

## **Candidate Handbook – Five Steps to Licensing**

California Guide Dog Instructor candidates are required to take and pass a written, practical and oral examination for licensure.

### **Step #1: Make a video recording to submit to the Board**

The basis for the practical/oral exam is a video recording created by the applicant as a visual performance of their interaction with a person who is visually impaired and currently receiving guide dog mobility instruction with a newly trained dog. Applicants must follow and submit a signed copy of the guidelines outlined in the Guide Dog Instructor Practical Examination Video Recording Guidelines which can be found at: [http://www.guidedogboard.ca.gov/forms\\_pubs/security\\_agrmnt.pdf](http://www.guidedogboard.ca.gov/forms_pubs/security_agrmnt.pdf)

Note: In many cases, an ideal time for recording is during the second week of instruction, however there is no requirement regarding the point in training at which a recording is to be made.

### **Step #2: Send in application**

Once a video is accepted the applicant is eligible to apply for a California Guide Dog Instructor's License. There are 4 components to a complete licensing application.

- Live Scan Fingerprints – Fingerprint instructions can be downloaded from the Board Web site at: [http://www.guidedogboard.ca.gov/forms\\_pubs/livescan\\_app.pdf](http://www.guidedogboard.ca.gov/forms_pubs/livescan_app.pdf)
- Licensing Application - The application form is available at [http://www.guidedogboard.ca.gov/forms\\_pubs/instructor\\_lic\\_app.pdf](http://www.guidedogboard.ca.gov/forms_pubs/instructor_lic_app.pdf)
- Licensing and Application Fee – A check for \$250 made out to the California State Board of Guide Dogs for the Blind
- Letter of Compliance - A letter from the applicant's school stating that the applicant has met all the requirements of the Business and Professions Code, Statute 7209 which states:

*7209. A person to be eligible for examination as an instructor must (1) have a knowledge of the special problems of the blind and how to teach them, (2) be able to demonstrate by actual blindfold test under traffic conditions his ability to train guide dogs with whom a blind person would be safe, (3) be suited temperamentally and otherwise to instruct blind persons in the use of guide dogs, and (4) have had at least three years' actual experience, comprising such number of hours as the board may require, as an instructor, and have handled twenty-two (22) man [person]-dog units; or its equivalent, as determined by the board, as an apprentice under a licensed instructor or under an instructor in a school satisfactory to the board.*

The application, letter, Live Scan results, and check should be received by the Executive Officer of the Board no later than 10 days before the Written Exam is taken. This

documentation must include a list of the names of the 22 guide dog teams the apprentice has worked with. Mail all documentation to:

California State Board of Guide Dogs for the Blind  
Attn: Brian Skewis, Executive Officer  
1625 Market Blvd., N-112 Sacramento, CA 95834  
Phone: (916) 574-7825  
Fax: (916) 574-7829  
[guidedogboard@dca.ca.gov](mailto:guidedogboard@dca.ca.gov)  
[www.guidedogboard.ca.gov](http://www.guidedogboard.ca.gov)

### **Step #3: The Written Examination**

When the application requirements are met and approved, the candidate is eligible to take the Written Exam. The Exam will take place at the following location:

Office of Professional Examination Services  
2420 Del Paso Road, Suite 265  
Sacramento, CA 95834  
Phone: (916) 575-7240

The applicant should arrive 15 minutes early. The candidate must bring a valid identification card and their copy of the Exam video recording as a backup. He/she must not wear clothing that indicates their place of employment. Candidates will be given two hours for the exam which is evaluated on a pass/fail basis. Notification of the outcome (pass/fail, not the percentage score) will be given by the end of the day either in person or by telephone. If a candidate fails the Written Exam, he/she may take it again in six months. Pending a successful outcome, he/she will be eligible for the next scheduled Practical/Oral Exam. The applicant's video recording, licensing application, and \$250 fee is valid for 18 months from the first Written Exam, however a fee of \$50 is charged for each subsequent Written Exam.

