



Guide Dogs for the Blind

HIGHLANDS RANCH
PUPPY RAISERS

Thank you for your interest in Guide Dogs for the Blind – Highlands Ranch, CO Puppy Raisers. We hope this document will help answer any questions you have. Please feel free to contact our club leader if you have more questions.

About us:

We are a Guide Dogs for the Blind volunteer puppy raising club located in Highlands Ranch, CO. Guide Dogs for the Blind (GDB) is a nonprofit, charitable organization that was established in 1942 to provide a safe means of mobility for people who are blind and visually impaired. GDB is the largest guide dog school in the country, and continues its dedication to quality student training services and extensive follow-up

support for graduates. GDB receives no government funds. Services are provided to students from the United States and Canada at no cost to them.

Volunteer puppy raisers receive a guide dog puppy at approximately 8 weeks old, and the pup will return to one of GDB's campuses for formal training between 15 and 17 months old. We are responsible for teaching the puppies good manners and providing them with comprehensive socialization experiences. Puppy raisers can have other pets in their home and if you are not able to commit to raising a puppy full time, there are still other ways to get involved with our local puppy club, such as puppy sitting. And, GDB's puppy raising program complements many FFA, 4H, home schooling, high school, and college programs.

Club Meetings:

We have regular puppy club meetings twice a month, and a socialization outing once a month. In addition, raisers with puppies under 5 months old attend weekly training meetings with their puppy. No previous experience is necessary to be a puppy sitter or puppy raiser. We provide training and support at our monthly puppy club meetings.

Our regular puppy club meetings are held the 1st & 3rd Thursday of each month. Our exact location varies, so please contact us for the details about our next meeting.

You can find more information, including an up-to-date calendar of club activities, on our website www.HighlandsRanchPuppies.com.

You can also find more information at Guide Dogs for the Blind, guidedogs.com.

A volunteer is required to attend a minimum of three consecutive meetings to really get a feel for whether this is a project they can commit to or not. It's a fun project! It's also a lot of work. When a volunteer has attended at least three consecutive meetings, they may request a volunteer application from their club leader. Once the completed application is received, the leader will schedule a home visit/fence check. The volunteer needs to demonstrate a minimum level of puppy handling skills, including appropriate use of cues, proper training techniques, appropriate use of headcollars, etc, and complete a couple puppy sits of program puppies. Then they may be approved to be a puppy sitter or raise a puppy.

Puppy raisers and sitters are required to attend 80% of required meetings and outings during each rolling six-month period of participation in the program. In addition, raisers and sitters are required to attend training workshops twice a year, and our annual fund raiser.

Financial Responsibility:

Guide Dogs for the Blind provides puppy raisers with supplies such as leashes, puppy jackets, collars, and approved veterinary care. They also provide for transportation from the whelping kennel to the puppy raising home, and from the puppy raising home back to campus for formal training. The raiser is responsible for any additional expenses such as dog food, toys, and equipment.

Fundraising:

Our club has one main fundraiser each year, and we ask each puppy raiser and club member to participate. The fundraiser is running an aid station for the Elephant Rock bike race generally held on the first Sunday in June. Specific details are provided each year in the months leading up to the race.

Leader:

Our club leader is:

Darlene White

(303) 525-2306

HighlandsRanchPuppies@gmail.com

Guide Dogs for the Blind:

You can find more information about Guide Dogs for the Blind on their website:

Website: guidedogs.com

National Headquarters
P.O. Box 151200
San Rafael, CA 94915-1200
(800) 295-4050

California Campus
350 Los Ranchitos Road
San Rafael, CA 94903
(415) 499-4000

Oregon Campus
32901 S.E. Kelso Road
Boring, OR 97009
(503) 668-2100



Fact Sheet: Helpful Info for Potential Puppy Raisers

A Guide Dog puppy requires anywhere from 12 to 18 months of development in a raiser's home before it is ready to return to Guide Dogs for its formal guidework training. A puppy raiser is responsible for teaching a Guide Dog pup good behavior both at home and in public, and what to expect and accept in this busy world. The initial socialization, basic obedience, praise and attention that a dog receives in its puppy raising home prepare a pup for the diverse situations it will encounter as a guide.

