall), and "Stay" are more intensively trained. More precise positioning next to the handler is expected, so that the dog will not interfere with or disorient a blind handler. "Come" (informal recall) response continues on leash and in progressively larger enclosed areas of both cement and grass off-leash. Precise "Heel" position while handler is moving is introduced and when in harness dog learning to walk ahead of the handler.

"Over Here" is introduced. Response is to change sides, behind handler's back, to the instructor's opposite side. This is to make it easier for a blind handler to maneuver the dog safely through heavy doors on the dog's side, revolving doors, store turnstiles, etc.

General collar response and praise response:

More difficult distractions are introduced. Various dog breeds, people-food, very solicitous people, unusual scents. Specialized programs continue: kennel enrichment, harness socialization, etc.

Body work:

Responses to detailed grooming, pilling, bathing, ear cleaning, teeth cleaning, feeding, playing, in manners done by a visually impaired handler. Rolling dog over for care and inspection in a variety of environmental situations. Body handling responses continue to be developed and improved.

Canine Welfare Technicians continue to focus on kennel enrichment activities, relaxing time in community run, grooming and campus walks.

Guidework Training BEST Guide Dogs™

Wearing the harness:

Dogs are comfortable wearing and working in the physical harness. Dogs having sensitivity to wearing the harness are on specialized programs. Individual dogs not improving in the wearing of a harness would be of concern.

Pattern Training

Pattern Training is a method of introducing guidework behaviors to the young dog in a very positive manner.

The instructor causes the correct guiding behavior to happen by cueing the dog before any mistakes are made. Pattern Training immediately introduces the young dog to all guidework responses without taking confidence away from the dog.

The dog is prevented from making any errors while experiencing all of the basic guidework mechanics. In this way the instructor keeps all guidework related learning very upbeat for the dog.

Obedience commands are used separately from guidework commands to regain attention on the instructor. Once the dog is again attentive, the pattern training of guidework behavior resumes.

Pattern training lasts for approximately 4 weeks. During that time, techniques gradually progress to more "standard" training, which gives the guide dog more freedom to make errors.

During Pattern Training, dogs can be worked in a variety of environments, even challenging work areas, because the instructor causes the right responses to happen. Only extremely advanced work areas are avoided, such as those with crowds of pedestrians and stressful environments.

Dogs are being introduced to and learning these guidework behaviors:

- ✓ Stopping at streets, regardless of the type of curb or wheelchair ramp
- ✓ Clearing for the handler on the right side
- ✓ Clearing for the handler on the left side
- ✓ Clearing for the handler above the dog's head
- ✓ Crossing streets in a straight line or adjusting that line to reach the up curb on the other side. [Dogs also receive targeting training in how to seek out the up curb by placing their front feet on that curb]
- ✓ Moving forward at a consistent pace on the command "Forward"
- ✓ Resuming that consistent pace on the command "Hopp-Up" or moving closer to a stopping point
- ✓ Stopping and standing stationary on the command "Halt"
- ✓ Leading the handler in a 90 degree turn to the right and pick up the new travel line on "Right"
- ✓ Leading the handler in a 90 degree turn to the left and pick up the new travel line on "Left"
- ✓ To ease off on the amount of pull into the harness on the command "Steady"

Physical Agility Programs Continue as in Phase 2.

Obstacle Course Progression:

Dogs continue to be walked through the course on leash if they are not ready to work it in harness. Some dogs progress to guiding through clearance course with obstacles, still being leash cued by Instructor to move in the desired way a finished guide would move. Course design becomes more difficult, requiring more angled clearance moves by the dogs but not requiring a stop.

Socialization Training:

- ✓ Dogs are introduced to riding in the training van crates. A separate configuration of crates, just like in the vans is located in the kennel complex. All dogs are introduced to jumping in and out of this "mock" crate set before being put in an actual training van. Dogs then experience loading and unloading from crates in the van, riding comfortably and quietly, and waiting quietly in the van for their turn at a training route.
- ✓ Dogs may be identified during this Phase for specialized socialization programs for fears or distraction. (Training Supervisor makes those decisions)
- ✓ Food protocol training continues - teaching how to avoid and refuse food on the ground or offered by others.

PHASE 4 OF FORMAL GUIDE DOG TRAINING

Approximately Weeks 5 & 6

"The Balanced Education System of Training Guide Dogs™"(BEST Guide Dogs™)

Obedience and Distraction Training

Continued development of collar and praise responses:

Work on development of reliable responses in various environments (formal, informal and during guidework). Progression is to the extent where minimal repeat commands or leash cues are necessary. Instructor is beginning to act and handle dog as a visually impaired person would.

Difficult Distractions

Continue as in Phase 3.

Body handling responses

Continue as in Phase 3 to develop consistent response and improvement where necessary.

Guidework Training

Dogs are comfortable wearing and working in the physical harness. Individual dogs still having problems wearing a harness would be of concern, but still kept on socialization programs to improve behavior.

Pattern Training Progression

Instructors are now allowing the dog more freedom to make decisions and to make some mistakes. When errors begin to occur, instructors will show the dog the correct answer before they get confused. Basic level guidework responses are being directed to the dog as a blind handler would.

