

# Volunteer Handbook



## Contents

Volunteer Handbook .....	1
A warm welcome from your Guide Dogs Family! .....	3
About Guide Dogs .....	3
Our ambition, purpose and behaviours .....	4
Our brand.....	5
Diversity and Inclusion.....	5
Our trustees.....	5
Our staff and structure .....	5
An overview of common sight loss conditions.....	6
An introduction to sighted guiding .....	6
Our work and how we fund it .....	6
Our money.....	7
Ways you can help us raise funds to provide these services .....	7
What volunteering with Guide Dogs involves, what you can expect and what is expected.....	9
Volunteer Manager .....	9
New volunteer paperwork & procedures .....	9
Volunteer ID card.....	10
Volunteer Clothing .....	10
Induction .....	10

**PEOPLE** - together we are Guide Dogs.

Familiarisation .....	11
Working hours .....	11
Useful contacts .....	11
Volunteer Voices.....	11
Contact information.....	11
Running late? .....	12
Unable to come in? .....	12
Dress code .....	12
Feeling unwell? .....	12
Problem solving .....	12
Making the most of your time .....	12
Role-related training for volunteers.....	13
Role profile .....	13
Award and Recognition .....	13
Reimbursement - how to claim expenses .....	13
How to keep up to date with Guide Dogs news? .....	14
Other opportunities.....	14
Keeping you and our customers safe .....	14
Health and safety tips for volunteers .....	14
Your safety and insurance .....	15
Safeguarding .....	15
Wellbeing .....	15
Our “small print” - Volunteer Agreement .....	16
Volunteering policies and procedures.....	17
And lastly, THANK YOU!.....	17



**PEOPLE** - together we are Guide Dogs.

## A warm welcome from your Guide Dogs Family!

We are so excited to have you with us! We understand that the first few months in a new role can be exciting, challenging, and perhaps also a bit daunting. Don't worry, we'll be there to support you and make sure it all goes smoothly. You have already impressed us with your enthusiasm, knowledge and passion and we're looking forward to getting you involved and developing your skills and experience.

It's normal to feel nervous and have lots of questions when you start something new - and that's the same for volunteering. This handbook is your reference throughout your time as a volunteer, covering the 'need to know first' information along with signposting to further material which you may want to come back and refer to throughout your volunteer journey. Many of the links in this handbook will take you through to our [Volunteer Information Point](#) (VIP). This is a place where you can find the latest Guide Dogs news, locate resources related to your roles and find out how to get in touch.

Your Volunteer Manager will go through the induction checklist with you to let you know a bit more about what to expect in your first few months and ensure you have everything you need to start in your role. If at any point you have questions or would like to highlight any areas you would like further information, training or support, please just ask your Volunteer Manager.

## About Guide Dogs

Guide Dogs exists to help people with sight loss to lead the life they choose. Guide Dogs works closely with many other organisations and charities to provide services, access and mobility to people of all ages with sight loss. You can read more about our different services [here](#).

We are a **person - centred organisation**, recognising that every individual is different. By adopting a Person - centred approach (PCA) into our culture and the way we conduct ourselves, we promote wellbeing, align with the wider health and social care sector and work with our customers, and each other, to explore what's important to us and how we can achieve our aspirations.

The fundamental values of a PCA are:

- The person is at the centre of every decision relating to their life
- People choose the support that they want and in a way, that works for them
- Active listening and reflective conversations identify aspirations and ways to achieve them
- Supports wellbeing and is inclusive
- Moves from being service-centred to person-centred
- Everything begins with a conversation.

**PEOPLE** - together we are Guide Dogs.

## Our ambition, purpose and behaviours

Our ambition: a future where every person with sight loss has the confidence and support to live their lives to the full.

Our purpose: to provide life-changing services for the independence of people living with sight loss and their friends and family.

If you would like to know more...

You can read our 2018 - 2023 strategy ambitions '[Guide Dogs: By My Side](#)' and find out about how we plan to provide more life-changing services for people with sight loss.

