



Guide Dogs for the Blind

800.295.4050 | [guidedogs.com](https://www.guidedogs.com)

GDB Social Media Guidelines for Volunteers

Updated November 2023

Volunteers are welcome and encouraged to share their volunteer journey and important milestones with their friends, family, and networks via social media. Social media is a great way to connect with each other, share our mission, and help recruit new volunteers. This document outlines guidelines for social media accounts related to your role as a volunteer for GDB.

GDB Websites

- Guide Dogs for the Blind Website: [guidedogs.com](https://www.guidedogs.com)
- Guide Dogs for the Blind Online Store: [guidedogs.com/shop](https://www.guidedogs.com/shop)
- GDB Pupdates: [guidedogs.com/pupdates](https://www.guidedogs.com/pupdates)

GDB Media

- Blog “No Bones About It”: [guidedogs.com/blog](https://www.guidedogs.com/blog)
- Podcast “Central Bark”: [guidedogs.com/podcast](https://www.guidedogs.com/podcast)

Social Media

- Facebook – Official GDB: [facebook.com/guidedogsfortheblind](https://www.facebook.com/guidedogsfortheblind)
- Facebook – GDB Puppy Central: [facebook.com/gdbpuppycentral](https://www.facebook.com/gdbpuppycentral)
- Instagram: [@GDB_official](https://www.instagram.com/GDB_official)
- TikTok: [@GDB_official](https://www.tiktok.com/@GDB_official)
- YouTube: [youtube.com/guidedogsaregreat](https://www.youtube.com/guidedogsaregreat)
- LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/company/guide-dogs-for-the-blind](https://www.linkedin.com/company/guide-dogs-for-the-blind)

IMAGE SHARING

- Public GDB Galleries (accessing GDB photos including Graduation, Event, and Breeder Photos) – [flickr.com/photos/guidedogsfortheblind](https://www.flickr.com/photos/guidedogsfortheblind)



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IDENTIFYING YOURSELF AS A GDB VOLUNTEER

- We encourage you to add your volunteer experience at Guide Dogs for the Blind to your profile as appropriate. It can be a great conversation starter!
- You're invited to like, share, comment, and get to know our GDB community online- the more active you are, the more people we can reach on social media.
- Please do not use GDB's primary logo or any commemorative logos (for example, the 80th anniversary logo) as your personal profile picture. Doing so can be confusing or potentially misleading because every time you post, the logo will appear and imply the post is being published by GDB.

SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES

- GDB clients, employees, volunteers, and visitors to campus, as well as GDB puppies and dogs, should not be photographed, cited, or obviously referenced without the person's approval. Please do not post pictures of clients until they have completed class.
- Make sure photos and videos depict dogs being handled in an appropriate manner (e.g., don't show a puppy being held upside down or a dog looking scared or with "squishy eye" when wearing a gentle leader).
- Consider the situation/setting: avoid posting images of a dog with medical conditions, undergoing surgery, recovering from anesthesia, or wearing an e-collar, for example.
- Avoid showing things that are considered graphic, polarizing, or potentially damaging to our reputation, including medical procedures and sensitive clinical scenarios. For example, there is often poop and vomit when dogs are involved– but neither is appropriate to show in social posts.
- It is okay to show dogs exercising and playing in the community runs or interacting with staff in kennels. Please do not show dogs alone in a stall in the kennel or training van as that may be polarizing for the public.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR VOLUNTEERS

Please note, that if your social media account regularly features branded content (for example, lifestyle or business branding), commercial, or e-commerce activity (including affiliate marketing and brand ambassadorship), volunteers are asked to create a separate account exclusively for GDB-related activities and updates. *GDB dogs may not be used directly or indirectly in the promotion of personal business interests or commerce activities.*

Example 1: You are a volunteer and you also run a small business. **GDB Guidance:** GDB program dogs should not be featured in promotional images or marketing posts. Please avoid misrepresenting or implying a relationship with GDB for the reputational benefit of your business or brand.

Example 2: Your pet dog is a brand ambassador for a pet gear retailer, and you offer a discount or promo code in your highlights and in your profile as well as occasional sponsored giveaways. **GDB Guidance:** GDB program dogs should not appear on this account as it would create an implied relationship between GDB and your affiliate efforts. We ask that you create a separate account for volunteer activities.



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Puppy Raisers

- GDB puppies should only be shown with GDB-approved toys, food, and equipment. Equipment includes puppy coats, leashes, and collars.
- Do not obscure the branding on the GDB puppy coats or add extra adornment to the dog. This includes the pup wearing bandanas, adding pins or decals to the coat, etc. Exceptions may include GDB Fun Days and holidays when themed costumes are appropriate in controlled environments. It is not appropriate to go on walks and regular outings with the dog in costume.

Breeder Custodians

- Be sure to show the dog wearing its Breeder scarf in your photos and social posts when possible.
- Please consider context and language: avoid vulgar, overly descriptive, or clinical language about our breeding program.
- Do not use social media to communicate the status of dogs or puppies until you receive word through official GDB channels. These formal communication processes exist for the purpose of sharing information with the appropriate parties in a timely and official manner.

Foster Care Providers

- Please use discretion when posting pictures of dogs in foster care or dogs that have previously been in foster care – especially if they are placed there because of a medical challenge.
- In order to maintain client privacy, do not identify the handler of any dogs that are currently in foster care or have previously been in foster care.
- Do not include the dog's name when posting any pictures of dogs currently in foster care or previously in foster care.

Campus Volunteers

- Taking photos in the course of your work on campus – if approved by your supervisor – is allowed and encouraged provided you use your best judgment. Disruptive activities, such as staging formal photo shoots; lingering beyond the scope of your work to capture candid photos; or interrupting staff and/or other volunteers to participate in personal photography is not appropriate.
- Do not use social media to communicate the status of program dogs (e.g., career change, passing final test) until you receive word through official GDB channels. These formal communication channels exist for the purpose of sharing information when appropriate (e.g., phase reports). Phase reports can be posted on social media as long as the update includes only dogs that have been raised by or are affiliated with the raiser or club. Please do not post the entire list of phase reports.
- Please do not send photos directly to GDB constituents. It's important that GDB staff communicate directly with the appropriate parties prior to this type of information being released in a public forum.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Contact Guide Dogs for the Blind's Marketing Department at marketing@guidedogs.com

These guidelines are not exhaustive. Policy violations will be evaluated and potentially subject to disciplinary action. Thank you for supporting the GDB brand in the best possible way!