GUIDE DOGS QUEENSLAND

Volunteer Guidelines and Code of Conduct

Guide Dogs QUEENSLAND

Welcome from Chief Executive Officer

Hello and welcome to Guide Dogs Queensland's Volunteer Program.

Your contribution of time and energy is vital to ensuring the Association continues to deliver life changing services to Queensland's blind and vision impaired community.

Established in 1960, Guide Dogs Queensland has a proud history of service and today offers a complete range of services including Guide Dogs, Orientation and Mobility, training in the White Cane and Electronic Travel aids, counselling, special programs for children and Low Vision clinics.

We receive minimal government funding for some specific client services. It is through community support such as donations, sponsorship and volunteering that we are able to provide these services to our vision impaired clients.

Guide Dogs Queensland is committed to ensuring the well-being of Volunteers, Staff and Guide Dogs. To assist with this commitment, we have developed Volunteer guidelines. These guidelines provide an overview of policies and procedures applicable to Volunteers, and define the standards that apply to all Volunteers while carrying out their important responsibilities for Guide Dogs Queensland. As well as providing important information for Volunteers, these guidelines demonstrate to clients accessing our services that we act with integrity and respect when conducting our work.

I encourage you to familiarise yourself with the content and ensure the provisions are observed.

Perhaps you know someone who is vision impaired, you identify with vision loss or you simply love Guide Dogs, whatever your motivation, we hope your journey with Guide Dogs Queensland is rewarding and you enjoy being a part of the team. I take this opportunity to congratulate you and thank you for joining us.

Yours sincerely,



Michael Kightley Chief Executive Officer

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1 Introduction

This Guideline is intended to provide general information about Guide Dogs Queensland (GDQ): what we do, how we operate, and the terms, conditions, responsibilities and benefits of volunteering for GDQ.

The information contained within is general and applies to Guide Dogs Queensland as a whole. There is more detail to be found in additional documents that set out specific policies, procedures, and instructions for particular positions and processes. It is important that each volunteer takes the time to become familiar with the content of such documents.

We will update the Volunteer Guidelines and Code of Conduct from time to time. GDQ has the right to change, at any time, the policies, procedures and details set out herein. Such information will be passed on to staff at the earliest convenience.



2 Guide Dogs Queensland

History

Guide Dogs for the Blind Association of Queensland (GDBAQ), trading as Guide Dogs Queensland (GDQ) was formed in 1960 and incorporated in 1965. It began under the umbrella of the Royal Guide Dogs for the Blind Associations of Australia with its original focus mainly on the provision of Guide Dog mobility. A later program was developed to provide white canes and teach orientation and mobility skills to people of Queensland with blindness or vision impairment.

In the beginning, there was only one central GDQ office located in Brisbane. GDQ has since expanded its services by opening regional offices throughout the State, in Townsville, Bundaberg, Toowoomba, the Gold and Sunshine Coasts. Service provision now includes: Guide Dog Mobility training, Orientation and Mobility training, electronic travel aids, Occupational Therapy, support for children and counselling.

Mission Statement

Through partnership with our stakeholders, Guide Dogs Queensland will provide services, which reduce the disadvantage of vision impairment. Our services will assist our clients to achieve their optimal level of mobility.

At the end of 1993, with a view to improving the services offered to the people of Queensland who are blind or vision impaired, GDQ took the decision to become an autonomous Association and build our own training centre. Land was acquired at Bald Hills and plans drawn up for the Guide Dog Breeding and Training Centre. Today the centre provides a residential facility for the training of clients, a Guide Dog breeding and training facility and also a Vet Clinic.

This centre greatly enhances our aim to provide a full range of services to all Queenslanders, who are blind or vision impaired.

Client Training and Programs

GDQ provides the following services statewide:

- Guide Dog Mobility
- Long Cane Training
- Electronic Travel Aid training
- Special Education transition
- School Holiday Camps
- Young People's Programs
- Counselling Retreats
- Low Vision Support Groups
- Low Vision Clinics
- Occupational Therapy
- Counselling
- Orientation and Mobility
- Community and Professional Workshops and Mobility Expos

Services are provided to residents of Queensland and delivered through programs either on GDQ premises, client residence or out in the community.