### Our work is aligned to our Behaviours:

Guide Dogs people are:

#### **Person Centred**

We are a group of people working to help each person affected by sight loss. We listen, and recognise that every individual is different in where they've come from and where they're going. We are open, empathetic and inclusive. We place the person at the centre of every decision.

#### **Expert**

We are specialists in what we do. We are committed to excellence and will never stop innovating. We respect our history, but seek out ways to adapt and improve, and are always willing to learn.

#### **Optimistic**

We are relentless in our belief that people with vision impairment can lead the life they choose. We are passionate about helping each person, committed to challenging barriers, and proud of who we are and what we achieve.

So we -

#### **Partner**

We only change lives when we collaborate. We build valued relationships with donors. We work together with our service users and colleagues, volunteers and partners - and our dogs, of course - to deliver great outcomes. We support and develop each other.

#### **Lead by example**

We can all be a guide. We take the lead and then hand it over, empowering people to make progress independently. We gain trust by having faith in others, and influence by example. We do what we say we will.

#### **Engage**

We cannot change lives if we look on from the side-lines. We get involved, take ownership, and feel responsible for all we do, think and say. We celebrate wins big and small, and we hold ourselves and each other to account.

**PEOPLE** - together we are Guide Dogs.

## Our brand

Our brand is about making ourselves more relevant to more people by:

- improving accessibility for people with sight loss
- ensuring our design works on digital platforms (for increasing numbers who find us online)
- reflecting our breadth of services

We want to talk about sight loss with empathy rather than sympathy, to find out more information on how we have done this, [click here](#).

## Diversity and Inclusion

Guide Dogs are committed to becoming an organisation which celebrates the diversity of our staff, volunteers and service users whilst fostering an inclusive environment for all.

We are only at the beginning of our journey to become more diverse, equitable and inclusive but we are committed to positive change and are taking actions to progress this journey. (More details on this during your Welcome Event!) The most important thing each of us can do is to continue conversations about diversity & inclusion. We must educate and hold ourselves and each other accountable to grow into the organisation that we can and should be. The biggest barrier we face in becoming an inclusive organisation for everyone is in our own fear of having frank, open discussions about issues we may find difficult to discuss, like race, sexuality and oppression.

## Our trustees

The work of the organisation is overseen by trustees who have been invited to join us due to the specific skills and/or experience they bring.

They give their time to Guide Dogs and Blind Children UK for free so they are also volunteers.

## Our staff and structure

Our main presence around the UK is in local teams running key aspects of our work within their community. They act as a base for many of our staff working in areas such as community fundraising, engaging with the community, developing volunteering, working with people of all ages with sight loss to help identify their mobility needs and identify solutions (both within and beyond Guide Dogs), and developing our services including guide dogs, and other forms of support such as My Guide. Our Guide Dogs family is made up of approximately 1,600 staff and 17,000 volunteers (including you!), with more than 1,000 pups born with us each year.

Our new born pups are found at our National Breeding Centre (NBC) in Leamington. At eight weeks they join our volunteer Puppy Walkers. As they get older (typically 14 months) they will either move onto our four Guide Dog training schools in Atherton, Forfar, Leamington, and Redbridge or to one of the community offices.

**PEOPLE - together we are Guide Dogs.**

Our overarching functions are completed at our Central Office in Burghfield, just outside Reading. Often referred to as “Head Office” or “Hillfields”.

If you would like to know more please follow the below links:

- [Trustees](#)
- [Executive Board](#)
- [Volunteering for Guide Dogs](#)

## **An overview of common sight loss conditions**

Vision impairments result from conditions ranging from the presence of some usable vision (low vision) to the absence of any vision (total blindness). [Here](#), you can read further information about some of the common sight loss conditions and the impacts they can have.

## **An introduction to sighted guiding**

Sighted guiding is not specific to Guide Dogs; it is a way of escorting a person who has vision impairment in an efficient way, giving this person the feeling of moving in a safe and secure manner.

