



## Career Change Program Discovery Package



### **ABOUT LIONS FOUNDATION OF CANADA DOG GUIDES**

Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides (LFCDG) empowers Canadians living with disabilities to navigate their world with confidence and independence, by providing a Dog Guide at no cost and supporting them in their journey together. Located in Oakville, Ontario with a breeding and training facility in Breslau (between Kitchener and Guelph), we are the only school to train Dog Guides in seven distinct programs.

From breeding to rearing and training with a lifetime of follow-up services, each Dog Guide requires an investment of \$35,000 to train and place. The Foundation relies on donations to provide these special matches and does not receive any government funding. Each client who is accepted into a program is matched with a Dog Guide at no cost.

LFCDG has been operating under the highest standards for 40 years. We are a founding member of the Canadian Association of Guide & Assistance Dog Schools and a fully accredited member of International Guide Dog Federation, Assistance Dogs International, and Imagine Canada.

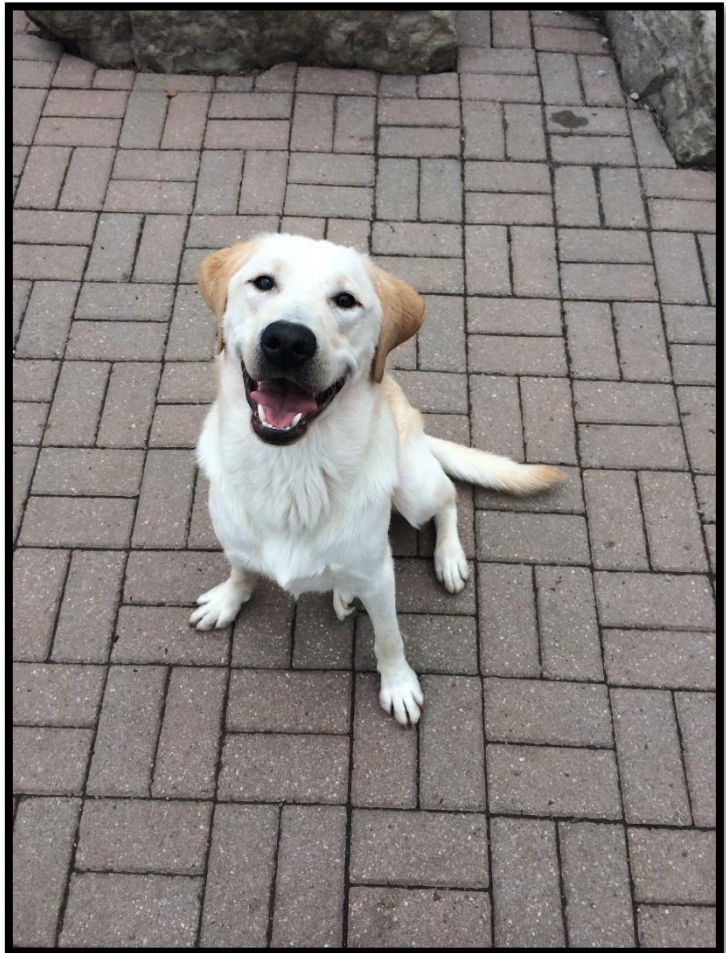
We are dedicated to fostering an inclusive and diverse environment that values and respects the unique perspectives, backgrounds, and experiences of our all stakeholders. We are committed to providing equal opportunities, promoting fairness, and eliminating discrimination in all aspects of our interactions.

**We have matched over 3,000 clients to Dog Guides across the country.**

## ABOUT THE CAREER CHANGE PROGRAM

Career Change dogs are those which have been disqualified from our programs due to temperament and/or health reasons that we are looking to adopt to wonderful families to live as a pet. They may or may not have received some formal Dog Guide training. This is strictly dependent on what stage they were at when they were Career Changed. All have been raised in volunteer foster homes. Further obedience training is recommended once placed in a new adoptive home. We occasionally have dogs returned for adoption that are retiring from a working environment.