Funding

Guide Dogs Queensland receives minimal government funding. This helps pay for some specific programs, but the majority of our Client and Guide Dog Services are funded through the generous support of the community and corporate organisations.

GDQ is only able to provide these services thanks to people who give donations; leave gifts in their Will; support our Income Streams; and volunteer their time.

3 Volunteer program structure

Volunteers add diversity and first-hand community knowledge to the skill set of Guide Dogs Queensland and in return receive the opportunity to invest in and contribute to the community in which they live.

Our programs are structured on the basis of operational need and may change from time to time.

No matter how you volunteer your time and skills, Guide Dogs Queensland is committed to structuring our programs so that volunteers have support from other staff and are provided with relevant information to ensure successful completion of volunteer assignments.

Your Manager/Supervisor

All volunteers have a designated manager (a paid employee) and an on the job supervisor (another volunteer or paid employee). Supervisors may vary dependent on location and volunteer role. Supervisors are responsible for organising rosters, the daily supervision of volunteers and initial and ongoing training and support. Please make a note of your supervisor and do not hesitate to ask any questions about the performance of your duties. The majority of our volunteers in our varied programs will be required to complete a "Record of Hours" or sign-in sheet at each activity for authorisation by your supervisor/manager. This requirement will be discussed with you on the job.

If you want to discuss any aspect of your volunteer engagement, talk over any thoughts you have about your career path with the Association, or raise any other issues or concerns, please contact your supervisor/manager or the Human Resources (HR) department for support.

Induction

A list of current policies as they apply to volunteers is provided to volunteers during our induction programs or is available from your supervisor or local GDQ office. Please note that all Association policies are reviewed and developed on a regular basis and that policies and procedures may change from time to time.

It is your responsibility to familiarise yourself with the GDQ Policy and Procedures Manual which is located at the workplace.

Please ask your Supervisor for access, direction and/or clarification on any GDQ policy or procedure.

Training

GDQ is committed to ensuring that all volunteers have the necessary skills, experience and knowledge to undertake their work safely and effectively, through the provision of relevant and compulsory training and development programs.

When you start volunteering you will receive training/orientation for the role. Some positions will need volunteers with specific experience, while others will provide an opportunity to learn new skills. Training and orientation is provided to ensure volunteers have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary for the volunteer tasks and role.

Apart from initial training at the start of volunteering you may be invited to attend other training sessions or information meetings as required by Guide Dogs Queensland. Attendance at training sessions is an important part of developing your skills and expanding your knowledge of GDQ which will enhance your opportunity to become involved in various volunteer programs we offer.

Relationship between paid staff and volunteers

Paid staff and volunteers work together as a team. Whether voluntary or paid, each person has the right to be respected and treated fairly. It is the responsibility of all people to create a pleasant and respectful working environment for others. For each volunteer role there will be a staff coordinator/supervisor who will be able to answer your questions and provide support.



4 Code of Conduct

All workers (employees and volunteers) of Guide Dogs Queensland are required to comply with the following Code of Conduct at all times.

To help us achieve our mission, we have developed clear standards of conduct that promote a culture of fair and ethical behaviour. These will assist us to ensure we do the right thing, at the right time, for the right reasons.

This Code provides all workers with a clear understanding of the standard of conduct expected by Guide Dogs Queensland.

While it is not possible to provide a comprehensive set of rules to cover every conceivable situation, this Code of Conduct provides guiding principles and standards that should assist persons in determining acceptable standards of conduct.

Successful implementation of these standards will also promote a professional, positive image of Guide Dogs Queensland.

All workers must familiarise themselves with this Code and ensure that its provisions are observed. As well as helping you in your role, the Code of Conduct demonstrates to clients that we act with integrity and respect when conducting our work.

Overview

At Guide Dogs Queensland we abide by shared values that are the moral principles guiding us to do the right thing. This applies to our relationships with each other within GDQ and to all we come in contact with as part of our work. It also applies to the way we carry out our business.

Values

Why are they important?

- Our core values help us both as individuals and as an organisation to make the best decisions about the work that we do.
- Our core values educate our clients and potential clients about who and what we are as an organisation.
- Our core values help us to retain and recruit staff who fit with our organisational culture and who understand the importance of the work we do and why and how we do it.