The dog is experiencing all guidework behaviors with the instructor still patterning any advanced responses.

Progression with guidework responses to the extent that each dog can maintain a straight line of travel with the Instructor under blindfold and respond to each command consistently with minimal leash gestures or leash cues. Introductions to maintaining a line of travel in spite of a visually impaired handler's natural body movements. Focus on developing the working pace and pull that will be the final pace and pull for client.

Responsible lead lessons for each dog occurs at the end of the of pattern training. Responsibility in work responses is gradually increased and tested. They are now

learning how to pull more responsibly and consistently into the harness chest piece on command and maintain a straight line of travel while moving. Appropriate level of pull and pace is established for each individual dog.

Physical Agility Programs

Continue as in Phase 3.

Obstacle Course Progression

Dogs are now guiding in harness through clearance course with obstacles still being leash cued, if necessary, to move in the desired way a finished guide would move. Course design becomes more difficult, requiring more angled clearance moves by the dogs. Clearances requiring a stop are introduced.

CWTs continue to focus on kennel enrichment, relaxing time in community run, grooming and campus walks.

PHASE 5 OF FORMAL GUIDE DOG TRAINING

Approximately Week 7

"The Balanced Education System of Training Guide Dogs™ "(BEST Guide Dogs™)

Notable Accomplishment: Preliminary Obedience Testing

Responses to "Sit", "Down", "Heel", "Come", "Stay" are demonstrated to a Training Supervisor and expected to be understood, fairly consistent and generally gained with single commands.

Command responses are documented. Heavy distraction offered during exercises.

Demonstration of food refusal required.

General ease of body handling is demonstrated.

Body Work

Body handling responses continue for consistent response and improvement where necessary. New Handlers added to body handling experiences.

Guidework Training:

Formal Harness Training:

Dogs now have full freedom to make decisions and some mistakes with normal guidework responses. When errors begin to occur, instructors will continue to show the dog the correct answer before they get confused. The instructor will still pattern challenging and advanced guiding decisions and responses.

Difficult travel line problems and open parking lot areas are worked to further establish responsible line stability.

Challenging animal and food distractions are set up for new area guidework routes.

Instructors practice short blindfold sessions with their dogs, having a teammate spot them for safety. This gives them information regarding what guidework behaviors are strong and weak in an individual dog, allowing them to focus on improving those weaker areas.

Notable Accomplishment - Preliminary Blindfold Testing

Instructor under blindfold works dog on an urban/suburban area route, a distance of approximately 14 blocks. Passing requirements are for dog to display an

understanding of safe guidework skills and focus on work and handler. Obedience exercises are done at some point on route, usually when distraction is present.

Dogs passing Preliminary Blindfold testing will be able to progress to Advanced Guidework Training. Dogs not passing receive further training and are re-tested when ready.

Physical Agility Programs

Continue as in Phase 4.

Obstacle Course Progression

Dogs are guiding through more challenging clearance courses as more finished guides. Course designs become increasingly difficult, requiring development of problem solving skills and Intelligent Disobedience responses.

Socialization Training

Extra socialization assignments are given to individual dogs needing them. Areas that may require additional socialization are harness or surface sensitive dogs and/or dogs with a higher stress levels in the kennel

Canine Welfare Technicians focus on extra relaxing times for all dogs during this progressively more stressful learning stage of formal guide dog training.

Tools used are community running, kennel enrichment programs, grooming, individual play sessions, office time at desks of staff and relaxing campus walks.

PHASE 6 OF FORMAL GUIDE DOG TRAINING

Approximately Week 8

"The Balanced Education System of Training Guide Dogs™ " (BEST Guide Dogs™)

Obedience and Distraction Training

Continued development and consistent response in various environments

- ✓ Formal Exercises
- ✓ Informal Exercises

Difficult Distractions

New animal and common dog interest distractions sought out, response evaluated. Individual distractions that interest each individual dog is worked on separately (i.e. squirrels for some, birds for others). New handlers and instructors are introduced to continue development and monitor consistent responses in various environments (formal, informal and during guidework).

Body Handling

New handlers added to body handling experiences. Any problems still present would be of great concern for success as a guide.

Guidework Training

Routes continue in suburban areas and progress to downtown urban areas. Focus on improving any response weaknesses noted at preliminary blindfold testing. Major weaknesses have individual programs developed, including transferring dog to another string from more training time.

Socialization Programs

Individual dogs may be identified as demonstrating need for specialized socialization programs for fear reactions observed, as training becomes more difficult. (Training Supervisor decisions)

ADVANCED HARNESS TRAINING BEGINS

Obstacle Course Progression - Intelligent Disobedience Training Begins

Advanced clearance problems are first introduced to the dogs on campus in the obstacle course, then sought out on real environment routes. Situations are set up to introduce disobeying the handler for the sake of safety.

Socialization Training

Canine Community Programs
June 2007

CWTs continue to focus on kennel enrichment, relaxing time in community run, grooming and campus walks during the progressively more stressful stages of formal guide dog training.