We encourage all volunteers to sign up to local My Guide training (training in sighted guiding) when it is run. Speak to your volunteer manager about booking onto the next available training. [Click here](#) for information on sighted guiding techniques, part of what you will learn and practice when you attend training.

## **Our work and how we fund it**

We have many services and elements to our work, more than people first realise! You will find out more about all of the below on your Welcome Event, but here is some starting information and further links if you would like to know now.

### **Guide Dogs**

Find out more about our Guide Dogs [here](#).

Information on the cost of providing our guide dog service can be found [here](#).

### **Children and young people’s services (CYP)**

Sighted children learn by watching others; children with vision impairment often need to be specifically taught skills and concepts they would not otherwise pick up. Find out more [here](#).

### **My Guide**

Many people with sight loss become isolated if they are unable to get out and about. My Guide is our free service that helps people with a vision impairment get out of their homes and into the community with a volunteer as their sighted guide. Find out more [here](#).



## **Campaigning**

We campaign for the right of people with a vision impairment to have the same freedom of movement as everyone else. Find out more [here](#).

## **Cities Unlocked**

Getting around cities is a nerve wracking experience for many people, especially those living with sight loss. Find out more about how we are involved [here](#). You can watch a further summary of our Guide Dogs work [here](#).

## **Research**

Our research programme enables us to gather the evidence we need to ensure that our policies, campaigns and services remain relevant to people with sight loss and allow them to get out and about on their own terms.

If you would like to know more, click [here](#).

## **Our money**

### **Ways you can help us raise funds to provide these services**

We wouldn't be able to provide the range and volume of these services without the time donated and money raised by our volunteers and staff. Below is further information about how you can help us fund our services.

### **Community Fundraising - your local link**

As a volunteer, you might fancy:

- Holding an event (e.g. a tea party, fashion show, jumble sale etc.)
- Managing a collection box
- Becoming a speaker or
- Joining one of our volunteer fundraising groups.

Speak to your volunteer manager to find out who your local Community Fundraiser is.

### **Challenge events**

By taking part in a Challenge Event, you can help us ensure that when someone loses their sight, they don't lose their freedom as well. You can organise your own event or join an existing one. Options include running, cycling, triathlons, swimming, and even skydiving. Find out more [here](#).

### **Dogalogue**

Order from our [mail order catalogue](#) or via our website. 100% of profits go to the charity.

### **Sponsor a Puppy**

By sponsoring a puppy from just £1 a week, you can follow a puppy's journey to become a life-changing companion for a person with a vision impairment.

We'll keep you up-to-date with regular Pupdates, following your puppy's journey.

Photo on previous page: Gus, a Guide Dogs puppy.

To find out more, click [here](#).

**PEOPLE - together we are Guide Dogs.**

## Leaving a legacy gift

To find out about our information days or request a free booklet and DVD and find out how a gift in a will can change someone's life visit [our website](#); call 0800 953 0113; or email [Giftsinwills@guidedogs.org.uk](mailto:Giftsinwills@guidedogs.org.uk)

## Giving in memory of a loved one

Deciding to make a gift to Guide Dogs in memory of a loved one can provide great comfort at a very difficult time.

We can sensitively help with a range of options such as:

- Collection envelopes for friends and family to make a donation to Guide Dogs, in lieu of flowers
- A Tribute Fund set up by Guide Dogs in the name and memory of a loved one
- Name a Guide Dogs puppy

Find out more [here](#).

