

Help Prevent Attacks on Seeing Eye® Dogs

The Seeing Eye provides specially bred and trained Seeing Eye dogs for blind citizens of the U.S. and Canada, increasing their ability to travel independently to work, school or anywhere they desire. Seeing Eye dogs are working dogs whose owners depend on them just as sighted people depend on a vehicle to get them from place to place.

Did you know...

- **More than one-third of all dog guide teams are attacked by loose or uncontrolled dogs**
- The safety of the team depends on the dog guide's ability to concentrate on its work. Distractions from uncontrolled dogs, termed "interference", put the team in harm's way
- Attacks on dog guides can be devastating. They can cause irreparable physical or psychological damage that prevents dog guides from continuing their work
- The expenses, retraining, replacement, emotional trauma and loss of mobility can create major setbacks for the blind person

Any dog, regardless of size or breed, can pose a threat to a dog guide team. People who are blind routinely experience interference from: dogs enthusiastically running out to greet them, the family "guard" dog that issues a menacing growl, or the well-meaning pet owner who brings a leashed animal over to visit the guide. All are forms of interference and all affect the safety of the dog guide team.

10 Ways to Protect Dog Guide Teams

In many states it's a criminal offense to permit your dog to attack or interfere with a dog guide. Dogs provide great companionship, but owning a pet also involves serious responsibility. Following these ten simple steps will not only protect dog guide teams, it will protect your dog as well.

1. **Love your dog, leash your dog:** Always keep your dog on leash in public places and unfenced areas. Learn and obey your state and local leash laws.
2. **Avoid interference:** Never let your pet near a dog guide, even if your dog is leashed. Dog guides are working animals and it is dangerous to distract them from their duties.
3. **Just say "Hi":** Alert the blind person of your dog's presence when passing by the team. A simple greeting of "Hi, I have a dog with me," is appreciated.
4. **Keep your dog close:** Using a retractable leash in populated areas or leaving your dog tied up outside unattended in a public place endanger both the dog guide team and your own dog.
5. **Calm, cool, collected:** Keep your dog under good control at all times. Never allow a child or anyone unable to control your dog to walk it on a leash.
6. **Know your dog:** Learn as much as possible about your family pet and its breed characteristics. This will help you provide proper training, exercise and care.
7. **Training is key:** Enroll in obedience classes. Properly socialized and trained dogs make better pets.
8. **Visit the vet:** Keep your dog up to date on vaccinations such as rabies and spay or neuter.
9. **If you see something, say something:** Report any loose dogs roaming about in your neighborhood to the local police and animal control offices. Unsupervised pets in unfenced yards should also be reported.
10. **Lend a helping hand:** Offer assistance to a blind handler if you witness an attack or interference on a dog guide. If your dog causes harm, take responsibility for its actions.