The puppy raiser's goal is to develop an energetic and curious pup into a mature, dependable dog that has the following characteristics:

- Good house manners. The puppy is well-behaved and will not relieve in the house, is quiet and calm, eats only his own food, and is not destructive.
- Socialized to the world. The puppy has been exposed to a wide variety of people, things and places and accepts new situations in a calm and thoughtful manner.
- Well-traveled. The puppy is relaxed and comfortable when traveling in all modes of transportation: cars, buses, trains, airplanes, ferries, subways, etc.
- People-friendly. The puppy bonds well with people, enjoys receiving verbal praise and is eager to please.
- Animal-friendly. The puppy is calm and appropriate around all sorts of animals: other dogs, cats, birds, livestock, etc.
- Responsive. The puppy obeys basic commands and is cooperative during various training exercises.

The Puppy Raising Commitment

Local representatives interview potential puppy raisers in their homes. Potential raisers submit completed applications for approval and attend preliminary club meetings. In addition:

- All members of the household must be committed to raising a puppy.
- Raisers can be adults or youth, 9 years and older.
- Raisers must provide a safe and secure living environment. Young puppies need to be supervised throughout the day. All puppies must be on leash when not in a secure area.
- There must be a compatible relationship with other pets in the home.
- Puppies must sleep indoors.
- Raisers must provide daily exercise and socialization for the puppies.
- Raisers and puppies are to attend regularly scheduled club meetings and outings.
- Raisers are responsible for some expenses, including food and incidental expenses. These expenses may be tax-deductible, depending on the raisers' state tax laws.
- Raisers must use only Guide Dog approved training and management techniques when working with the puppies.
- Raisers need to be willing to travel to meet with Guide Dog representatives for evaluation of the pup's progress and/or attend training workshops.
- Raisers must be positive representatives of Guide Dogs for the Blind within their communities.
- Raisers are required to release the puppy back to Guide Dogs for the Blind at GDB's request.

Although there is a lot of work involved in raising a Guide Dog puppy, the rewards are very great. By raising a Guide Dog puppy, you have the ability to make a difference in the life of someone who is visually impaired.

Guide Dogs supports puppy raisers in certain areas within the eight Western states. Prospective raisers can check the availability of raiser groups in their local area by contacting the Puppy Raising and Dog Placement Department at Guide Dogs for the Blind at (800) 295-4050.

(800) 295-4050 | www.guidedogs.com

National Office: P.O. Box 151200, San Rafael, CA 94915-1200
California Campus: 350 Los Ranchitos Road, San Rafael, CA 94903 | (415) 499-4000
Oregon Campus: 32901 S.E. Kelso Road, Boring, OR 97009 | (503) 668-2100



Fact Sheet: Puppy Raising FAQ

Q: How old is a puppy when it is placed with a puppy raiser?

A: A puppy is placed in the home of a volunteer raiser when it is at least 8 weeks old.

Q: How long does a puppy stay with the puppy raiser?

A: A puppy usually remains in the puppy raiser home until it is between 13 and 18 months old. The length of time may vary, however, depending on the individual puppy's development or Guide Dogs for the Blind's need for dogs.

Q: Do I need dog training experience to be a puppy raiser?

A: No, but it is helpful if you have owned a dog previously.

Q: What if the 13-18 months is too long of a commitment?

A: Guide Dogs for the Blind also needs short-term raisers who will keep a puppy until it is at least 20 weeks old. Short-term raisers housebreak and begin training the puppy before it is placed with another raiser who will finish raising the pup.

Q: Are there meetings to attend?