### **Studying for the Written Exam**

- The Written Exam is based on the *Guide Dog Instructor Examination Outline 2011* (Exam Outline). The percentages noted in each section of the Exam Outline indicate the number of test questions that will be asked from that selection of task and knowledge topics. Each test administered will have a total of 100 multiple-choice questions with four options each, with question selection based on the Exam Outline task and knowledge percentages. Please refer to the Exam Outline as a study guide for the Written Examination. Below are three examples of test questions:
  1. Which of the following conditions is often associated with a lick sore granuloma?
    - a. Boredom
    - b. Dirty coat
    - c. Poor diet
    - d. Over bathing

2. Which of the following characteristics in a guide dog would be considered valuable for a small, frail, elderly person?
  - a. Animated
  - b. Small size
  - c. Needs daily work
  - d. Verbally responsive
  
3. Which of the following eye diseases is often characterized by tunnel vision and night blindness?
  - a. Retinoblastoma
  - b. Retinitis pigmentosa
  - c. Macular degeneration
  - d. Retinopathy of prematurity

#### **Step #4: The Practical/Oral Exam**

A candidate must pass the Written Exam to be eligible for the Practical/Oral Exam which is usually scheduled for the following day at the same location. The Oral Exam is a candidate's verbal explanation of the knowledge they have demonstrated in the video recording. Each candidate should prepare a discussion of the related knowledge statements listed below. The recording is used to illustrate and enhance the description of the knowledge statements as it relates to the specific tasks that were demonstrated. Raters may not ask any unrelated questions regarding the recording or non-listed knowledge topics; however they may ask a candidate to expand on a point even though it's not demonstrated in the recording. Also, a rater may ask the candidate if he/she has any safety concerns related to their recording.

Applicants should arrive 15 minutes before the scheduled exam and wait in the office lobby. The candidate must bring a valid form of identification. They must not wear clothing that indicates their place of employment. Candidates will be given the list of knowledge points (see below) 15 minutes before the exam to review and organize their thoughts. These knowledge points may be referenced at any time during the Exam, however, personal notes may not be brought into the exam room.

The purpose of the recording is to give the raters, three senior licensed guide dog instructors, a visual representation to use to evaluate the candidate's ability to train and problem solve with a team. The following is a list of the related knowledge statements from the Exam Outline: Knowledge of:

- Techniques used to maintain and enhance orientation skills while using a guide dog. (K57)
- Orientation and mobility skills related to guide dog travel and cane travel. (K62)
- Techniques used to work with and control a guide dog. (K67)
- Methods of instructing clients on harness techniques used in guide work. (K72)

- Techniques used for instructing a client in the observation and interpretation of a dog's behavior. (K73)
- Methods of instructing clients on techniques used in reworking guide work errors. (K74)
- Methods of instructing clients on techniques used in avoiding and ignoring distractions during guide work training. (K75)
- Methods of instructing clients on techniques used in controlling inappropriate behavior in a guide dog. (K77)

The Executive Officer of the Board will bring a copy of each candidate's video and will be in charge of operating all equipment. The candidate can ask to stop or start the recording at any time, or rewind or fast forward if, for instance, they want to clarify or demonstrate a point they are making.

Each candidate will be notified of the status of their application within 48 hours of the Exam. Within 60 days of the successful completion of the Oral/Practical Exam, new licensees will receive an ID card and license certificate. New licensees will be required to email a high resolution, un-cropped photograph to Board staff for the creation of their ID card.

#### **Step #5: Annual license renewal**

The date an examination is successfully completed is a licensee's anniversary date. Each year, licensees receive notification that their \$100 license renewal fee is due. Along with their check and license renewal form, they must provide proof of completion of Continuing Education as state law requires eight hours in the areas of 1) blindness and mobility; 2) health issues related to blindness; 3) instructing blind person; 4) care and training of dogs.

We look forward to adding your name to the list of guide dog instructors who have been licensed in California since 1948.