

Minimum Standards for Training Guide Dogs

These are intended to be minimum standards for all assistance dog programs that are members or provisional members with ADI. All programs are encouraged to work at levels above the minimums.

1. The guide dog must respond to commands (basic obedience and skilled tasks) from the client 90% of the time on the first ask in all public and home environments.
2. The guide dog should demonstrate basic obedience skills by responding to voice and/or hand signals for sitting, staying in place, lying down, walking in a controlled position near the client and coming to the client when called.
3. The guide dog must meet all of the standards as laid out in the minimum standards for ADI Assistance Dogs in Public. Dogs should be equally well behaved in the home environment.
4. The guide dog will be trained to negotiate obstacles, overhangs, barriers, street crossings, city and country work and public transportation. Trainer-under-blindfold work must be included for each guide dog.
5. The client must be provided with enough instruction to be able to meet the minimum standards for guide dogs and assistance dogs in public. Clients must be able to demonstrate:
 - o Negotiating obstacles, overhangs, barriers, street crossings, city and country work and public transportation.
 - o Knowledge of acceptable training techniques.
 - o An understanding of canine care and health.
 - o The ability to continue to train, problem solve, and add new skills with their guide dog.
 - o Knowledge of local access laws and appropriate public behavior.
6. The assistance dog program must document monthly follow ups with clients for the first 6 months following placement. Personal contact will be done by qualified staff or program volunteers within 12 months of graduation and annually thereafter.
7. The program will provide a laminated ID card with a photo of the client and dog and names of both. In public the guide dog will wear the program's appropriate guide harness.
8. The program staff must demonstrate the knowledge of blindness and working with the visually impaired and/or blind clients. The program shall make available to staff and volunteers educational material on different disabilities.
9. The client must abide by the ADI Minimum Standards of Assistance Dog Partners.
10. Prior to placement every guide dog must meet the ADI Standards and Ethics Regarding Dogs, be spayed/neutered and have current vaccination certificates as determined by their veterinarian and applicable laws. It is the program's responsibility to inform the client of any special health or maintenance care requirements for each dog.