PHASE 7 OF FORMAL GUIDE DOG TRAINING

Approximately Weeks 9 & 10

"The Balanced Education System of Training Guide Dogs™ "(BEST Guide Dogs™)

Obedience and Distraction Training

Continued development and consistent responses in various environments (formal, informal and during guidework) and with new handlers.

Advanced Guidework Training

Suburban and downtown urban areas with challenging environments

Notable Accomplishment -Traffic Conditioning (Week 9)

Dogs are introduced to traffic safety problems and shown how to deal with them as a guide. Dogs learn to 'stop', 'hold line' when stopped, and to 'back up on their line' when a vehicle gets too close.

Notable Accomplishment - Formal Traffic Training (week 10)

Dogs are taught responsibility in making emergency decisions with traffic problems. Dogs learn to decide when to 'stop', 'hold line', 'back up' or even 'scoot forward' on their travel line for safety of the team. Dog learns to maintain position, face the vehicle, and to proceed on original line when danger has passed.

Supplemental training in 'backing away' from a vehicle is given (on campus) to individual dogs who have a difficulty with the response.

Total Barricade Training

Training in how to inform the handler of objects totally blocking the travel path and then work safely around them.

Overhead obstacle clearance introduction

An overhead clearance is any obstacle that is over the dog's head. During this part of training the dog is taught to look up and look out for this type of clearance.

Advanced Work Routes (San Francisco & Portland)

New work areas introduced to the dogs. Difficult crossings, clearances, line problems, animal distractions, surface issues, curb approach challenges, pedestrian islands.

- ✓ Large City
- ✓ City Traffic patterns
- ✓ Crowded sidewalks

- ✓ Different Pedestrian climate
- ✓ Large government and business building work
- ✓ Very heavy and close traffic

Pre Matching with Blind Applicants

Dogs are identified for individual applicants with special needs and requirements in a guide dog.

Socialization Training

CWTs continue to focus on kennel enrichment, relaxing time away from guidework lessons (community run, grooming, play sessions, campus walks, dog massage, Reiki) during more stressful stages of formal guide dog training.

PHASE 8 OF FORMAL GUIDE DOG TRAINING

Approximately Weeks 11 - 13

"The Balanced Education System of Training Guide Dogs™ "(BEST Guide Dogs™)

Obedience and Distraction Training

Continued development and consistent responses in various environments (formal, informal and during guidework) and with new handlers.

Guidework Training

Advanced Harness Training in a variety of suburban, country and urban areas are worked, including sidewalkless routes.

Sidewalkless technique introduction:

Maintaining a travel line on the extreme left of roadways (facing oncoming traffic) with no sidewalk or reasonable shoulder to walk on. How to work around obstacles on the roadway and immediately return to the left edge of the road.

Specialized training on the right edge of the roadway in preparation for work areas clients live in with those challenges.

Platform edge exposure work:

Learning to avoid the drop off of subway and rail platforms

Light Rail, Subway systems:

Introduction and exposure

Overhead Obstacle Clearance training:

Continues as in earlier phases

Escalator Training - Boarding/Riding/Exiting:

How to safely step onto moving escalators and acquire a safe stance, ride the escalator in that stance without moving until time to anticipate exiting safely with energy.

NOTE: Puppy raisers should never put their pups on escalators.

Intensive Indoor Mall and store work techniques:

- ✓ Slower pace for indoor work, if appropriate
- ✓ Crowded aisles
- ✓ Elevators
- ✓ Multiple Stairways (Up & Down)
- ✓ Various colors and textures of slick, shiny floors
- ✓ Patience work in shopping situations
- ✓ Intensive food avoidance situations (food court)

Vet Meeting - Review of Health

Each dog's health history to date is reviewed by the staff vet. Viability for care by a visually impaired assessed. Health drop decisions made on some dogs, other individuals given timelines for improvement or other medical procedures/testing.

Socialization

Leash relieving exposure on cement begins

PHASE 9 OF FORMAL GUIDE DOG TRAINING

Approximately Week 14

"The Balanced Education System of Training Guide Dogs™ "(BEST Guide Dogs™)

Obedience and Distraction Training

Maintenance of consistent responses in various environments (formal, informal and during guidework) and with different handlers.

Advanced Guidework Training and Testing

"Finishing" Routes

Relaxing residential or country route work, sidewalkless areas, less difficult and straight-forward work for confidence building before class.

Advanced Work Routes

New advanced work routes are introduced to the dogs that require advanced decision-making. These route can consist of:

- ✓ City Traffic patterns
- ✓ Difficult crossings
- ✓ Difficult clearance situation
- ✓ Line problems
- ✓ Animal distractions
- ✓ Surface issues
- ✓ Curb approach challenges
- ✓ Pedestrian islands
- ✓ Crowded sidewalks
- ✓ Different Pedestrian climate
- ✓ Additional city bus exposure
- ✓ Additional rapid transit ride exposure

Dogs at this level (almost Class Ready) are worked by unfamiliar or novice handlers (O&M seminars, mock student instruction practice for apprentices, obedience exercises with new students in class learning handling, demonstrations, etc.)