CARES Values

- > Committed
- I am committed to the wellbeing of GDQ clients, donors, volunteers and my colleagues.
- I am passionate and dedicated to my role at Guide Dogs Queensland.
- Thoughtful and deliberate daily time management.

- I am responsive, diligent and productive.
- I lead by example.

> Accountable

- I take responsibility for my work, my behaviour, my actions and my attitude.
- I make mistakes, but I admit to them and I learn from them.
- I make timely decisions and ensure they are communicated effectively.
- I am diligent, transparent and honest in all my dealings.

> Respectful

- I treat our clients, our supporters and my colleagues with respect.
- I earn the respect of our clients, our supporters and my colleagues.
- I seek to always be on time and well prepared for meetings and appointments.
- I listen without interrupting.
- I participate but do not dominate in meetings.
- > Ethical
- I act in accordance with what I know to be right.
- I respectfully question behaviour or actions that are contrary to our values.
- I act with integrity and honesty in all my dealings.

- I am fair, just and truthful.
- Successful
- To be successful is to do the job right.
- I am committed to the success of the organisation, my colleagues and myself.
- I consult and collaborate with our stakeholders and my colleagues.
- I am an active participant in a learning environment.

Public Comment

Association staff and volunteers should not comment to media on any issue unless they are directed to do so by a nominated Association spokesperson.

As a volunteer if you are contacted by a media representative, you should decline to make any comment and refer the representative to the Marketing and Communications Manager. If the Marketing and Communications Manager is not available, the General Manager of Community Engagement or Chief Executive Officer should be contacted immediately.

Workers have the right to make public comment and enter into public debate on political, community and social issues in their private capacity. Where a public comment is made in a private capacity, workers are to ensure that it is clearly identified as not being an official comment or made in an official capacity.

Lawful Directions

Workers are to follow any lawful direction, instruction or order given by another person authorised to do so.

Conflict of Interest and Duties

Workers are to arrange their private affairs in a manner that will prevent any actual or apparent conflict of interest from arising. Workers are expected to perform their duties in such a manner that the integrity, objectivity and impartiality of GDQ are preserved.

During the course of their duties, workers should not give preference to any person, organisation or interest as a result of any association with that person, organisation or interest. Immediately on becoming aware that a conflict of interest between private interests and Association duty, real or perceived, has arisen or may arise, employees or volunteers must discuss the matter with their Department Manager, and may be required to detail the specifics of the real or perceived conflict of interest in writing to the Chief Executive Officer's Executive Assistant.

Gifts and Benefits

Workers are not to accept any personal or other benefit in relation to or

arising from the performance of their duties, unless authorised by the Chief Executive Officer.

Where any person offers monetary gifts to another individual or group, staff members concerned are not permitted to personally accept such gifts. Any such monetary gift would be considered as a donation to Guide Dogs Queensland and as such donor information will be recorded and a receipt will be issued.

Personal Conduct

At all times, workers are to act and be seen to act properly and in accordance with the terms of this Code of Conduct. Workers are not to act in a manner which will adversely reflect on Guide Dogs Queensland.

Standard of Dress/ Dress Code

All workers are to maintain a standard of personal and dress presentation appropriate to their work environment and which reflects well upon GDQ.

Workers who may be issued with uniforms are required to wear them when likely to come in contact with the public and/or clients. Uniforms must be maintained in a neat and tidy condition. Uniforms are not to be worn outside official work duties. Other uniform items such as those items of apparel issued in the interests of Workplace Health and Safety must be worn in accordance with the appropriate policies and procedures issued at the workplace.

Improper Access or Use of Information and Confidentiality

A number of GDQ employees and volunteers (staff) have access to sensitive and/or confidential information.

