



Guide Dog Etiquette

When encountering a guide dog and their handler, people are not always aware of what they should or shouldn't do. These guidelines will help people to understand the proper etiquette around guide dogs. Not following these simple "rules" can result in anything from frustrating social behavior problems with the dog to more serious, and in some cases, dangerous situations for the guide dog handler and their dog.



1. Harness on Hands Off

They may be guiding their user along the sidewalk, crossing a road, locating a destination, or they may be lying quietly under a table in a café. Either way, the harness means, "Please don't distract me. I'm working."

Distracting the dog by petting them or talking to them when they are guiding can lead to a loss of concentration that could result in an accident.

2. Do Not Give Commands

Do not tell the dog where to go or try to grab the harness handle and show the dog where they should be going. The dog is trained to listen to their handler and certain commands. It is up to the handler to tell the dog where to go.

3. Contain Your Excitement

When you are interacting with a guide dog handler it is important to not get excited and talk excitedly to the guide dog. This can encourage play and when the harness is on the guide dog is working.

4. Give Them Space

It is important that when you have your pet dog and you approach a guide dog team that you do not encourage them to say "hello" to each other. This can be very distracting for the guide dog and stressful for the handler. Give them plenty of space to work and keep the distraction to a minimum.

5. Speak to the Handler

When you encounter a guide dog and their handler speak the person. Ask if they would like assistance if you feel as if they may need assistance. Do not interact with the dog. Ignoring the guide dog is the best way to interact with a person who has a guide dog.

**** Important ****

It is illegal to interfere with a working guide dog. See Back.

Saskatchewan Legislation

Animal Protection Act, 2018

Part 4

Protection of Service Animals

Definition for Part

32 In this Part, "service animal" means an animal that is trained to be used by:

- (a) a person with a disability for reasons relating to his or her disability.
- (b) a peace officer in the execution of his or her duties; or
- (c) a person who is authorized by a peace officer to assist peace officers in their duties.

Interference with service animal prohibited

33(1) No person shall harm, attempt to harm, touch, feed, impede or interfere with a service animal without lawful excuse or authority.

(2) No person responsible for an animal shall allow that animal to harm, attempt to harm, touch, impede or interfere with a service

animal without lawful excuse or authority.

Offence and penalty

34(1) A person who contravenes section 33 is guilty of an offence and liable on summary conviction to a fine of not more than \$25,000, to imprisonment for not more than 2 years or to both.

(2) In addition to any penalty imposed pursuant to subsection (1), the court may order the convicted person to pay compensation to the person responsible for the service animal for loss or damage suffered as a consequence of the commission of the offence, in an amount that the court may determine.

(3) The person to whom the compensation is payable pursuant to subsection (2) may file a certified copy of the order in the office of the local registrar of the Court of Queen's Bench at the judicial centre nearest to the place where the person resides.

(4) A certified copy filed pursuant to subsection (3) has the same force and effect as if it were a

judgement obtained in the Court of Queen's Bench for the recovery of a debt in the amount specified in the order, together with any reasonable costs and charges with respect to its filing.

**For More Information Contact
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