All dogs are spayed or neutered and vaccinations are updated. Each dog is unique and we support the future care of the dog by providing information about the dog and medical records. There is a two-week trial period to ensure that the dog is a suitable fit with your family. A fee is charged for all dogs based on age, level of training and reason for disqualification. Fees range from \$1,000-\$1,500, although fees for dogs with medical issues or retiring dogs are assessed case by case. This fee helps cover the many costs associated with the care, veterinary expenses, etc.



Does a Career Change dog sound like the right fit for you or your family?  
Continue reading through this discovery package before submitting an application online.

## ABOUT OUR DOGS

**At Dog Guides, we have established our own breeding program which consists of the following breeds:**

- Labrador Retriever
- Golden Retriever
- Labrador Retriever X Golden Retriever
- Standard Poodle



**Prior to dogs being matched with an adoptive family, the following health procedures will have been completed:**

- Males are neutered
- Females are spayed
- Wellness exam

**The following health procedures may or may not have been completed**

- Hips and elbows x-rayed (age and stage dependent)
- Eyes are screened by an ophthalmologist (age and stage dependent)

All of our puppies are raised by volunteer foster families until they are approximately 10-14 months of age, at which time they return to our training center in Oakville. Once we have determined which program a dog is best suited for, it will enter advanced training for 4-6 months. Training will focus on special skills intended to increase the confidence and daily independence of the client the dog will be matched with. Skills are unique in each program. Dogs are evaluated throughout training to ensure each dog has reached a certain standard before it can be matched with a client. The dogs are approximately 2 years of age when matched with an accepted applicant and placed into team training. Puppies and dogs may be career changed at any age or stage of training.



## COMMITMENT, RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPECTATIONS

- Applicants must be willing to travel to either of our locations (Oakville or Breslau) for a meet and greet.
- Applicant must assume all costs related to their new dog starting from the date of adoption.
- Applicants are required to schedule a veterinary appointment for their dog within one month of adoption.
- The adoption fee must be paid in full at the time of adoption.
- Applicants must notify Dog Guides if their Career Change dog needs to be rehomed or has passed away.
- Career Change dogs must not be used for any purpose other than as a loving pet.
- Applicants must acknowledge the two-week trial period and agree to evaluate whether the dog is a good fit for their home.
- Applicants must ensure that the dog receives regular veterinary care.
- Applicants have the right to withdraw from the adoption process at any time for any reason after having informed Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides.
- Applicants are not required to undertake any public relations or fundraising activities.



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- What is included in the adoption?

All dogs will go home with at least a two-week supply of their current diet and a one-month dose of heartworm, flea and tick prevention. Copies of their medical records will also be provided.

- What paperwork is included with the adoption

- Adoption Contract
- Health Certificate
- Detailed Veterinary Record
- Ophthalmologic Exam Record (if applicable)
- OFA Hips and Elbows Report (if applicable)

- What does “pending” mean?

When a dog is marked as “pending,” it means they have entered the trial period in their new home and are likely to be adopted.

- Can I adopt a retired dog?

Yes, retired dogs occasionally enter the Career Change program. However, fewer retired dogs are available, often due to health-related reasons.

- Does my new dog have service harness/vest privileges?

No, dogs adopted through the Career Change program are intended to be loving pets and do not retain public access or service harness/vest privileges.

- How long is the adoption process?

We aim to finalize adoptions as quickly as possible. The process typically takes 1–2 weeks from application submission to bringing the dog home. This does not include the trial period.

- The application window has closed; can I still apply for the dog?

If the application window for a dog has closed, you cannot apply for that specific dog.

- I already submitted an application, do I have to resubmit?

If your information is up to date, within one year of submission and your living situation has not changed, you do not need to submit a new application. Simply email us at [careerchange@dogguides.com](mailto:careerchange@dogguides.com) to confirm your application is current and indicate the dog you are interested in.