The following procedures and protocols must be followed when dealing with sensitive, confidential information on clients or commercially sensitive/ confidential information:

- 1. Staff members are expected to exercise commonsense and discretion when managing information, which is, or might reasonably be considered confidential, personal, sensitive or commercial. Staff must not:
- discuss any information about GDQ business with any person other than those GDQ staff who have a genuine need for the information to achieve outcomes in the course of their normal work;
- discuss any GDQ business in an open environment, where the conversation might reasonably be overheard by others (other staff, volunteers, clients, members of the public); or

- leave documents, files, case notes etc unattended or unsecured when not in use.
- 2. All GDQ staff are required to sign a Confidentiality Agreement Form as part of their employment conditions. Some staff also operate under professional group codes of practices.
- 3. Workers are prohibited from covertly recording conversations between parties.
- 4. Clients have a right to be informed about our practices concerning confidential documents and information in general. Clients have a right to access all documents relating specifically to them personally.
- 5. All material produced by staff and volunteers in the course of their work with GDQ is the property of GDQ. This includes case notes, client records and other documents.

Unauthorised, improper or unlawful access or use of any official or confidential information is viewed as misconduct and will not be tolerated. Where an employee or volunteer breaches this provision, GDQ will initiate action to mitigate the damage and/or undertake appropriate disciplinary proceedings.

Performance of Official Duties

In the performance of their duties, employees and volunteers are to:

- Demonstrate high standards of professional integrity and honesty;
- Perform any duties associated with their position diligently and to the best of their ability;
- Set and maintain standards of conduct that are consistent with Association goals and policies, and be seen at all times to act in support of the goals and policies;
- Promote and encourage employees under their supervision to exercise high standards of personal and professional conduct;
- Act with fairness and compassion;
- Provide conscientious, effective, efficient and courteous service to all Association clients and members of the public; and

Actively contribute to the achievement of GDQ's mission and goals.

Conduct Towards Others

In the course of their duties, employees and volunteers are to:

• Treat all persons with respect and dignity and in a reasonable, equitable and fair manner;

- Not intimidate, engage in sexual or other forms of harassment, unlawfully discriminate or otherwise abuse any person;
- Observe merit in recruitment, promotion and other selection processes;
- Adhere to management principles and practices which foster the rights and well-being of members; and
- Not induce others to breach this Code.

Please also refer to our Terms of Engagement Policy.

Conduct Towards Animals

In the course of their duties, employees and volunteers are to observe the following rights of breeding stock, puppies, Guide Dogs-in-training and Guide Dogs (qualified, reclassified and retired):

- To be well treated at all times and never mistreated, ill-treated or cruelly treated;
- To be protected from physical and other attack;
- To positive and considerate training techniques;
- To quality food, water and shelter;
- To proper veterinary care;
- To adequate periods of rest and play;
- To retire when recommended by Guide Dogs Queensland and/or its consultant veterinarian.

Thinking It Through – Resolving Dilemmas

While it is not possible to have a rule for every situation, the following points should be used as a guide to help make the 'right' decision:

- Discuss the situation with your supervisor, manager or other people in your team.
- Imagine changing places and being on the receiving end of your decision.
- Ask yourself what others would do in same situation.
- Would you like your situation publicised by the media? Imagine how other people and the media would react if the situation became generally known and whether you could comfortably defend your actions to your family, your supervisor and the media.
- Think about what obligations you may face or what expectations could arise should you go ahead.
- Think about who will benefit is it fair to GDQ, the client, those who donate to us, your co-workers, and yourself?
- If you still have any doubts about the right thing to do, ask your manager for advice.

Reporting of Non-compliance

All workers are encouraged to report any corrupt practices, breaches of the law and any matter detrimental to GDQ or its reputation. Reporting of non-compliance with GDQ's Code of Conduct may be carried out anonymously if desired. Please refer to GDQ's Whistleblower Policy for information.

Consequences of Non-compliance

GDQ assumes and expects that staff want to act ethically. **Nevertheless**, **all employees and volunteers are accountable for their actions.** Any alleged breach of this Code of Conduct by an employee/volunteer will be investigated and addressed in line with GDQ's Discipline Policy.



Thinking it Through - Resolving Dilemmas



5 NDIS Code of Conduct

As a registered NDIS provider, Guide Dogs Queensland is certified under the NDIS Quality and Safeguarding Framework and all workers have to comply with the NDIS Code of Conduct. The Code promotes safe and ethical service delivery and requires workers and providers who deliver NDIS support to:

- Act with respect for individual rights to freedom of expression, self-determination, and decisionmaking in accordance with relevant laws and conventions;
- Respect the privacy of people with disability;

- Provide supports and services in a safe and competent manner with care and skill;
- Act with integrity, honest, and transparency;
- Promptly take steps to raise and act on concerns about matters that might have an impact on the quality and safety of supports provided to people with disability;
- Take all reasonable steps to prevent and respond to all forms of violence, exploitation, neglect, and abuse;
- Take all reasonable steps to prevent sexual misconduct.