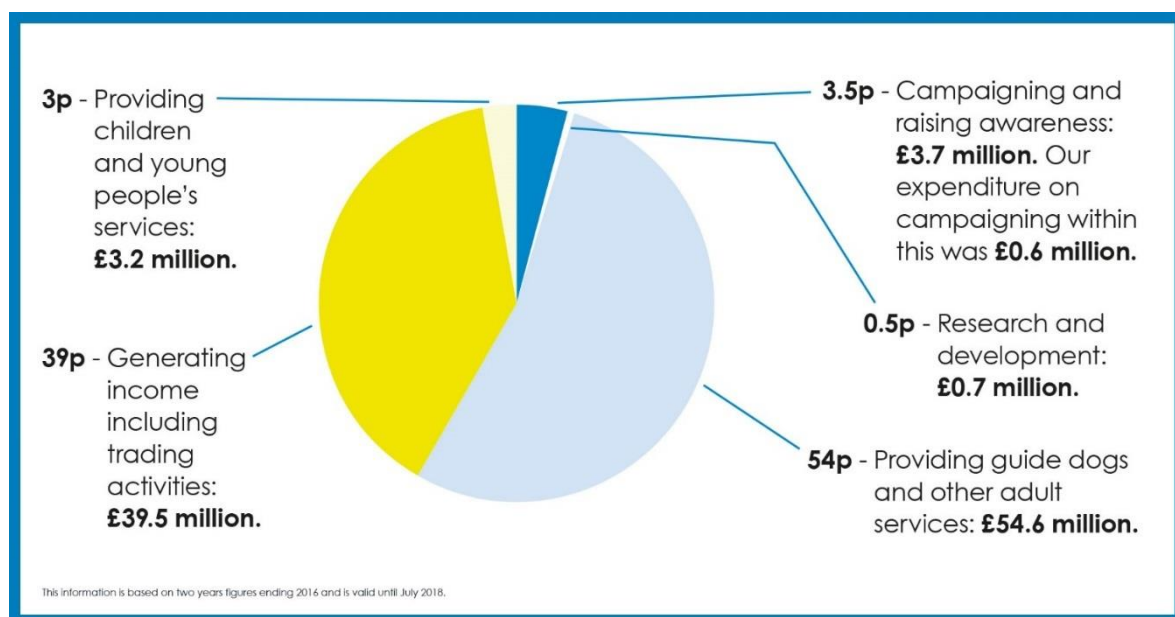
## Guide Dogs Raffles and Lotteries

Supporting Guide Dogs through raffles and lotteries is a fun and rewarding way to fund our life-changing work.

- [The Guide Dogs Lucky Lottery](#) is a weekly draw which costs just £1 a week per entry. There are 100 cash prizes up for grabs each week, with a top prize of £1,000. Every quarter, you also get the chance to win our top prize of £3,000.
- We also run regular raffles. Every ticket sold will help us change a life. If you would like to know more, [click here](#).

## How we spend the money raised

Depending on your volunteer role, you might get asked how we spend our money. For each pound we raise at Guide Dogs, this is how much we spend on what.



For more detailed information, you can click [here](#).

**PEOPLE** - together we are Guide Dogs.



If you do not have access to the internet and therefore cannot read the further information via the links, please speak to your volunteer manager. They can print information off for you to read as a hard copy.

## **What volunteering with Guide Dogs involves, what you can expect and what is expected.**

You are an integral part of our present and our future, crucial in meeting the needs of our customers and in achieving our ambitions. We want you and all other volunteers to have the best possible experience during your time with us; feeling connected, inspired and understanding how you personally make a difference.

We feel very privileged to have your invaluable skills, passion, time and knowledge. So, what else do you need to know? Let's start with the practical information...

### **Volunteer Manager**

You hopefully by now are aware of who your volunteer manager is, they are your go-to person for any questions and support you need whilst volunteering with us. Your volunteer manager will:

- Go through the induction checklist with you to ensure you have all relevant information needed to do your role happily and effectively.
- Clarify with you what activities and training need to be completed, how and by when.
- Answer any questions you may have and assist you if you get stuck.
- Have regular catch-ups, including a three-month review to discuss all aspects of your role including engagement and performance. Your three-month review will be scheduled as part of your induction.
- Provide you with continuous feedback both when things are going well but also if you need to adjust your approach.
- Sign off your expenses accordingly.

Good communication is vital throughout your time with us, so please speak to your volunteer manager if you have any concerns at any time.

