

Client Services charter

The Client Services Charter explains what you can expect from Guide Dogs NSW/ACT and our staff. It also explains what you can do to assist us to provide the best service possible.

About us

We believe that vision loss is not a barrier to having a fulfilling life. We understand that independence and mobility enable people the freedom to enjoy life, embrace new experiences, and reach their goals.

Everything we do is underpinned by our values. Our values are

Commitment	I am reliable I take responsibility I do the best I can
Empathy	I am sensitive to the circumstances of others I offer support when needed I listen actively
Respect	I treat people the way I would like to be treated I value the expertise of others I am positive in my interactions with others
Integrity	I am open and honest I act professionally I do what is in the best interest of Guide Dogs NSW/ACT

Our commitment to you

Our goal is to provide you with the highest quality of service. We will listen to and work with you to ensure you receive the best service and support.

What you can expect from us

We will

- make it easy for you to contact us
- help you apply for or use our services
- inform you about your rights and responsibilities
- arrange for an interpreter or other language services, if required
- do the things we say we will, for example, return your phone call at a designated time
- be polite and respect your views, opinions, and personal circumstances such as your culture, family situation, age, gender, disability, faith, sexual orientation, or gender identity
- protect your personal information and only use it for the right reasons
- inform you about your eligibility for a service or if there is a waiting list
- provide you with advice about other services that might be available
- provide you with opportunities to be involved in decisions about the services you access
- inform you about any decision that affects you and the reasons for that decision
- explain the way you can request a decision to be reviewed or the process to make a complaint
- exercise due care and skill to reduce the risk of injury to you.

How you can assist us

You can assist us to provide you with a better service if you or your support person were to

- provide us with complete and accurate information
- inform us about changes in your life that might affect your program
- treat our staff with respect and courtesy
- do the things you have agreed to do for example, keeping appointments or cancelling these in advance, if possible
- nominate a support person to assist you in liaising with us, if required
- respect our property and other people using our services
- provide us with honest feedback about our services.

Privacy and Confidentiality

Our Privacy Policy ([privacy policy](#)) sets out our approach to the management of personal information and contains information about

- how you can access and correct your personal information
- how to opt out of receiving our marketing communications and
- how you can make a complaint about privacy

Duty of care and dignity of risk

Duty of Care means that while you are receiving our services we will do everything reasonable to take care of your safety and wellbeing at all times. At Guide Dogs NSW/ACT, we have a responsibility to be careful where injury or harm is foreseeable. We also have a responsibility and duty of care to staff. We will not be able to provide supports where duty of care to clients and/or staff is compromised.

Dignity of risk recognises that the ability to take risks can assist a person to develop, and can add to a person's life experience. It also envisages that sometimes informed risk-taking will fail.

Risk taking is

- integral to learning, development, and identity
- the way to explore difference, new places, and new relationships
- central to an innovative, creative practice, and the exercise of judgement and
- a potential pathway to liberation from fears and dependencies

Dignity of risk recognises that people should be able to do things that involve a level of risk. This is part of exercising the right to personal autonomy to make decisions about a person's own life. It includes supporting people to take informed risks to improve the quality of their lives.

Feedback

We welcome feedback about our services. It assists us to understand your experience and to better meet your needs. We also know that you might want to make a specific complaint about our service.

Making a complaint

Guide Dogs NSW/ACT is committed to providing a fair and just culture in which all feedback, including complaints are encouraged and welcomed.

We recognise, respect and encourage the rights of individuals, family, friends and/or advocates to raise complaints without fear of retribution. If required an interpreter can be provide to assist clients throughout the complaint process.

We want to resolve complaints openly, honestly, and quickly. You can make a complaint in person, over the phone, in writing or via email. Complaints are kept private and confidential and access is only provided to staff that are required to know the details of the complaint. Complaints are stored securely in a Complaint Register. The nature of a complaint is not detailed in your client file.

If you want to make a complaint you should contact your Orientation and Mobility Specialist, Low Vision Specialist, another Guide Dogs NSW/ACT staff member or local office in the first instance for an opportunity to respond to and resolve most complaints as soon as possible. Alternatively, you can contact our Client Feedback Officer anytime on 0466 306 827 or email feedback@guidedogs.com.au.

Your instructor and staff at your local office are able to respond to and resolve most complaints.

If your complaint requires a more detailed investigation we will respond to your complaint within five working days or earlier if required. If you are not satisfied with our response then you can contact our Head Office to request a review of your complaint by the Client Services General Manager.

If you are not satisfied with our response you can speak to the NSW Ombudsman, if you are a resident of New South Wales (NSW), or the ACT Human Rights Commission, if you are a resident of the Australian Capital Territory (ACT).

NSW Ombudsman contact details

Telephone (02) 9286 1000

Toll free (outside Sydney metro) 1800 451 524

Web [NSW Ombudsman Website](#)

Email nswombo@ombo.nsw.gov.au

Fax 02 9283 2912

ACT Human Rights Commission contact details

Telephone (02) 6205 2222

Web [ACT Human Rights Commission Website](#)

Email human.rights@act.gov.au

Regional offices

Chatswood Regional Office and Head Office
Telephone (02) 9412 9300
Email chatswood@guidedogs.com.au
Address 2-4 Thomas Street Chatswood NSW 2067

Blacktown
Telephone (02) 9676 5802
Email blacktown@guidedogs.com.au
Address Suite 302, Level 3, 83 Flushcombe Road Blacktown NSW 2148

Newcastle
Telephone (02) 4925 3066
Email newcastle@guidedogs.com.au
Address Suite 2, 265 Wharf Road, Newcastle NSW 2300

Canberra (ACT)
Telephone (02) 6285 2988
Email canberra@guidedogs.com.au
Address Francis Chambers, Unit 11, 40-42 Corrina Street, Phillip ACT
2606

Dubbo
Telephone (02) 6362 6625
Email dubbo@guidedogs.com.au
Address Dubbo Neighbourhood Centre, 1/80 Gipps Street, Dubbo NSW
2830

Albury
Telephone (02) 6041 5201
Email albury@guidedogs.com.au
Address Suite 3, 549 Kiewa Street Albury NSW 2640

Coffs Harbour
Telephone: (02) 6652 7424
Email: coffsharbour@guidedogs.com.au
Address: Suite 3, 62 Moonee Street Coffs Harbour NSW 2450

Wollongong
Telephone: (02) 4225 9247
Email: wollongong@guidedogs.com.au
Address: 1/73 Market Street, Wollongong NSW 2500

Lismore
Telephone: (02) 6622 2535
Email: blacktown@guidedogs.com.au
Address: Nesbitt House, 4/164 Molesworth Street, Lismore NSW 2480

Tamworth
Telephone: (02) 6761 3125
Email: tamworth@guidedogs.com.au
Address: 108 Brisbane Street, Tamworth NSW 2340

Patron

His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (retired)

Governor of New South Wales

Full Member

International Guide Dog Federation

For our latest privacy policy please visit [guidedogs.com.au/privacy-policy](https://www.guidedogs.com.au/privacy-policy)