6 Human Resources

HR Help for volunteer

Welcome on board! We are excited about you joining us and want to ensure that you are successful in your new role.

We are here to support and connect with you whenever the need arises and can help you with settling in at GDQ. Whether it's a simple question or more complex issue, the HR team are here to assist you with your general volunteer enquiries and can help with any questions covering

- Jobs at GDQ
- Volunteering
- Safety Matters
- Conditions of employment
- WorkCover or medical issues
- Equal opportunity information
- Company values
- Conflict resolutions
- Performance and development
- Wellness and Employee Assistance Programs

Please feel welcome to get in touch, we look forward to working with you at GDQ!



7 Policies and Procedures our Commitment to you

What you need to know...

GDQ management provides workforce policies that support clear, consistent and transparent organisational practices.

GDQ aims to ensure all volunteers are familiar with policies relating to their involvement. Volunteers should address any concerns or lack of understanding regarding policies to their direct supervisor. Our staff will advise you on particular policies and procedures you need to know in order to carry out your volunteer assignments.

Policy development is the responsibility of the Quality Department in consultation with relevant stakeholders. GDQ aims to ensure staff are familiar with policies relating to their employment.

Please note that GDQ policies are reviewed and developed on a regular basis and may change from time to time.



8 Safety

At GDQ, we attribute our success to high standards of Quality, Service, Teamwork and Professionalism. Our clients and the community have come to expect these standards and it is only through the efforts of each and every one of us that we will continue to meet these expectations.

Workplace Health and Safety

Guide Dogs Queensland holds in high regard the health and safety of employees, visitors, contractors and neighbours. GDQ is committed to the elimination of hazards and factors that could contribute to accidents, where practical.

All accidents, incidents and near misses must be reported to your manager as soon as possible.

A full list of Workplace Health and Safety policies and procedures is available through the workplace. Certain safety procedures apply to specific departments and workers. These policies and procedures will be updated from time to time.

Safety is also an attitude you bring to work with you every day. Everybody who works at GDQ has an important role to play.

Your Obligations:

• Follow all reasonable, lawful instructions for the health and safety of yourselves and others.

Good safety + Good practice = Good business

Staff (Including Volunteers) Must Not:

- Wilfully or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of safety.
- Wilfully place at risk the health and safety of any person in the workplace.

Work Health and Safety (WHS) Committee

GDQ's Workplace Health and Safety Committee has been established in accordance with the Work Health and Safety Act, comprising representatives from each area of GDQ. The committee provides an opportunity to share and consult information about workplace safety.

The role of the WHS Committee is to:

- Represent the safety concerns raised in the representative's area/ department;
- Be the first point of contact for employees to raise safety concerns and issues; and
- To advise GDQ of safety concerns and issues

The committee welcomes any suggestion on safety you may have. You can advise your manager about your safety concerns or any member of the Work Health and Safety team (as identified on site).

Vaccination for 'At Risk' Tasks

Appropriate immunization may be offered or required where you may engage in 'at risk' activities. Workers will be advised by management to seek vaccination/s considered appropriate for the activities they perform.

Relevant health information concerning vaccination will be provided to workersas required.

Evidence of immunisation should then be provided o your manager.

All immunisation records will be kept confidential by Human Resources.

There will be some situations where staff members are unwilling or unable to be vaccinated. Acknowledgement of Declined Vaccination forms must be completed and retained for anyone who declines to be immunised.

Restricting those employees/ volunteers from duties relevant to the vaccination may be required.