### **New volunteer paperwork & procedures**

The following items should have been completed prior to you starting with Guide Dogs. Take the time to check that these points have been covered off:

- You will have received this Volunteer Handbook (including the Volunteer Agreement), been signposted to all Health and Safety information and Volunteer policies and procedures. These contain standard terms and conditions for all roles, and you should ensure that you read it thoroughly.
- Volunteer Agreement - you will receive this when your ID card is issued. It sets out the expectations that we have of you and lets you know what you can expect from us too. Please ensure you have read and signed this, also

**PEOPLE** - together we are Guide Dogs.

included at the end of this Handbook. Please return to [volunteer@guidedogs.org.uk](mailto:volunteer@guidedogs.org.uk).

- Complete your volunteer induction checklist with your volunteer manager, they will go through this with you during your induction. All induction points (relevant to your role) should be completed by the time you reach your three-month review so that you feel comfortable in role.

## Volunteer ID card

All our regular volunteers are provided with an ID badge. Your volunteer manager will be happy to take the photo if you need. If you have sent in your photo but not yet received your badge, either contact the Volunteering Office on 0345 143 0191 or speak to your volunteer manager.

Wear your badge with pride whenever you are volunteering for Guide Dogs. As well as a way of showing that you belong to the Guide Dogs family, it also shows our clients and the public know they are speaking to a legitimate member of Guide Dogs. (The process of issuing the card also helps us meet our insurance requirements.)

## Volunteer Clothing

Our volunteers are entitled to purchase a range of Guide Dogs branded clothing - if you would like to order, please contact our Volunteering Office on 0345 143 0191 or [volunteer@guidedogs.org.uk](mailto:volunteer@guidedogs.org.uk)

You do not have to wear branded clothing when volunteering, but we have arranged for it to be available to you at cost price should you wish to purchase items.

As a representative of Guide Dogs, you are expected to conduct and present yourself at all times in a manner appropriate to the aims, objectives and behaviours of the organisation. Every volunteer is an ambassador for us, having a very real responsibility for maintaining the high regard the public have for the charity and its work. We would like to ask that any Guide Dogs branded clothing is in a good general state of repair, and where possible, only worn when you are actively undertaking your volunteer tasks (e.g. attending a collection, delivering a talk, or walking a dog or puppy). Please note, the production of unofficial Guide Dogs clothing is not permitted.

## Induction

You are warmly invited to attend a Welcome Event should you wish to have a more holistic view of Guide Dogs and our main ambitions. These events are run regularly throughout the year, get in touch with your local Volunteer Coordinator to book a place.

You can also watch our Chief Executive Officer, Tom Wright welcoming you [here](#). He tells you more about the organisation, how we are working and our future direction.

**PEOPLE - together we are Guide Dogs.**

## **Familiarisation**

You will be shown the nearest toilets and facilities as part of your induction. There is usually a fridge, kettle and water facilities on all Guide Dogs sites.

## **Working hours**

Guide Dogs sites are open to the public from 9 -5pm. Your role profile will have given you an estimation of the expected hours for your role. We please ask that you are not on site without a member of staff, this is for your own safety.

You may already have chosen a specific day of the week to volunteer at Guide Dogs. We aim to be as flexible as possible when it comes to volunteering hours to make the role work for you, this will be an ongoing conversation/agreement with your volunteer manager.

## **Useful contacts**

Your go to person will be your volunteer manager but you can find out who your other local contacts are on the [Talk to Us page!](#)

## **Volunteer Voices**

Volunteer Voices are local consultative groups for Guide Dogs volunteers.

It's an opportunity for volunteers to come together to share learnings, experiences and to feedback on both strategic and local issues at a national level.

Feedback from Volunteer Voices goes to the relevant team - whether that's the community team or another relevant department. Executive Board (EB) are invited to attend meetings and receive a summary of national Volunteer Voices feedback.

Volunteer Voices ensures:

- Volunteers have a constructive influence on topics they have been consulted on.
- Volunteer Voices is a known and consistent forum for two-way conversations between volunteers and staff.
- Staff and volunteers are clear on how their involvement supports people with sight loss to have the same freedom of movement as everyone else.
- Volunteers are ambassadors and advocates of all Guide Dogs services.