There is no dog that fits what I am looking for; can I submit a general application?

Yes, you can submit a general application. However, due to the high volume of applications, you must submit a statement of interest specifying which dog you would like to adopt when one becomes available.

- Do I have to sign my new dog up for training?

Although it is not required, it is strongly recommended. Many dogs enter the Career Change program due to behavioral challenges, and training can help ensure a better bond and smooth transition.

- I don't live in Ontario; can I still adopt a Career Change dog?

Yes! Occasionally, we have dogs available for adoption out of province. If you are adopting from outside Ontario, you are responsible for making travel arrangements to and from our facility. Note that we do not adopt dogs outside of Canada due to border restrictions.



# JOURNEY

## Step 1: Discovery

You are here! Learn as much about the program as possible to ensure you understand the process and are able to fulfill the commitment, responsibilities and expectations of being matched with a Career Change Dog. It is important to understand all you can before making this important decision.

## Step 2: Application and Expression of Interest

Available Career Change dogs are posted on our website, where you'll find the adoption application. It's essential to complete the application thoroughly, providing detailed information about your home and what you're looking for in a dog. If you've already submitted an application, you can submit a Statement of Interest for a specific dog. Due to the high volume of applications, only successful candidates will be contacted for an interview. Some dogs may have a limited application window, so if you miss the deadline or are not selected, you will need to wait for another suitable dog to become available and reapply.

## Step 3: Application Review

The Career Change department carefully reviews each application to ensure the best possible match between adoptive families and Career Change dogs. The review process focuses on the dog's well-being and long-term success. Only successful applicants will be contacted for an interview. The review process takes place during the application period for each dog. In some cases, a home visit may be required; this will be discussed during the interview.

## Step 4: Interview

If your application is selected, we will contact you to schedule an initial phone interview. During this call, we will discuss the dog's history, their specific needs, and how your home environment can best support the dog. This is also an opportunity to ask any questions you may have.



## Step 5: Meet and Greet

If the interview confirms a good match, we will schedule a meet and greet. This session is your chance to interact with the dog, ensuring compatibility. You will have time to walk, play, and ask additional questions. Meetings are held at one of our locations, and you are responsible of arranging travel. If you are coming from out of province, you must also make arrangements for your new dog's travel. If you currently have a dog, your current dog must be present during the meet and greet to ensure compatibility. Your current dog must be up to date on all vaccines. This includes Bordetella, Leptospirosis, DA2ppv, and Rabies before entering our facility. If both parties agree the dog is a good fit, you will take the dog home the same day. We will provide a two-week supply of food and all necessary documentation. You must bring a collar, leash, and if required, a head harness to safely transport your dog. The adoption fee will also be paid at this time.

## Step 6: Adoption and Follow Up

Once the dog is home, the two-week trial period begins. During this time, you will have the opportunity to get to know your dog and see how they fit into your daily life. If it becomes clear that the dog is not a good fit, you can return the dog, and a full refund will be issued. After the trial period, we will complete one final follow-up to confirm that the adoption is successful. At this point, we will transfer the microchip to reflect the ownership change, and the adoption will be finalized. Although we do not conduct scheduled follow-ups after this stage, we encourage you to contact us if you experience any challenges or wish to share updates about your new dog.

Overall, the journey from discovery to receiving a Career Change Dog could take time. Not everyone who begins this journey will receive a Career Change Dog. It is our responsibility to place Career Change Dogs with families who will provide the best fit for the dog. This includes home environment and commitment to maintaining the care of the dog for its life.

Main Contact: [careerchange@dogguides.com](mailto:careerchange@dogguides.com)

Telephone: 289-795-5307

Assistance: [pcovi@dogguides.com](mailto:pcovi@dogguides.com)



Last updated January 2025. Subject to change at the discretion of Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides.

## Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides

Canine Vision • Hearing • Service • Seizure Response  
Autism Assistance • Diabetes Alert • Facility Support

