

# Guide Dogs.

It's a fact, Guide Dogs can go almost everywhere

—  
Guide Dogs Queensland  
2024



# Guide Dogs provide more than just mobility benefits to their handlers. They enhance the social participation, well-being, and independence of a person with low vision or blindness.

Working Guide Dogs have a legal right to access any event, business, public premises, public transport or rideshare services in Queensland. Their right to enter these places is protected under the **Guide Hearing and Assistance Dog Act 2009 (the Act)**.

Under the Act, a guide, hearing or assistance dog is defined as **a dog trained to perform identifiable physical tasks and behaviors to assist a person with a disability to reduce the person's need for support.**

## Where can Guide Dogs go?

Guide Dogs can go almost everywhere their handler goes including:

- cafes, restaurants, and places of accommodation such as a private rental arrangement or holiday accommodation
- travel on any form of public transport, including taxis, buses, planes, rideshare vehicles, trams, and trains
- hotels, private rental arrangements, or holiday accommodation

- any public place e.g. theatres, concert halls, galleries
- healthcare or medical suites
- retail stores (including supermarkets and food stores)

It's important to remember that if a Guide Dog is refused entry somewhere, so is their handler. This is a form of disability discrimination which could result in an on-the-spot fine or penalty notice for an individual or business. These laws also apply to people training Guide Dogs and Guide Dog puppies.

There are only a few exceptions for when a Guide Dog and its handler are not permitted to enter. These include certain parts of a health service facility, including:

- an in-patient ward, labour wards, procedure rooms, or a recovery area
- an area in which the standard of hygiene is maintained at a significantly high level for the purpose of preventing infection or the spread of disease
- an ambulance

- a part of a public place or public passenger vehicle where food is normally prepared e.g. a food van
- any venue may exclude a guide, hearing, or assistance dog from its facility if the dog's behavior - barking or growling at other people - poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others.

## The difference between a Guide Dog and comfort dog or pet

For a dog to be approved or certified as a working dog under the Act, it must:

- be able to be used as an aid by a person with a disability
- have recently passed a public access test that has determined the dog is safe and effective in a public place or public passenger vehicle and is able to be controlled by its handler
- not be a restricted breed as defined under the Local Government Act 1993
- be de-sexed and vaccinated
- have not been declared a dangerous dog under a local law



From an early age a Guide Dog undergoes extensive training. They learn how to help their handler get on and off modes of public transport safely and they learn how to behave in public spaces. For example, a Guide Dog in a restaurant or café setting is taught to sit under the chair out of the way of patrons or staff.

A pet or a comfort dog does not qualify as a certified dog.

## How can I tell if a dog is certified?

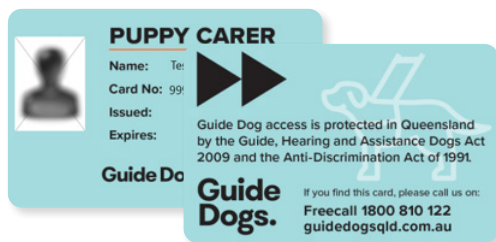
All certified guide, hearing and assistance dogs are required to display the approved badge on their coat or harness. If you are unsure about the legitimacy of a dog, politely ask the handler about their situation.

Under the Act, approved handlers are issued with an identity card that includes a photo of the handler and their dog. Visitors from interstate may not have Queensland identification however, in Australia, any person with a disability accompanied by a support animal is provided with the right of access under the *Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992*.

### Guide Dogs Queensland ID Card



### Guide Dogs Queensland Puppy Carer Card



## Taxis and rideshare services

A common challenge for Guide Dogs and their handlers is being refused rides in taxis or in ride share services, even though they have legal rights to these services as protected under the Act.

Taxi companies and individual taxi owners and rideshare drivers and operators cannot refuse services to individuals accompanied by a guide, hearing, or assistance dog.

Taxis are also prohibited from charging higher fares or fees to a person with their guide, hearing, or assistance dog. Fines of up to \$11,000 for individuals and up to \$55,000 for corporations can apply.

### Remember



There is no such thing as a 'no dogs' policy when it comes to certified guide, hearing, assistance, or trainee support dogs clearly displaying an approved guide, hearing and assistance dog badge. The Act provides them with a right of access.

**We are here to help. For more information please contact:**

Guide Dogs

1978 Gympie Road, Bald Hills QLD 4036

 **07 3500 9060**

 **clients@guidedogsqld.com.au**

 **guidedogsqld.com.au**

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