

## **Irish Guide Dogs for the Blind Client Charter**

### **Introduction**

The Irish Guide Dogs for the Blind is a national organisation, founded in 1976, to support people who are vision impaired. Over the years the objectives of the organisation were expanded to support families of children with autism and young people to achieve improved mobility and independence.

We strive to provide the highest quality of services in partnership with our clients while planning for the future and valuing Clients, Volunteers and each other.

Our Client Charter outlines our service commitments and details what you can expect in your dealings with us. We are committed to providing quality services responding to our Clients' needs and expectations.

We define a Client as any person/family currently in receipt of IGDB services, those who remain eligible for a service or have received a service in the past.

The Irish Guide Dogs for the Blind works in accordance with the following core values:

Conscientiousness – we take pride in what is done and how it is done. We will always present a professional and capable manner in all tasks that are completed. We will have clarity of purpose, set a good example for others and will be accountable for what is done and take ownership for achievements.

Excellence – we strive to continuously improve our performance.

Integrity – we will lead by example and will be fair and consistent when working with Clients, Colleagues and Volunteers. We will take ownership of achievements and responsibility for failure.

Optimism – we are solution-focused and look to bring a positive attitude to challenges. We will celebrate wins and encourage others to do the same. We do not fear failure – we believe we can all learn lessons for the next time together.

Respect – we will treat Clients, Colleagues and Volunteers with equal respect, and we will be open-minded and tolerant of different views.

Teamwork – we support a team environment which promotes wellbeing and maximises personal effectiveness. We aim to communicate clearly and effectively with others and strive to be supportive, consistent and professional with Clients, Colleagues and Volunteers.

In addition to our values, we ensure our resources, services and time are distributed in a fair and reputable manner to all Clients, regardless of their ethnicity, gender, religion or sexual orientation.

The Irish Guide Dogs for the Blind is fully committed to Client engagement that is ethical, legal and consistent with our values and mission.

### **Our commitment to you**

We are committed to providing quality services in response to our Clients' needs and expectations.

In line with our core values, you can expect us to:

- o be professional;
- o treat you with dignity, courtesy and respect;
- o provide you with clear, accurate and timely information;
- o continually look for better ways to deliver our service to you;
- o ensure our staff have the skills, information and other resources necessary to assist you; and
- o provide you with information in accordance with your communication needs and preferences.

### **Our Service standards**

We aim to provide quality services to our Clients. We will fulfil this by meeting the service standards outlined below.

1. When developing services, we will:
  - Consult with you.
  - design service delivery based on a detailed understanding of your needs and expectations.
  
2. When delivering services, we will provide:
  - clear, accurate advice and information.
  - ready access for Clients.
  - fair, unbiased treatment.

- an explanation of our decisions.
- seek feedback to drive future progress.

3. When evaluating our work, we will:

- monitor all Client feedback.
- analyse feedback without judgement.

4. If you phone us, we will:

- return telephone messages promptly.
- respond to queries within a reasonable timeframe if we are unable to resolve immediately.

5. If you e-mail or write to us, we will:

- respond to written queries and requests for information within 48 hours. If your query is complex, we will provide an interim response to inform you of our progress.

## **Client Communication**

Regardless of how you communicate with us, we aim to ensure that you receive a

Regardless of how you communicate with us, we aim to ensure that you receive a professional, prompt and courteous response from us. In addition, we acknowledge our Clients' preferred methods of communication and are committed to responding to

you in accordance with your preferences and needs.

All communication with you will be accessible.

We will respond to all telephone calls and emails within 48 hours.

Clients can contact us via a range of channels as outlined below.

#### Telephone

- Our telephone number is [0818 506 300](tel:0818506300)
- Phones will be staffed between 9am and 3:00pm Monday to Friday, excluding public holidays.
- Occasionally, these hours will be altered for training purposes or during times of low/high demand.
- You will be treated with courtesy and respect in all telephone contact.

#### Writing

The most efficient way to contact us is by email at [Info@GuideDogs.ie](mailto:Info@GuideDogs.ie).

Clients may also write to us at our head office at the below address:

Irish Guide Dogs for the Blind Headquarters & National Training  
Centre Carrigrohane, Model Farm Road, Co. Cork, **T12 WT4A**

- Emails and post will be checked daily during normal office hours Monday to Friday, excluding public holidays.
- We will acknowledge receipt of your email within 24 hours.
- You will be treated with courtesy and respect in all written correspondence.
- A contact name will be provided in all written responses.

#### **Client Complaints**

We are committed to providing a highly responsive service to our Clients. If, for any reason, you are not satisfied with the service you receive, you have the option to make a complaint. If we make a mistake, we will acknowledge and resolve the issue where we can.

You can access our complaints policy here.

<https://www.guidedogs.ie/about/governance/feedback-complaints>

## **Client Privacy**

We take our responsibility for the privacy of Clients seriously. It is always our aim to be compliant with regard to all aspects of data protection legislation such as the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and to process your personal data in a fair and transparent manner.

For further information on how we process your personal information, please refer to our Privacy Policy or consult with our Data Protection Officer (DPO) at [DPO@Guidedogs.ie](mailto:DPO@Guidedogs.ie) should you wish to find out more.

You can access our privacy policy here:

<https://www.guidedogs.ie/privacy>

## **How you can help us to help you**

We welcome your opinion and appreciate the time taken to bring any suggestions to our attention. If you have any comments or suggestions on how we can improve our service, you can use the Client Feedback mechanism.

Email us at [ClientFeedback@GuideDogs.ie](mailto:ClientFeedback@GuideDogs.ie)

You can help us by:

- following our core values in your dealings with us.
- treating our staff with courtesy and respect.

- telling us if you have requirements so that we may accommodate you.
- providing us with the information we need to respond to your enquiry.
- responding to all reasonable requests in a timely fashion.
- supporting the Irish Guide Dogs for the Blind community to ensure the long-

term future of the organisation is maintained.

## **How to contact us**

Lean Kennedy, Advocacy & Policy Officer - Mobile 085 857 0751  
[LKennedy@GuideDogs.ie](mailto:LKennedy@GuideDogs.ie)

Simon Osbourne, Guide Dog Training Lead - Mobile 087 751 1725  
[Simon@GuideDogs.ie](mailto:Simon@GuideDogs.ie)

Nathalie Wood, Assistance Dog Training Lead, Mobile 087 989 773  
[NWood@GuideDogs.ie](mailto:NWood@GuideDogs.ie)

Mary Cawley, Employment Vision Programme Manager and Orientation and Mobility Instructor - Mobile 087 791 0129  
[MaryCawley@GuideDogs.ie](mailto:MaryCawley@GuideDogs.ie)

Victoria Elliott, Child Mobility Officer - Mobile 086 380 7008  
[Victoria@Guidedogs.ie](mailto:Victoria@Guidedogs.ie)

Sudesh Hendrick, Dog Welfare Officer - Mobile 087 125 0141  
[SHendrick@Guidedogs.ie](mailto:SHendrick@Guidedogs.ie)

Caroline Sexton, Client Services Administrator Assistance & Community Dogs –  
Tel 021 487 8280, Mobile 087 965 2362  
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