To submit a question or comment to your local Volunteer Voices rep, please contact your [Volunteer Coordinator](#).

## **Contact information**

It's important that we have your current contact details. Please let us know if you move house, change email address or mobile phone number or if your status changes.

## **Running late?**

If you are running late please call your volunteer manager to let them know.

## **Unable to come in?**

We fully understand that on occasion you will not be able to come in to volunteer when you have planned to. For example, if you're not feeling well or if personal circumstances prevent you from doing so. If this happens, please let your volunteer manager know as soon as you can.

## **Dress code**

As a Guide Dogs volunteer please dress appropriately for your day, while recognising that you are representing the organisation. Volunteers are encouraged to wear their Guide Dogs issued clothing whilst carrying out their volunteer role, though we understand this may not always be possible.

In all cases where safety clothing and equipment is provided, it should be worn and used as appropriate. Please let your volunteer manager know if there is any defect in your safety clothing or equipment.

Everyone should feel comfortable to wear items of clothing which are worn for cultural and religious purposes, providing they do not breach any health and safety requirements. (If you would like to see the Dress Code policy for further information please ask your volunteer manager for a copy)

## **Feeling unwell?**

If you start to feel unwell while you are volunteering please let your volunteer manager or a colleague know straight away.

Equally, please let us know if you are unable to come into Guide Dogs when we are expecting you.

## **Problem solving**

Please raise any problems or concerns with your volunteer manager. We want to help you get the most out of your volunteering opportunity and also ensure that we get the full benefit of what you have to offer.

If at any time you are unhappy or your volunteer manager feels that there is an imbalance of benefits, your volunteering arrangement will be reassessed. Both you and Guide Dogs are free to end the arrangement at any time. Please refer to the Volunteering Policy and Volunteer complaints procedure for more guidance if needed which can be found on [VIP in the Volunteer Toolkit](#).

## **Making the most of your time**

We really hope you'll enjoy your experience as a volunteer and that you will take time to tell us about your experiences and the new skills and knowledge you have gained. We will positively encourage you to get involved in Guide Dogs life throughout your time with us.

## **Role-related training for volunteers**

You will have seen in the role profile the training that you are required to attend as part of your induction to ensure you have everything you need to successfully and safely do your role. During your time with us you will receive ongoing training and informal learning. For further details as to what is available to you, speak to your Volunteer Manager. They will ensure you are booked onto the relevant training. Training and development should be part of your regular catch-up discussions. All training attendance and completion will be recorded for your own learning record as well as for audit purposes.

## **Role profile**

You should have received a full written description of your volunteer role when you applied for your role. This helps to make sure your role is of benefit to both you and Guide Dogs and that the expectations and commitments are clearly outlined from the beginning. If at any point you feel this has changed, please discuss with your volunteer manager.

## **Award and Recognition**

We appreciate your significant contribution as a volunteer and we are committed to providing rewarding experiences for you during your time with us.

We nominate volunteers for special awards each year, so be sure that your fantastic commitments and skills won't go unnoticed! Your Volunteering Coordinator will update you about these awards annually.

As a volunteer we offer you:

- a National newsletter 'The Guide' (sent monthly) and a local team newsletter sent bi-monthly.
- eligibility to apply for internal job vacancies
- forward magazines
- invitation to Guide Dogs Welcome!
- invitation to local social events such as, coffee morning and Christmas parties
- local and long service awards
- participation in National Volunteers' Week celebrations
- pat on the back - recognition scheme, click [here](#) to learn more or if you would like to nominate someone!
- role-related training

## **Reimbursement - how to claim expenses**

Please complete, sign and ask your volunteer manager to sign and approve. Ensure you take photos of your original receipts. You can find further guidance and the expense claim form [here](#). If you do not have access to the internet please ask your volunteer manager for a hard copy.