A: Yes, puppy raising groups meet regularly under the direction of a leader trained by Guide Dogs for the Blind. These informational meetings offer a place to learn about training techniques, meet other raisers and participate in excursions with the puppy. Guide Dogs for the Blind asks that each puppy raising group meet at least twice a month, but are encouraged to meet weekly with raisers who have puppies younger than 20 weeks of age. The meetings generally last 1-2 hours depending on the activities scheduled. Since Guide Dogs places puppies in raiser homes throughout the eight Western states (California, Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Utah, Colorado, Arizona and Nevada), the meeting times and places will vary depending on location.

Q: Do I have to be a member of the 4-H organization to raise a puppy?

A: We have both youth and adult raisers; some youth raisers have 4-H affiliation. Puppy raising groups that are not affiliated with 4-H are organized through corporations, churches, service clubs and Guide Dogs itself.

Q: What if I live within the eight Western states and there is no puppy raising club in my county?

A: Contact the Puppy Raising Department at Guide Dogs for the Blind. A member of the staff can provide the requirements needed for forming a new puppy raising club.

Q: Where does a Guide Dog puppy stay when the raiser is out of town?

Raisers in puppy raising groups frequently tradeoff and supervise each other's puppies when the raisers are away. In some cases, a puppy can accompany the raiser on an out-of-town trip (with approval) in order to further the pup's socialization.

Q: Where can a Guide Dog puppy accompany its puppy raiser?

A: Raisers take their well-behaved pups to malls, grocery stores, school and work, among other places, to expose them to a variety of situations. The puppy raising club's regularly scheduled meetings often include outings specifically designed for puppy socialization. The club's leader also teaches the raisers appropriate ways in which to expose the puppies to a wide range of socialization experiences.

Q: Do Guide Dog puppies require special foods?

A: Yes, Guide Dogs for the Blind does require that Guide Dog puppies be fed one of several specifically chosen brands of high-quality dry dog food. A Guide Dog puppy should never receive table scraps.

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Q: Can I raise a puppy if I'm gone during the day?

A: Yes, as long as there are provisions made to relieve and exercise the puppy during the day. Accepting an older puppy that doesn't have as rigorous a relieving schedule could also be a consideration.

Q: Can I have other pets at the same time?

A: Yes. Controlled, supervised interaction between a Guide Dog puppy and other animals is quite beneficial.

Q: Who pays for the Guide Dog puppy's expenses?

A: The raiser pays for a puppy's food, toys and incidental equipment such as grooming tools, food bowls and a crate (if needed). Guide Dogs for the Blind provides most basic training equipment and other supplies, and raisers are eligible for our Veterinary Partnership Program.

Q: Are the costs of raising a puppy tax deductible?

A: Yes. Guide Dogs for the Blind is a nonprofit charitable organization, and all expenses incurred by the raiser as they relate to raising the puppy are considered a donation to Guide Dogs. Guide Dogs suggests all puppy raisers consult with a tax advisor to receive the proper IRS requirements for documentation.

Q: What if a puppy doesn't become a guide?

A: If a dog is "career-changed" before it becomes a guide, the puppy raiser is given priority to adopt the dog as a pet. If the raiser is unable or chooses not to adopt the puppy, the Dog Placement Department at Guide Dogs has a long list of applicants eager to offer these dogs loving adoptive homes.

Q: Is it time-consuming to raise a puppy?

A: Raising a Guide Dog puppy does involve spending time grooming, socializing and caring for the puppy. Puppy raisers are taught ways in which to work ongoing training into a daily schedule.

Q: Do raisers find it hard to return the pups?

A: Puppy raisers do become very attached to their puppies, however, they are comforted with the knowledge that their dogs will go on to become loving partners for people who are blind or visually impaired. At special graduation ceremonies, all puppy raisers are invited to formally present their dogs as guides, share their puppy raising experiences and develop friendships with their dogs' new partners.