Below, please find answers to questions we were unable to address during the March 10, 2021 Client Town Hall meeting; we appreciate your patience in awaiting these responses. Please do not hesitate to reach out to us as needed for additional questions, assistance or support. The Support Center Team is available by calling 800-295-4050 Monday-Friday from 8:00 AM -5:00 PM, Pacific Daylight Time (PDT).

**Question 1**: *"With his pandemic, how are the dogs going to resume regular guiding?*

*I want to know is it hard for them to do their job, even if they just walking around the neighborhood. To learn the areas.*"

**Answer:** Resuming a regular guidework routine after the pandemic will vary depending on the individual team.  In general, dogs have excellent memories and will remember familiar routes and guidework basics after minimal practice once back to a normal routine. They may, however, be more excited or distracted by the environment for the first couple of weeks.  Start by walking routes you are very familiar with, incorporating appropriate management strategies to maintain your dog’s focus and consider increasing food reward for a short period of time.  With a bit of practice, you and your dog should be back on track.

In some cases, especially for newer teams or less frequently traveled routes, using a cane or human guide to pattern your dog for one or two sessions will remind him or her of the path and techniques, and help to ensure a smooth and successful transition back to regular travels. Hopefully this answers the question and addresses your concerns, but please reach out to the Support Center at 800-295-4050 or email igraduatesupport@guidedogs.com for advice on your individual situation. You may also find it helpful to reread “Back to Basics”, our article about maintaining and returning to guidework practice during the pandemic: <https://www.guidedogs.com/uploads/files/Alumni-Resources2/Back-to-Basics-Keeping-Guidework-Basics-Fresh-and-Fun.docx>

**Question 2**: *Are we going to have a reunion this year? And also is it going to be expensive again?*

**Answer:** The Alumni Association Board of Directors will begin planning our next reunion for the fall of 2022 or Spring of 2023. We will do our best to keep costs as low as possible and we are hoping to include a virtual element to the festivities allowing anyone from anywhere to participate at no cost.  We would love to hear from any alumni who have ideas about what would make the event better or who have connections or information about more cost-effective venues, ideas for workshops, etc.  Please email Theresa Stern at tstern@guidedogs.com with your thoughts.

**Question 3**: *“Is it possible to get airports to create outdoor relief areas inside the secure gate areas?  Some airports have little rooms with a fire hydrant and fake* *grass, but the dog is still inside, not outside like the dog expects.*

**Answer**: In short, yes, it is possible.  Relief areas are managed by the local airport authority.  The make-up of these authorities vary widely.  It is best to research the airport you normally use and contact its management to get on their disability advisory council or a similar body.  If your airport is too small for that, it is most likely owned and managed by a municipal government or a private company that has a advisory mechanism on disability access.  If it isn’t your airport, you can still reach out to its disability advisory body or its management.  As public spaces, airports fall under the ADA’s regulations in the U.S. and thus they are obligated to make them accessible.  At the end of the day, there are very few guide-dog users.  Airport management is not going to prioritize our needs unless they hear from us.  Reaching out to them with advice is a good way to build a collaborative relationship to  develop better accessibility.

**Question 4**: *I along with others, missed the call that discussed traveling nationally with our guide dogs.  I understand that the airlines have requirements that are new about us traveling with our guide dogs.*

**Question 5**: *On our March 10th call, could you please review for all of us the details about us traveling on airplanes with our Guide Dogs, along with all other related travel updates that we all need to know about?*

**Answer**: For answers to these questions and additional conversation on the DOT Service Animal Regulation updates implemented in January, 2021, please click the following link which will take you to a recording of our Webinar with Ray Prentis from Alaska Airlines: <https://www.guidedogs.com/uploads/files/Audio-Files/Alaska-Airlines-GDB-Webinar-on-DOT-Service-Animal-Regulation-Changes-2021.m4a>

**Question 6:** Are you ever going to have German Shepherds?

**Answer:** At this time, we do not have plans to make changes to the breeds we offer: Labrador Retrievers, Golden Retrievers and Lab/Golden crosses.