## How to keep up to date with Guide Dogs news?

As a volunteer you will have access to our monthly volunteer newsletter 'The Guide' as well as your local team newsletter, sent bi-monthly.

Please check our [Volunteer Information Point](#) (or VIP as we like to call it!) This is where you can find the latest Guide Dogs news, locate resources related to your volunteer roles and find out how to get in touch. It's a dedicated place for dedicated people.

## Other opportunities

### Fancy a change or want to do something extra?

Throughout your time with us you will encounter lots of professionals in different fields, and it's quite likely you might wish to experience another department once you've experienced the role you initially signed up for.

The best way to monitor new and upcoming volunteer vacancies is via the [Guide Dogs website](#). If you see something that interests you or would just like to know more about other volunteering opportunities within Guide Dogs please speak to your Volunteer Manager and/or Volunteering Coordinator. They can provide details on how to apply and information about what other volunteering roles involve.

### Paid work and internal vacancies

Volunteering is one way in which to develop and increase your skills, learning and experience. Occasionally it can also be used as a springboard to employment, but please remember, volunteering does not necessarily lead to paid work. However, as a volunteer you are welcome to apply for any vacancies you think you are suitable for. You can find internal vacancies [here](#).

### Leaving and feedback

We'll be sorry to see you leave if and when the times comes, but before you go please make sure you:

- let your volunteer manager know when your last day will be
- return your ID pass
- complete any outstanding expense forms
- complete an exit questionnaire if you wish

Your feedback is really important to us, so we thank you in advance for sharing your thoughts, be it positive feedback or constructive criticism by completing an exit questionnaire. You will receive this via email after your last day with us.

## Keeping you and our customers safe

### Health and safety tips for volunteers

Please refer to the Health and Safety factsheets on [Keeping you all safe](#). When you are out and about volunteering for Guide Dogs it is important that you consider your safety at all times.



## Your safety and insurance

Volunteers fall under all the same regulations and safety guidelines as paid members of staff and are covered by Guide Dogs' employer's liability insurance.

By signing the volunteer arrangement accompanying this handbook you are agreeing to adhere to the Volunteering Policy, use Guide Dogs tools and equipment only in accordance with appropriate instructions and to wear protective clothing as required. (If you would like to see the Dress Code policy for further information please ask your volunteer manager for a copy)

## Safeguarding

Safeguarding is not something we want you to be concerned about and incidents are quite rare but if, as part of your activities, you come into contact with the public and your gut senses something is wrong you should speak with your volunteer manager or a local member of staff as soon as practicably possible.

If you cannot contact anyone locally, call the Guide Dogs Safeguarding team on 0345 143 0199. Even if you are uncertain about what you have heard or seen, don't worry. It is our role to make that decision but your role to tell us about it. We'll listen and take every report seriously and all information we receive is treated sensitively.

Part of keeping people safe is to ensure that roles which work directly with vulnerable people receive safeguarding training. For volunteer roles who have a lot of contact with the public, such as Drivers, Dog Exercisers, My Guides and Service User Representatives, we have created additional training so that you feel more confident in spotting signs of abuse and neglect, and to ensure we meet our legal obligations. This learning is usually delivered as a mix of e-learning and face to face training, regularly delivered across the UK. Both are key to ensuring we provide the best services and care to people with a vision impairment. No one can undertake any of the four roles listed above without receiving Safeguarding training.

If you are in a relevant role, you will be contacted in advance to tell you about training options as they become available in your area. If you have any questions about the content or concerns, please speak to the Safeguarding team to get a clear idea of what will be covered.

The Volunteer Toolkit provides more information to support you. This can be found [here](#).

## Wellbeing

We are an organisation committed to supporting the wellbeing of everyone in our Guide Dogs family. You can explore and utilise these free resources [here](#). Or join our [Wellbeing group](#) on our Volunteer Facebook page.

As part of our 'Keeping you Safe' pages on VIP you can also access details of [External Support Services](#).

