

	Policy Title:	Successor Policy
	Approved by:	LFCDG Board of Directors
	Approval Date:	October 3, 2024
	Effective Date:	October 3, 2024
	Policy Owner:	Client Services

Purpose

The purpose of this successor policy is to outline the criteria and process for existing Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides (LFCDG) clients seeking to apply for a subsequent Dog Guide. The successor program aims to ensure a smooth transition for applicants who have benefited from an assistance Dog Guide and need a successor dog. Having had a previous Dog Guide in no way guarantees subsequent acceptance into the program.

Eligibility Criteria for Successor Status

Previous Dog Guide Recipient:

- Applicants must have previously received and successfully worked with and cared for a Dog Guide from LFCDG. If the gap between having your prior Dog Guide and reapplying is more than 24 months, eligibility will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.
- The applicant's previous Dog Guide must be retired, no longer able to perform its duties, or a plan to retire the dog within the next 18 months (about 1 and a half years) must be shared with LFCDG.
- If an applicant requests to transfer to a different program, their eligibility for successor client status will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

Demonstrated Ability to Care for a Dog:

- Applicants must have demonstrated the ability to provide proper care, attention, and a suitable environment for a successor dog.
- Prior Dog Guide removal due to neglect, abuse, or improper care would make an individual ineligible for reapplication.

In Good Standing:

- Applicants must be in good standing with LFCDG, including:
 - Having maintained consistent, regular and positive communication with staff;
 - Having submitted annual vet records for prior Dog Guide;
 - Having submitted regular weight reports for prior Dog Guide.

- Having maintained the training and skills of the Dog Guide and utilizing them for their intended purpose.
- Applicants must have no prior conviction of cruelty, abuse, or neglect of animals or humans, crimes against humanity, or violence against animals or humans.

Application Process

Verification of Eligibility:

- LFCDG will verify the applicant's eligibility according to program requirements at the time of reapplication based on the information provided.
- The applicant will also be granted successor status if they meet the successor eligibility criteria. Successor applicants will be given priority status on our program waitlists.
- At any point in the application process, your application for a Dog Guide may be denied. You also have the option to withdraw from the application process at any time.

Submission of Application:

- Applicants must complete and submit the successor application form, which includes personal information, details about their previous assistance dog guide, and reasons for needing a successor.

Assessment:

- Shortlisted applicants will undergo an assessment process to evaluate their current needs, lifestyle, and ability to benefit from a successor dog.

Home Visit:

- A representative from LFCDG will conduct a home visit to assess the living environment and ensure it is suitable for a successor dog.

Successor Dog Placement

Matching Process:

- LFCDG will use information gathered during the assessment to match the applicant with a suitable successor dog based on the individual's needs, lifestyle, and preferences.

Team Training:

- The applicant will undergo a complete team training class with the new successor dog to establish a strong bond and ensure effective communication and collaboration.

Follow-Up Support:

- LFCDG will provide ongoing support to the applicant, including follow-up visits, training reinforcement, and assistance in addressing any challenges that may arise.

Responsibilities of Successor Dog Recipient

Healthcare:

- Ensure regular veterinary check-ups and necessary medical care for the successor dog as outlined by LFCDG.

Training Maintenance:

- Commit to maintaining the training and skills of the successor dog through regular practice and reinforcement as directed by an Instructor.

Communication with Organization:

- Maintain open communication with LFCDG, reporting any changes in the dog's health, behavior, or the recipient's needs.

Retirement Planning:

- Collaborate with LFCDG to plan for the successor dog's retirement when the time comes.

Confidentiality

All information provided by the applicant will be treated with utmost confidentiality, adhering to privacy and data protection regulations.

Policy Review

This policy will be periodically reviewed and revised to ensure its relevance and effectiveness in meeting the needs of LFCDG successor applicants.