Notable Accomplishment - Final Traffic Testing

Instructor is under blindfold on a guidework route. Several traffic checks requiring all types of traffic avoidance responses are given to the dog with instructor unable to predict when they will happen.

Escalator Boarding/Riding/Exiting continues

Dog is progressing to independence in boarding, riding and exiting.

Sidewalkless training

Continues as in earlier phases.

Specialized training

Customizing a dog's work for a particular clients needs (slower pace, client who travels with a support cane, balance issues

Platform edge training continues

Avoidance of drop-off edges on pedestrian platforms of subway and rail systems. Boarding and exiting trains.

Total Barricade Training continues

Informing handler of blocked path and working safely around objects and back on the original travel path.

Advanced overhead obstacle clearance training

Continues.

Socialization

Leash relieving practice on cement surfaces continues. Dogs who are not comfortable doing this will be placed on additional socialization programs.

TRAINING PHASE 10 OF FORMAL GUIDE DOG

Approximately Weeks 15, 16 & 17

"The Balanced Education System of Training Guide Dogs™ "(BEST Guide Dogs™)

Obedience and Distraction Training

Maintenance training of consistent responses in various environments (formal, informal and during guidework) and with new handlers.

Advanced Guidework Training and testing

Advanced Guide Work Routes
"Finishing" Routes

Notable Accomplishment - Final Obedience Testing

With the instructor under blindfold, an extensive obedience test is given to each dog. All dogs must pass final obedience in order to qualify to take the final blindfold guidework test.

Final Building Testing

Instructor under Blindfold - each dog is tested on escalators, elevators, stairs and store work through food court areas.

Final Blindfold Testing

Blindfold test on urban street & sidewalk route of 40 to 50 minutes in challenging work area. Obedience exercises required to be demonstrated on the route. Dogs passing are deemed "Class Ready Guides". Class ready Guide Dogs are fully prepared for matching with students.

Vet Meeting - Review of any Health Concerns

Pre Class Vet Physical is done and an accurate height on the dog is recorded (from the ground to the top of the shoulders)

Final Class Preparations

New Collars - sizing and assignment.
New Harnesses prepared.

Leash Relieving practice on cement surfaces

Continue as in previous phase

Dormitory exposure**Socialization Training**

All Specialized programs for socializing would be complete for dog to be *Class Ready Guide* status.

Extra relaxing walks, kennel enrichment and play sessions with the dogs is a primary focus for the *Canine Welfare Technicians*.

CLASS

By the time the dogs are finishing their final exams in Phase Ten, the students that are scheduled to arrive for the next class have been confirmed and the preliminary and important process of matching dogs with students begins. Once the students have arrived at the campus and class training has begun, the final decision regarding each student and dog match is made. There will be more dogs available than there are students allowing the best match of student and dog. If your dog is not chosen for this class, it only means that the right student was not available for your dog. If your dog was not chosen, he will continue training with the next string and be available for placement with a student in a future class.

There are 3 different class-training programs available. The four-week class is for new students and some students (retrain) with previous experience using a dog guide. We also have two and three-week retrain classes available. The best training option (two, three or four week retrain class) is recommended during the home interview based on the student's previous experience current physical condition and handling abilities. All the students begin class so that their graduation is on the same day.

The home interview may recommend in a few situations a student receive in-home training if they cannot attend a class at one of the campuses. If in-home training is approved, the student and dog may not attend the formal graduation on campus. (See "Graduation" portion of this packet for special arrangements afforded to Raisers whose dogs are trained in-home).

Some of the lectures students receive during their training are:

ORIENTATION

Instructors give an orientation to the dormitory facilities.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDE DOG

Instruction on how to meet and properly handle a Guide Dog.

COMMUNICATIONS WITH A GUIDE DOG

Instruction on appropriate commands for a Guide Dog.

HARNESS COMMANDS

Instruction and review of the obedience and guidework commands for a Guide Dog.

DESCRIPTIONS OF GUIDE DOG BREEDS

Description of the characteristic of each Guide Dog breed: Labrador Retriever, Golden Retriever, German Shepherd Dog, and Labrador/Golden Retriever cross

CONTROL OF A GUIDE DOG

Instruction on effective control of a Guide Dog.

EQUIPMENT FOR A GUIDE DOG

Discussion about the different types and appropriate use of Guide Dog equipment.

GROOMING

Discussion and instruction on grooming, skin care and dental care for maintaining good health of a Guide Dog.

RECEIVING YOUR GUIDE DOG

Hands-on instruction and discussion prior to meeting your Guide Dog.

MAINTAINING A WELL BEHAVED GUIDE DOG

Review of daily schedule and use of obedience commands.

PROCEDURES FOR FEEDING YOUR GUIDE DOG

Instruction on feeding your Guide Dog (when, what, and how much).

STUDENT VISITING HOURS

Review of visiting hours for students during training at Guide Dogs.

FOLLOW YOUR DOG

Instruction of proper following position while walking with a Guide Dog.

STREET CROSSINGS

Discussion of crossing streets with a Guide Dog (listening for traffic, appropriate stops, etc.).