## Our “small print” - Volunteer Agreement

Since 1931, Guide Dogs has been working to change the lives of people with sight loss. As a volunteer, you are a vital part of this work. Thank you for your time and energy. We want you to enjoy volunteering and let you know what we can expect from each other. The term supervisor below relates to anyone who acts as your volunteer manager.

Guide Dogs will:

- introduce you to how the organisation works and your role within it, and
- provide any training you need through general and role-specific induction
- provide regular two-way communication with your supervisor
- treat you fairly with dignity and respect
- consult with you on appropriate issues and keep you informed of any changes that impact upon you as a volunteer and/or volunteering generally
- work within the values set out in our diversity and equality policies to help us represent the community we serve
- apply our procedures appropriately should any problems arise
- provide appropriate insurance for your volunteering work agreed with Guide Dogs
- pay any out of pocket expenses in accordance with our Volunteer Expenses Policy.

As a volunteer I will:

- treat other volunteers and staff fairly, with dignity and with respect
- complete an initial 3-month trial period of my role
- perform my volunteer role reliably and to the best of my ability following direction and guidance from my supervisor
- conduct myself in a manner that does not risk damaging the charities' good reputations
- treat as confidential all information of Guide Dogs operations and personnel and not disclose these to people without authorisation, internally or externally
- access and use resources including email, internet and supporter data only in accordance with our policies and procedures and only with proper authorisation
- adhere to Guide Dogs social media guidelines if I am active on social media
- discuss with my supervisor prior to delivering talks, publishing literature or communicating with the media about Guide Dogs
- read policies, procedures and related documents I receive or have been given access to, and raise with my supervisor anything I am not clear on or would like to discuss further
- drive only if I have a valid driving licence and current MOT and insurance
- advise my supervisor of any medical conditions that could affect or be affected by my role
- pay in any funds I raise or receive for Guide Dogs as soon as possible, as directed by my supervisor
- return all Guide Dogs property promptly when I stop volunteering.

**PEOPLE** - together we are Guide Dogs.

I acknowledge that Guide Dogs public liability insurance only covers circumstances where Guide Dogs is legally responsible for bodily injury, or loss or damage to property. I accept that this does not cover all risks including general damage to property or personal injury where Guide Dogs is not at fault.

Should I enter into a further agreement with Guide Dogs in relation to a volunteer role, I accept that the terms of that agreement will prevail. This agreement is binding in honour only, and may be cancelled at any time by either of us. Neither of us intends any employment relationship to be created. Updates may be made from time to time. The latest version and other documents mentioned will always be on the Intranet, Volunteer Information Point or from your Volunteering Co-ordinator.

\*Please note: You should have received a copy of the Volunteer agreement in your welcome email from the Volunteering Office. Please ensure you have signed and returned this to [volunteer@guidedogs.org.uk](mailto:volunteer@guidedogs.org.uk) If you have not received this, please speak to your volunteer manager or contact the Volunteering Office on 0345 143 0191

## Volunteering policies and procedures

Guide Dogs' policies and procedures set out our commitment to you and the practical steps we will take to implement this. They provide guidance and direction to staff and volunteers alike and convey a strong message to all that Guide Dogs is committed to excellence in volunteering.

The full policies are available on the [Volunteer Information Point](#). (VIP)  
If you would like hard copies of any of these policies then please just ask your volunteer manager and they can provide this for you.

## And lastly, THANK YOU!

We couldn't do what we do without each and every one of you, thank you for all that you do for us. It really is appreciated and we hope you enjoy being part of the Guide Dogs family. Our volunteers can transform the lives of people living with sight loss, whether it is raising our puppies, sighted guiding, collecting funds or cheering on our event participants.

We know that without our volunteers, our charity could not continue its life changing work. If you'd like to read more about our inspiring volunteer stories you can [here](#). You are part of this, thank you!

If there is anything not clear from what you have read above or anything you feel you are missing, please get in touch with your volunteer manager. We'll do our best to support you in whatever way we can.



**PEOPLE** - together we are Guide Dogs.