

Everyday Heroes

Guide Dogs: Guiding Eyes For People Who Are Blind

(NAPSA)—Among the unsung heroes of our nation are our guide dogs. They are the guiding eyes for people who are blind or visually impaired, and are specially bred and trained for this most important job. Here from the Guide Dog Foundation are several guidelines for people to follow when in the presence of a guide dog. These guidelines allow for the safety of the dog and its handler.

Etiquette And Guide Dogs

- Don't touch, pet or feed a guide dog while it is wearing its working harness. Do allow the dog to concentrate and perform for the safety of its handler.

- Don't call the dog by its name. Do understand that, for safety reasons, some blind or visually impaired people will not reveal their guide dog's name to a stranger.

- Don't give the dog commands. Do allow the handler to do so.

- Don't walk on the dog's left side as it may become distracted or confused. Do walk on the handler's right side, several paces behind him or her.

- Don't attempt to grab or steer the handler while the dog is guiding him or her, and do not attempt to hold the dog's harness. Do ask if the handler needs your assistance and, if so, offer your left arm.

- Don't allow children to tease



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or abuse the dog.

- Don't allow pets or other dogs to challenge or intimidate a guide dog. Allow them to meet when all animals can be carefully supervised.

- Don't pat the dog on the head. Do stroke the dog on the shoulder area—but only with its handler's approval.

- When speaking to the guide dog's handler, do address the person and not the dog.

For more information on guide dogs or the Guide Dog Foundation for the Blind, Inc., visit www.GuideDog.org or call (800) 548-4337.