MAINTAINING A HOUSE CLEAN DOG

Relieving instruction and information on how to maintain consistent house behavior.

FLEA CONTROL

Discussion of available products and instruction in their use.

ORIENTATION & LEARNING ROUTES

Review and discussion of the downtown street system and street names.

DISTRACTIONS

Instruction on control of a Guide Dog when distracted by other animals, people, or environment.

REWORKING ERRORS

Instruction on how to improve Guide Dog work.

WORKING IN BUILDINGS

Instruction on locating and working different types of buildings with your Guide Dog (such as stores, malls, supermarkets, etc.).

TOYS

Instructors discuss and issue recommended toys for Guide Dogs.

WHEN YOUR DOG IS HOME ALONE

Instruction and practice on having a quiet and well-behaved dog when left alone.

Discussion on appropriate times, and length of time, for dog to be left alone.

TRAFFIC TRAINING & TOTAL BARRICADES

Instruction on working around obstacles totally blocking the sidewalk.

CARE OF YOUR GUIDE DOG

Instruction and review of water, feeding and relieving schedule for a Guide Dog.

NUTRITIONAL NEEDS OF YOUR DOG

Discussion of nutritional needs, type of dog foods, and recommended amount for feeding each individual dog.

THE PUBLIC & YOUR GUIDE DOG

Discussion on laws, legislation and the public.

TRAVELING WITH YOUR GUIDE DOG

Discussion about the different methods of travel with a Guide Dog (city bus, light rail, airplane, etc.).

A GUIDE DOG IS REALLY A "DOG"

Discussion on how Guide Dogs are raised and trained; how to best adapt you're Guide Dog to your home.

WORKING YOUR GUIDE DOG IN YOUR HOME ENVIRONMENT

Instruction on how to transition to your home area with your Guide Dog.

GRADUATION

Information about meeting your puppy raiser, the graduation ceremony, and departure for home after graduation.

Students begin training with their dogs in residential areas San Rafael or Gresham and in the last part of training to San Francisco or Portland. There are many different situations presented to the teams including public transportation (cars, city buses, subway systems, and ferries), heavy traffic, construction, escalators, areas with no sidewalks, etc.

Our students come from many different walks of life and areas. Towards the end of class, students are given more exposure to areas similar to where they will be working most of the time at home. Students are given tips on how to keep their dogs comfortable in all types of climate changes.

This is a busy and exciting time for the Training staff. They have spent many months nurturing and preparing the dogs for class. The staff puts it this way:

"When we finally get to class I'm ready. You are so proud of the dogs - it's a process where you really want to see them fly. There is a part of me saying "show those students what you can do!"

"Going into class and making that match (of dog and student) is what it's all about...seeing people become more and more independent...walking with smiles on their faces."

The end of the training string signals the culmination of months of hard work by many people at Guide Dogs, both staff and volunteers. From the volunteers that socialize the young puppies and work in other areas on campus, to the immense efforts of you in the puppy raising community, to the dedicated staff, and to our donors... we couldn't do it without all of you! It is the efforts of all these people that make the ten phases of training possible, and provide us with the foundation to shape a wonderful dog into a highly trained guide dog and companion, and then pair that dog with a partner to become an effective team. This is the mission of Guide Dogs for the Blind.

GRADUATION

Graduation is the culmination of many years of hard work from many people. Raisers are invited to attend graduation and present the dogs they have raised to their new partners. If you are planning to fly to attend a Guide Dog graduation ceremony, we recommended purchasing refundable airfare, in case something happens to cause your dog to be career changed, passed back or taken out of class at the last moment.

On graduation day, you will have an opportunity to meet the graduate and have your pictures taken together. The pictures will be sent to you after graduation. The graduates will then be seated on the stage. When your name is called, you will go on stage to present the dog to the graduate at the microphone. You will then be given an opportunity to share a few words about your experiences. After the ceremony you will escort the new team to a reception in the dormitory. You will be sent a DVD of the graduation as a keepsake.

Your dog could also be selected as a sponsored team. Donors who have contributed a significant amount towards the cost of training a person and their dog are invited to come to graduation and meet the team they have sponsored. Many times donor teams are chosen based on the area in which the graduate lives or their background, such as being a veteran or in a certain career field. When photos are taken, the donor (if present) will also have their photo taken with the graduate and dog. If your dog and his new partner are a sponsored team, and the donor is present you may be asked to meet the donor at a reception. The Puppy Raising Department will notify you a few days in advance if the graduating team has been sponsored.

Those raisers whose dogs have been matched with students receiving in-home training are welcome to attend graduation, and their name, their dog's name and the student's name will be mentioned during the program even though their dogs will not be presented in person.

Individuals who receive their guide dogs through in-home training are often not able to attend the formal graduation with their new guides. The whole purpose of this type of special training is to help a person with a visual impairment who cannot, for health or other personal reasons, attend one of the campus-based training classes. Because of this, Guide Dogs can sometimes arrange for the raiser to visit their dog on campus before it leaves for training. The Instructor will take photos of the working team for the raiser's keepsake. You may attend graduation and can make a statement at the microphone when introduced. With the graduate's consent, a statement composed by the graduate may be read by Guide Dogs' staff. Also with the graduate's consent, a phone call can be arranged between the raiser and the graduate.

