

Career Change Dog Policy Change

Dear Puppy Raiser,

Guide Dogs for the Blind would like to thank you for all the tremendous work you do as a volunteer for our organization. You truly make our life-changing mission possible. We greatly appreciate the dedication, passion, hard work, and love that you bring to GDB.

I would like to tell you about a policy change that may affect you as a puppy raiser.

We acknowledge that a puppy raiser's option to adopt a career change dog that he or she raised has been a long-standing benefit that GDB extends to our puppy raisers. Traditionally, only guide dogs, breeders, and K9 Buddies were prioritized before a raiser's option to adopt a dog that he or she raised. After much thought and consideration, GDB has decided to implement a new policy.

Starting today, February 5, 2015, GDB will prioritize the placement of career change dogs with a select number of non-profit organizations that have been evaluated and screened by GDB as candidates for prioritization. These organizations will primarily consist of service dog organizations such as hearing dogs or medical alert dogs, but may also include organizations such as agencies for the blind, canine search and rescue organizations, and others that GDB believes enhance people's lives. GDB will offer dogs to these designated organizations for adoption prior to the dogs' puppy raisers being offered the opportunity to adopt the dogs. Individuals who wish to adopt a dog for use as a therapy dog, a personal service dog, or a companion will not be prioritized before puppy raisers.

We want to encourage all of you to accept this policy change as a mark of your success. Dogs that go on to service work or important roles other than as a guide dog are still making remarkable, positive differences in people's lives. Those of you who raise dogs that go on to such work also make remarkable, positive differences in people's lives.

Our mission and vision statements towards which we all strive state:

MISSION STATEMENT

Guide Dogs for the Blind 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.

GDB carefully screens and continually evaluates the organizations that we place our dogs with. We have an extensive application process in which we inquire about many factors, including staff experience, how dogs are cared for and housed, types of training used, surplus of financial resources to care for dogs and clients, and much more. Right now, we have eleven non-profit organizations that we have screened and with which we place our career change

Untitled

dogs.

Your Community Field Representative (CFR) will be working with your club leader to detail the processes involved in this new policy. Basically, though, if a dog you raised is career changed and is being considered for adoption to one of our collaborating organizations, your leader will let you know.

Your leader will also let you know if the dog you raised is placed or not placed with another organization. Just as with guide dogs, not all dogs are successful with these other organizations. Dogs that are dropped from the training program of a prioritized organization will be offered back to GDB. If the client from another organization has had the dog for more than one year, she/he may choose to keep the dog. Dogs that are returned to GDB will be placed with a raiser or otherwise adopted in accordance with GDB career change dog placement protocols.

As we announced last year, puppy raisers whose dogs graduate with other organizations will be recognized quarterly at GDB graduations. Whenever possible, raisers will also be invited to the graduation ceremonies of the other collaborating organizations as well.

We know that some may have concerns about this new policy. We appreciate not only your concerns but also the attachment we know you so strongly feel to the puppy that you are raising or have raised. We greatly appreciate all you do to help us in our mission. By your puppies becoming guide dogs, breeders, K9 Buddies, or dogs that provide a service of a different type, you are changing lives and truly changing the world. Thank you.

Warmest regards,
Chris Benninger, President and CEO
Brent Ruppel, Director of Community Operations