

The journey of an assistance dog

1) Birth & Puppy Raising

Pups are born onsite and from day one, they benefit from world-class socialisation. Volunteer puppy raisers then introduce the pups to different environments and experiences, to give them the best start as future Assistance Dogs.

2) Formal Training & Matching

As young adults, dogs begin advanced training. After bonding and assessment, they are guided into their best career pathway and complete an extra 16-20 weeks of specialised training. Dogs are then carefully matched with clients based on skills, temperament and personality. Tailored training ensures success, with an initial Public Access Test and ongoing lifetime support.



**Psychological
Assistance Dogs
(PTSD Dogs)**

Guide Dogs.



**We are here to help.
For more information please contact:**

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Guide Dogs.

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Guide Dogs Queensland (GDQ) is currently developing a new service to support community members with a formal PTSD diagnosis. The service builds on our 65-year history of dog breeding, raising, and training as well as its commitment to co-design and client-centric care.

Alleviating symptoms

PTSD Assistance Dogs can perform a large array of skills to address clients' symptoms, enhancing independence and allowing them to navigate the world with confidence. These range from the preservation of personal space and grounding through touch, to the interruption of distress.

Best in class support

GDQ goes above and beyond to provide the best support possible to clients with PTSD. There are specific advantages we offer:

Purpose-bred dogs

Our world-class dog breeding centre uses insights from our colony and around the world to maximise the likelihood of good health and behavioural suitability. This reduces long-term medical costs and provides a strong foundation on which to raise a wonderful, highly trained dog.

Early socialisation and education

Our dogs receive early years education through our puppy socialisation and education program. This helps to ensure that our dogs remain confident and well-disciplined around distractions such as other dogs, crowds and busy environments. Our dogs are a constant, not a variable.

World-class training and animal welfare

Our training capability is outstanding. While many assistance animals are trained to complete 3 tasks, ours are trained to understand 25-30 skills using positive reinforcement. These range from high-level obedience to symptom alleviation and life-skills support.

Client support

Each dog has its own unique personality and physical attributes, so we take the client-dog matching process very seriously. Our aim isn't just to place dogs, but to ensure successful long-term match. To achieve this, we spend time with each client, and their supporting psychologist to co-design the best skillset required. Our clients become part of our community and we provide extensive, post-placement support.



Applying for a PTSD Dog

We will prioritise clients based on the best match to our PTSD Assistance Dogs. Client's need to meet the following criteria to progress with an application:

- A formal diagnosis of PTSD from a registered psychologist, who has provided support for more than 6 months.
- Physical and mental capacity to handle and work with a large breed dog (Labrador).
- Be located in Queensland with a supportive home environment.
- The ability and willingness to undertake a training program and learn new skills/tasks.

Applications for this service can be submitted via our website. However, please note that due to high levels of interest applications may be paused temporarily.

Please check our website for updates or future opportunities.

Exclusions

GDQ provides a full-service PTSD Assistance Dog program but does not:

- Accredited owner-trained dogs
- Work with dogs/breeds outside our colony of Labradors
- Place any other type of Assistance Dog. Eg. autism, medical alert, hearing.