If your dog is chosen for breeding stock, it will also be involved in a graduation at one of our San Rafael graduation ceremonies. Just like presenting a guide, you will have the

opportunity to present the breeder and make a statement at the microphone when introduced.

Tips to help make graduation more relaxed and enjoyable to all:

- Realize that the student is probably nervous and wants to make a good impression on you.
- It's natural for some raisers to be nervous too; we want you to relax and enjoy yourself.
- Please let your first words be a greeting to the student (not the dog). Initiating a handshake is great! (Gently touch the back of the student's right hand as a greeting if they do not have their arm extended.)
- The student may offer you the leash so that you can visit with their dog for a few minutes. Keep in mind that this is a courtesy to you. Please be respectful of the student's important relationship with their dog and hand the leash back to them in a few minutes.
- Take a few minutes to greet the dog you've raised; it's best to stay gentle and calm. Despite your own excitement, try to not increase the dog's excitement.
- Please remember that 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 student. Ask the student 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 student may or may not want to share this.
- Please do not offer the student any training advice, even if asked.
- The student will put the harness on the dog when it is time to take photos. The student may also attach alternative control equipment onto their dog, such as a specialized collar or headcollar.
- The students' complete address is sent to you in the letter informing you of the graduation. Many times phone numbers are exchanged but remember that the graduate and you are under no obligation to give each other personal information or communicate in the future. Please respect any privacy wishes that the other may express.

This is truly a day to celebrate! All of the hard work that you have put into your dog has paid off. This new team still has a lot of work to do. When they return home, they will truly begin developing a working relationship based on trust and love. The graduate will receive a yearly veterinary stipend and follow-up visits by licensed Instructors to ensure that the transition goes smoothly. The graduate will look back on this day as the beginning of a new and exciting chapter in their life. And you are a very large part of what has made Guide Dogs' mission a reality for another visually impaired person!

CAREER CHANGE DOGS

"Career change" dogs are those who are released from Guide Dogs for the Blind programs, usually to become pets/companions. Some career change dogs go on to other careers such as obedience work, search and rescue, agility, hearing dog or service dog training, tracking, and pet therapy. The dogs that do not graduate as guides or breeders are released from the Guide Dog program for a variety of reasons; usually medical, temperamental, or behavioral.

Guide Dogs is very fortunate to have a large community of raisers and leaders who work very hard to deliver back to us the best possible guide candidates. All raisers should be proud of their efforts and accomplishments regardless if the dog graduates, becomes a breeder, or is career changed. We are immensely proud of the love and dedication that all our volunteers - puppy socializers and testers in our kennels, raisers, leaders, and others - contribute so generously and effectively to help us develop the best puppies possible.

The level of skill, soundness, and health that is necessary for a dog to be considered for guidework is extremely high. A dog must be orthopedically sound, capable of walking for long distances, free from nagging allergies, and in good physical health. An effective guide must exhibit a paradox of behaviors that can be extremely difficult to balance. The dog must be sensitive yet brave, obedient yet independent, loving of the handler yet aloof from strangers when necessary. One small concern may prevent a dog from being issued, resulting in career change.

Our canine population must be large enough to allow us to carefully screen and select the very best guide and breeder candidates. This is essential in order for us to provide the quality of guide that is needed in today's busy world.

All of our dogs, including our career change dogs go on to enrich the lives of people with whom they come into contact. They are wonderful ambassadors for our program, making friends throughout the world for themselves and for Guide Dogs for the Blind. All become wonderful, loving pets either with the family that raised them, a close friend or relative of the raiser, or with an adoptive family who has been screened and carefully selected by the Dog Placement Department at Guide Dogs. The hard work and love that raisers give to our puppies is the largest contributing factor in making career change dogs such great pets, and for this our raisers deserve our heartfelt thanks.

Who can receive a career change dog?

If a dog is career changed from the puppy home or training program

- The last raiser to raise the dog has the first option to receive the dog as a pet.
- If the last raiser does not wish to keep the dog personally, the previous raiser has the next choice to receive 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. An example of a dog that's had four raisers: 4th raiser = 1st choice, 3rd raiser = 2nd choice, 2nd raiser = 3rd choice, 1st raiser = 4th choice.
- If no raisers of a dog wish 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.
- The above guidelines for placement options have exceptions at the discretion of Guide Dogs. Exceptions may be based on consideration of:
 - a. the dog's temperament
 - b. the dog's health
 - c. the dog's compatibility with people and pets in the Raiser or adopter home
 - d. the dog's possible effect on a Guide Dog puppy in the home
 - e. instances of abuse or neglect in the home
 - f. incidents of dogs running loose at the home
 - g. questions regarding the raiser's ability to effectively care and control the dog
 - h. inadequate fencing or other housing needs
 - i. previous agreements between transfer homes, leaders, and advisors
 - j. other determinations by Guide Dogs in consideration for the well-being of the dog and/or the household

If a dog is retired from the graduate's home in less than a year

- The last person to raise the dog has the first option to receive the dog as a pet.
- If the last raiser declines to accept the dog personally, the graduate has the option to keep the dog or place the dog only with a close family member or a close friend.
- If both the graduate and the last Raiser decline these options, the dog will be placed by Guide Dogs using the same guidelines as when a dog is career changed in the puppy home or training program.

