Headquarters and Training Center

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Client Experience Team

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Applicant and Graduate Support: 888-987-2188

**Is a Guide Dog Right for Me?**

Working with a guide dog is an experience like no other. The unique bond handlers form with their Dogs represents an opportunity to increase independence and confidence through the advantages of teamwork. The following questions are designed to assist in determining if a guide dog is right for your lifestyle and everyday travel needs.

# Travel Skills

* Have you received formal Orientation and Mobility training and are you in the habit of walking on a regular basis?
* Do you travel independently when commuting to work, school, and/or social outings, running errands, or utilizing public transportation?
* Do you have regular walking routes that you feel comfortable and confident navigating on your own?
* Are you able to adapt your orientation and mobility skills to environments you are unfamiliar with?
* Are you able to problem-solve when faced with a challenging situation?
* Is one of your goals to enhance your travel skills?
* Do you consider yourself to be active daily (e.g., regular walking, standing, and/or exercising)?

# Living with a Dog

* Do you like dogs and are you ready to be woken up by a cold wet nose every morning?
* Are you willing and able to meet the physical needs of your guide dog (e.g., veterinary care, quality nutrition, consistent grooming, relieving opportunities, and exercise)?
* Are you willing and able to fulfill the emotional needs of your guide dog (e.g., verbal praise, physical affection, awareness of stress, and trust)?
* Are you willing and able to meet the financial needs of your guide dog (e.g., veterinary care expenses, dog food, treats, and toys)?
* Are you ready to be affectionate and cuddle with your dog during down time?
* Have you discussed the possibility of owning a guide dog with family members, friends, and co-workers? Are they willing to abide by Guiding Eyes’ standards of care for the dog without interfering?
* Have you considered or discussed dog allergies with whom you live?
* Do you have any pets, and if so, do they get along with other animals?
* Does rain make you melt? Our dogs need to go out in all types of weather.

# Working with a Dog

* Our dogs are masters at using “Jedi mind tricks” to acquire your food, are you prepared to resist sharing your meals?
* Are you prepared to have more interactions with the public, as they will naturally take notice of and have questions about your guide dog?
* Knowing that Guiding Eyes is there to support you, are you prepared to advocate your rights as a guide dog team if experiencing access discrimination?

# Independent Living Skills

* Do muddy paws make you smile or cringe?
* Do you live in a stable, clean, and pet safe environment?
* Are your independent living skills (cooking, cleaning, organization, time management) sufficient for taking care of both yourself and your guide dog?
* Our dogs show their love by leaving their hair behind, do you enjoy grooming and a little extra vacuuming?
* Are you able to independently participate in an intensive training program and actively engage in the learning process?

# Ready to apply?

Please visit guidingeyes.org where you will find our online application under the Admissions menu.

## Contact us

If you have questions about guide dog readiness or the application process, please email us at admissions@guidingeyes.org or call (888) 987-2188 to speak with a member of our team.