



INDUSTRY NOTICE

The Accommodation of Guide and Service Dogs in Passenger Directed Vehicles

Posted December 6, 2019

Purpose of Notice

This Industry Notice is to remind the owners and drivers of passenger directed vehicles in British Columbia (B.C.) of their responsibility to accommodate people who are traveling with a guide or service dog.

Legal Protections:

B.C. has a law to protect and promote human rights called the [B.C. Human Rights Code](#). This law requires service providers in B.C. to accommodate people with disabilities who rely on guide or service dogs in the course of their daily lives. Service providers include operators of commercial passenger vehicles such as taxis, limousines, and transportation network services once they are licensed to operate in BC.

Denying service to a person because of their reliance on a guide dog or service dog may constitute discrimination as per section 8(1) of the B.C. Human Rights Code. Discrimination refers to treating a person badly or denying them a service or benefit because of a personal characteristic, such as having a disability.

If someone believes they have been discriminated against because of their disability, that person can file a complaint with the [B.C. Human Rights Tribunal](#). If the complaint is deemed to be justified, the respondent may be ordered to pay for damages and compensate for expenses.

Information About Guide and Service Dogs:

Guide dogs and service dogs are not pets. They are highly specialized working dogs trained to perform tasks for a person with a disability, such as guiding someone who is blind safely around an obstacle. They can be identified by their good behavior, being under the care and control of their handler, and by their good hygiene and grooming. The difference between guide dogs and service dogs is:

- **Guide dogs** assist people who are visually impaired and blind; and
- **Service dogs** assist people with other physical or mental disabilities, which may not always be apparent.



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Some guide or service dogs may be certified under the [Guide Dog and Service Dog Act](#) (GSDSA) and may wear a vest or other visible identifier. However, certification under the GSDSA or the use of identifiers is not mandatory.

Responsibilities of Drivers of Passenger Directed Vehicle

Operators of passenger directed vehicles must take all reasonable steps to avoid discriminating against people with disabilities. There are very few circumstances in which a driver may refuse a trip to a person with a guide or service dog.

For more information on this topic, read [Protections for people with disabilities who require a guide or service dog: What you need to know.](#)

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this notice, please contact the Passenger Transportation Branch at:

Telephone: 604 527-2198 or toll free through Enquiry B.C. 1-800-663-7867

Email: passengertransportationbr@gov.bc.ca

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michele Jaggi-Smith".

Michele Jaggi-Smith

Registrar & Executive Director
Passenger Transportation Branch