Vehicles

Only employees of GDQ are authorised to drive Association vehicles unless otherwise authorised by the Chief Executive or a General Manager. As a volunteer, if you have permission to drive a GDQ vehicle, you must:

- Provide a copy of your current Driver's Licence.
- Where permission is given for any person for private use of GDQ vehicle, petrol and other costs (including vehicle recovery and insurance excess, should an accident occur at that time), are the responsibility of that person.
- Drivers are responsible for costs involved in traffic violations and offences.
- Unless otherwise arranged, vehicles are to be returned to the workplace during periods of absence/leave.
- NO alcohol or drugs are to be consumed or taken while in charge of GDQ vehicle.
- Exterior and interior of vehicle must be kept clean and in good order at all times.
- Vehicle mileage must be given and shown on fuel and service dockets.
- Driver log sheets must be completed at each journey and handed in weekly.

Your manager is to be advised as soon as possible after ANY incident involving an Association vehicle.

Any accidents or near misses must be reported to your GDQ Manager.

9 Important Information

Acceptance and Appointment

Volunteers are not able to begin their volunteer duties until they have been officially informed of their placement and have completed all necessary screening and paperwork.

Absenteeism

Some roles require volunteers to commit to a regular time for their volunteer activities. Volunteers who are unable to attend or will be late should notify their supervisor prior to their scheduled start time to enable a replacement to be found where necessary.

Continued absenteeism adversely effects GDQ's ability to provide services and coordinate community events and may result in a review of the volunteer's work assignment.

Inductions

All staff are required to complete a series of induction programs with Guide Dogs Queensland.

Volunteer may be required to undertake such Other inductions programs covering organizational induction, such as work work area inductions, vision impaired training and dog handling skills which will be organised during the course of your engagement. All induction programs are compulsory.

Learning and Development

GDQ is committed to ensuring that volunteers have the necessary skills, experience and knowledge to undertake their work safely and effectively.

We do so by actively encouraging you to attend training and development sessions relevant to your role, in addition to compulsory policy and procedure training and specific on the job induction.

Equal Employment Opportunity

Equal Employment Opportunity simply means providing a workplace where decisions are based on individual performance and ability. For instance, equal access to jobs, promotions and training is everyone's right. It is not determined by such things as age, race, colour, sex, religion, marital status, sexual preference, disability or impairment.

All persons at GDQ can compete equally for positions and development as decisions are made and evaluated on individual performance.

Your Own Ideas

While executing your work, you may come up with ideas, better ways of doing things or constructive criticism. We welcome feedback and suggestions as they are important to successful operations. Please relay feedback and suggestions to your supervisor/manager or the HR department.

Managing Performance and Behaviour

As a matter of policy, GDQ seeks to resolve conduct and performance issues using GDQ's professional performance management system which may incorporate interviews, written warnings and additional training and supervision. In some instances, however, when a staff member breaches policy or engages in unacceptable behaviour as a representative of GDQ, disciplinary action, including termination, may be necessary.



Smoking

Smoking is not permitted in any GDQ Office or building or in any GDQ vehicle by staff, volunteers or clients. Some locations, however, do allow a designated area where smoking is permitted. Check with your manager.

Identification

You may be issued with an Identification Tag which must be worn at all times whilst representing GDQ and carrying out public duties. All identification must be returned to GDQ when your volunteering ends.

Guide Dogs Property/ Intellectual Property/ Personal Property

All property, stock and assets used to conduct GDQ business belongs to Guide Dogs Queensland. GDQ assumes no liability for employee's personal property brought into the workplace or at any GDQ work site.

Leaving Guide Dogs Queensland

A volunteer may resign from their position at any time and for any reason by giving written notice to their supervisor/manager. Volunteers are obliged to return all GDQ property prior to leaving. In all instances, volunteer positions and roles will be reviewed at intervals by GDQ Management. GDQ Management reserves the right to terminate any volunteer position based on operational need.

Volunteer records

GDQ maintains personnel records of each volunteer which remain the property of GDQ and are treated as confidential documents. It is the responsibility of the volunteer to inform their supervisor of any changes to their personal details or changes to circumstances that may effect their work.

Volunteer Recognition

Service by volunteers to Guide Dogs Queensland is greatly appreciated by members of GDQ's Board of Management, the Chief Executive and staff.

Specific awards for years of service and involvement in various programs are presented on an annual basis.

The Last Word...

As volunteer with GDQ, we hope you find your engagement stimulating and rewarding. Remember, your manager and your fellow staff are here to help with any questions you may have.

(ongratulations and welcome to the Team!

GDQ Registered offices

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