If a dog is retired from the graduate's home after a year or more

- The graduate has the option to keep the dog or place the dog as he or she chooses.
- If the graduate declines this option, the dog will be placed by Guide Dogs using the same guidelines as when a dog is career changed in the puppy home or training program.

If a suitable home (one that meets the order of placement described above) cannot be found, Guide Dogs Puppy Raising and Dog Placement Department will individually screen and select a home for the dog

- Guide Dogs receives hundreds of 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 Guide Dogs 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 \$500.
- GDB provides follow-up information: books, videos, audio tapes, booklets, training references.
- GDB welcomes back any dog that is not compatible with the new home.

How Guide Dogs places the puppies you raise

It is difficult when you can't provide a home for a career changed dog when you have invested so much time, effort, and love raising it. We want you to know about our Dog Placement process and the time, effort, and love that go into each placement.

The process starts when someone notifies us of their desire to receive a dog from our program by submitting a Career Change Application. After careful review, only those who qualify are kept on file. Acceptable applications are entered into our computer database.

When a dog is career changed and the raiser is unable to take the dog back or has no close family member or close friend that can offer a quality home, the dog's placement becomes the responsibility of the Dog Placement Department. We learn everything we can about the dog: the reason the dog was released from the program, the dog's history in the puppy raising home (another reason completed project records are so helpful!), the training and socialization history and health history. We review the evaluations done in the field by the puppy raising advisors and, if the dog made it all the way back to the training program, we talk with the instructors and instructor assistants who may have trained and cared for the dog. From all the information we have gathered, we put together a basic profile of the kind of home we are looking for - a family with kids, a retired couple, a home without other dogs or cats, a family who has owned this type of dog before, etc.

By searching the available applications in the database, we develop a list of potential matches. Then, considering the dog's strengths and weaknesses, we spend hours reviewing the applications and talking on the phone with several potential adopters to find a home that seems best suited for the particular dog we are trying to place. Only when we feel we have a possible match do we indicate that we have a dog available. We then describe the dog in detail, always giving both the positives and negatives. It is very important to us to be straightforward about the dog. Our success in locating a permanent home is more likely if there are not a great deal of "surprises" when adopters take their new dog home.

A fence check must be completed before the dog goes to its new home. This check provides an opportunity for us to observe the home environment. Fence checks may be done by GDB staff, leaders or volunteers.

Once the fence check is completed, the family is required to meet the dog on campus. We encourage the whole family to come, especially if there are young children in the household. During this meeting we spend a lot of time discussing dog behavior, teaching the family various training techniques (e.g. how to use a proper collar and leash correction along with praise and the basic obedience commands). It typically takes between one and two hours to educate the family and "show" the dog.

Not every meeting results in the dog going to that home. Occasionally, in spite of the hours that were spent interviewing the family by phone, the match is inappropriate. Sometimes we deny the placement, and sometimes the family decides that the dog is not right for them. If the campus meeting is not successful, the process begins again to search for a new, more appropriate home.

It takes time to find the right match. It is never a case of just assigning a dog to the next applicant on the list. As dogs wait for new homes, most adjust well to kennel-life, continuing to mature and learning from the instructor assistants who constantly work with them grooming, exercising, and training.

Our primary goal is placing the dog with a family that will provide it with a lifetime of love, care, and companionship. Since our breeds are known to enjoy active involvement with their owners, we also encourage applications from those who are looking for dogs to enter into agility, obedience, tracking, search and rescue, pet facilitated therapy, and other disciplines and hobbies.

Thank you for the time, love, and care that you have put into raising a puppy for Guide Dogs for the Blind. Even though all dogs cannot become guides or breeders, we recognize that each dog is truly a unique and valued individual. We will continue to work hard to find loving and responsible homes for each. We know that you would want nothing less for your puppy!

Taking back your career change dog

Let's suppose that you have just found out that the puppy you so carefully raised has been career changed. Now what?

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 obligated to take a career change dog back. We at Guide Dogs understand a raiser's feelings of love and responsibility to the puppy that they raised because we feel the same spirit of protectiveness. However, we 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, we would prefer to place the dog through our Puppy Raising and Dog Placement Department.

Before deciding to take a career change dog back, please ask yourself the following questions

- Are you considering taking the dog back only because you feel an obligation to the dog or GDB?
- Have you considered that the dog may be a different dog in size and behaviors than the one that you returned for training several months ago?
- Can you give the dog the best possible home for the rest of the dog's life?
- Do you have time to spend exercising and playing with the dog?
- Does everyone in the home want the dog?
- If you are a youth raiser, do your parents want the dog as much as you do?
- If you are a youth raiser, will you be going to college or moving into your own home while the dog may be still living? What are your plans for the dog then?
- Will the dog get along well with all family members: adults, small children and pets?
- Do you have other dogs - a GDB puppy, other career change dogs, or pets - and will you be able to provide each with sufficient individual love and care?
- Can you afford the food and veterinary care of a large-breed dog?
- Do you currently have a secure, fenced area (yard or dog run) at least 5 feet in height?
- If your 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, do you have the landlord's permission to have a dog?

