



About the Board

What is the Guide Dog Board?

The California State Board of Guide Dogs for the Blind is a regulatory body created by the Governor that exists to ensure the quality of the guide dog industry by setting and enforcing standards, and providing outreach and education. Consumer protection is the Board's highest priority through the licensure and regulation of guide dog programs and team instruction in California. The Board ensures that instructors are qualified, training is standardized, and schools are well managed. Through these functions, the Board serves and protects guide dog users, financial donors to guide dog schools, and the general public.

- *Guide Dog Users* - As a client of a California Guide Dog School, you can rest assured that instruction is being provided or overseen by a licensed person that has completed at least a three year apprenticeship to learn proper and effective ways to train guide dogs and teams. California Instructors have passed rigorous exams that test their knowledge and skills in guide dog team instruction as well as safety, effectiveness, and evaluation.
- *Donors* - As a financial contributor to California Guide Dog Schools, knowing that a school is held to the highest standards in the country ensures that your donation is utilized appropriately and is being put to good use. Guide Dog Schools are annually evaluated both financially and through site visits by Board staff.
- *The Public* - As a member of the general public, knowing that guide dogs in California are trained to the highest standards makes certain that your day to day interaction with guide dog teams will be safe and effective for everyone.

Arbitration Process

What is the Arbitration Program?

- Arbitration is designed to provide resolution for guide dog users and schools with disputes that involve the continued use or custody of a dog.
- In the unlikely and unfortunate event that a guide dog school chooses to separate you from your guide dog against your will, you may wish to seek Arbitration through the Board.
- Through Arbitration, the Board acts as a neutral third party to determine the best course of action regarding the continued use and/or custody of a guide dog.
- Arbitration is only available to graduates of California Guide Dog Schools that are not the unconditional legal owner of their dog. In other words, Arbitration is only available if your school retains the title of your dog.

Why would you need Arbitration?

- In certain circumstances, a school may decide to reclaim custody or retire a dog to ensure the safety of you or your dog.
- Some examples are instances of medical or environmental issues preventing the dog from providing safe and effective travel, or instances of neglect or abuse of a guide dog.
- If you disagree with your school's decision, you may seek Arbitration from the Board.

How do you seek Arbitration?

- If your dog has been reclaimed or retired by your school, they must formally notify you within 30 days.



CALIFORNIA STATE BOARD OF GUIDE DOGS FOR THE BLIND
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- If you wish to seek arbitration, you must submit a written and signed request to the Board and your school within 30 days from the day you received notice from your school.
- All hearings, investigations, and decisions will be concluded within 45 days from the receipt of a user's written request for arbitration.
- The Board will make every effort to minimize any costs, as all parties are required to bear their own costs for arbitration.

More Information and Resources

- Link to Detailed Document
- Link to Full Text of Law
- Telephone: 916-574-7826
- Email: Guidedogboard@dca.ca.gov

Guide Dog Discrimination

Can the Guide Dog Board Help Me?

While the Board has information and resources available to assist victims of guide dog discrimination, the Board does not have any jurisdiction over public access rights, discrimination, or the investigation or prosecution of individuals responsible for attacks on guide dogs. In many situations, however, the Board is able to assist in these instances by directing you to the proper outlets and authorities in your time of need.