If any of the preceding questions cause doubts, perhaps you would be better off letting a previous raiser accept the dog or letting GDB place the dog.

If you decide to accept the career change dog back as a pet

- Guide Dogs will legally transfer the dog to you.
- You must complete an "Agreement Confirming Gift of Dog" contract which transfers the dog from GDB to you.
- Any transportation costs to return the dog to you are at your expense.
- With the exception of a small number of pre-approved cases, veterinary and all other expenses are your responsibility.
- If the dog doesn't work out, please do not hesitate to notify and then return the dog to GDB.
- If at any time in the dog's life you transfer the dog to a new home, please complete and return to Guide Dogs a "Supplemental Dog Transfer Form."
- Raisers are not allowed to sell career change dogs.
- If concerns about a dog's behavior or health arise, please contact the GDB Dog Placement Department's dog evaluation specialist.

Placing your career change dog

If you decide that you cannot personally keep the dog, you also have the option to place the dog (using the same order of preference as described in "Who Can Receive a Career Change Dog?") If you choose to place the dog yourself, you may only place the dog with a close friend or close family member. Guide Dogs 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, Guide Dogs will happily place the dog.

Guide Dogs takes great care, reinforced by years of experience, in the placing of career change dogs. Guide Dogs 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. We offer not only these preliminary services but also follow-up services to ensure that the dog is happy in the new home.

If you decide to place a career change dog with a close friend or family member, first, carefully ask yourself some questions about the dog

- Does the dog have temperament, control, or behavior concerns that make him a challenging candidate for placement?
- In offering this dog to a new home, can you be honest with the prospective adopters about all his behaviors, good and bad?
- If the dog has problems in the adopters' home, can you offer the resources to help work through the problem?
- If this dog does not work out in his new home, are you willing to take him back or return him to Guide Dogs?
- Would this dog be better placed by Guide Dogs' experienced Dog Placement staff?

In deciding whether your close relative or close friend is a good candidate for a dog, ask yourself some general questions about the prospective home

- Have you honestly and completely explained in detail all the dog's potential negative behaviors and/or health problems to the prospective adopter?
- 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, and pets/livestock?
- Is any one 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 him?
- 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 to you?
- Do they only want the dog because he has come from Guide Dogs for the Blind?

- Do they understand that all dogs have dog behaviors, good and bad, even ones from Guide Dogs?
- Do they understand all the responsibility involved in providing a lifetime, loving home for a dog?
- 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 general dynamics can often best predict a dog's happiness in a new home. Refer to the article "Common Career Change Misconceptions" for additional information. If you have any concerns about the success of the proposed placement, please let Guide Dogs select a home instead.

If you are confident from the answers to the above questions that a prospective family may be a good candidate to receive the dog that you raised, ask the following

- Can the prospective family afford the food and veterinary care of a large-breed dog?
- Do they have time to spend exercising and playing with the dog?
- Do they have a secure, fenced area (yard or dog run) at least 5 feet in height?
- If the potential home has a pool, is it safely fenced?
- Will the dog be inside (at least at night)?
- Is adequate shelter provided from both rain and sun?
- How much time will the dog be alone?
- If renting, do they have the landlord's permission to have a dog?
- Are they able and willing to obtain and use a crate?
- Will they take a dog through obedience classes or private training to better understand and control the dog?
- Are they familiar with the grooming needs of this breed?
- Are they willing to provide flea control?
- Are they planning to move in the near future?

If you are satisfied that the dog you are placing fits well with the applicant

- 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 you decide to place the dog in this new home

- Any transportation costs to transport the dog to the new home are yours or the adopters.
- Raisers are not allowed to sell career change dogs.

- 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 that you cannot answer, please ask the adopters to contact the GDB Dog Placement Department's dog evaluation specialist who will consult with them.
- Ask the adopters that if it doesn't work out to please contact you or GDB directly to return the dog to us.

If you don't feel right about a potential new owner, tell them "no."

If you have any uncertainties, please let us place the dog. The Dog Placement Department is available to place the dog from either campus in the event that you don't feel comfortable with your options. Since the quality of the dog's life depends on this placement, take your time and don't take chances!

Thank you for all the love and effort that you spent raising a puppy for Guide Dogs for the Blind. Thank you also for helping us find a permanent, happy home for each dog from our program.

Please help us fulfill our responsibilities by letting Guide Dogs for the Blind Dog Placement staff find homes for any dog in need of a home.

Guide Dogs for the Blind will gladly accept back any dog that is returned to us at any stage of the dog's life.

We feel a great debt to all our dogs - guides, breeders, and career change - that have contributed to our mission. We have a lifelong responsibility to them all.

Please help us fulfill our responsibility by returning to us any dog that is from our program and that is in need of a home.